

Succot

5782/2021



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Shabbat Ha'azninu

FRIDAY 17TH SEPTEMBER

Mincha Followed by Arvit 18:30

Shabbat commences 19:01

SATURDAY 18TH SEPTEMBER

Shacharit 08:45 Followed by Kiddush

MONDAY 20TH SEPTEMBER

Mincha Followed by Arvit 18:30

Succot Commences 18:49

TUESDAY 21ST SEPTEMBER

Shacharit 08:45

Mincha Followed by Arvit 18:30

Candle Lighting 19:49

WEDNESDAY 22ND SEPTEMBER

Shacharit 08:45

Mincha Followed by Arvit 18:30

End of 1st half of Yom Tov 19:46

FRIDAY 24TH SEPTEMBER (HOL HAMOED)

Mincha Followed by Arvit 18:30

**SATURDAY 25TH SEPTEMBER
(HOL MAMOED)**

Shacharit 08:45

**MONDAY 27TH SEPTEMBER
(SHEMINI ATZERET)**

Mincha Followed by Arvit 18:20

2nd Chag Commences 18:33

**TUESDAY 28TH SEPTEMBER
(SIMCHAT TORAH)**

Shacharit 08:45

Mincha Followed by Arvit 18:20

WEDNESDAY 29TH SEPTEMBER

Shacharit 08:45

Mincha Followed by Arvit 18:20

Succot terminates 19:30

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REPENTANCE OUT OF LOVE

Rabbi Jonathan Tawil

Founder & Director TAL

The festival of Succot is a happy festival. We celebrate the fact that Hashem took us out of Egypt and sheltered us in booths, as well as placing us in a special defence force of Ananei Hakavod – Clouds of Glory. These surrounded the Jewish nation in the wilderness and protected them from their enemies.

The Tur – Rabenu Yakov Ben Asher- is famous for codifying Jewish law. In his book, he asks why we celebrate Succot now at this time of year. Surely, if we are celebrating the fact that Hashem protected us in the wilderness and the booths that the Bnei Yisrael built, the correct time to celebrate should be Pesach. In fact we should really be eating Matza in a Succah!

Our Sages state that there is a process of repentance that begins in Elul and ends on Hoshana Rabah (the last day of Succot).

In Elul we say Selichot, at Rosh Hashana we are all judged, ten days later at Yom Kippur we are forgiven and stamped, yet Hashem is all Merciful and there is still time to do Teshuva until Hoshana Rabah, when the Petakim go out – the angels are sent with their mission in their hand to enact the edicts.

The Ben Ish Chai relates that the whole process is a total of 51 days and is hinted at in the word Hoshana – NA (numerical value 51) – for Hashem saves us in these 51 days.

Looking back in history, at what point did the Jewish Nation achieve their highest level?

When the Bnei Yisrael reached the Mountain of Sinai and prepared themselves to receive G-d's Torah, they emphatically stated those famous words Naaseh Venishma - We will do and we

will listen. They stated their unequivocal belief in Hashem and His Torah.

Furthermore, it was not just a few people that made this statement. Rather we are told Vayichan Yisrael – the entire nation stood there like one man with one heart (Rashi). There was unity.

Our Sages (Gemara Shabbat) state that the Bnei Yisrael achieved such a high level of spirituality that Paska Zuhmatan – they were no longer susceptible to death. Their unity and faith in Hashem led them to the highest achievable level being that of Adam before he sinned.

It is to this level that we must try and aspire as a nation.

But it seems so difficult. How are we going to achieve the unity and the faith necessary?

Hashem in His great Mercy has implanted in creation a way for us to achieve this level yet again.

There is a famous Gemara that tells us of the rewards of the two different types of repentance.

Resh Lakish said: Great is repentance, for because of it, premeditated sins are accounted as errors (unintentional sins). The Gemara brings another quote by Resh Lakish that seems to contradict this. Resh Lakish said that repentance is so great that premeditated sins are transformed into merits. The Gemara reconciles these stating that there no contradiction: One refers to a case [of repentance] derived from love, the other to one due to fear (Yuma 86b).

Rav Dessler explains that when a person repents out of fear, they are able to cleanse themselves of their sins, but only to a level of unintentional



sin. However, when a person repents out of love of Hashem, then their original sin is a vehicle for their repentance and ends up acting as a merit in their favour!

Throughout the Yamim Noraim – we are in fear of Hashem. The Shofar is blown to instil trepidation in our hearts, to awaken us to our current situation. On Yom Kippur, we fast and cry to Hashem begging for mercy. We come to a realisation that we are nothing and that Hashem the Great and Almighty G-d is in charge. In effect we repent out of fear.

Yet there is a further additive to this process and that is Succot.

On Succot, we come together in a much happier atmosphere. Succot is at a time when the farmers are bringing in their produce, counting their blessings. It's at a time when we unite as unit and celebrate our newly forgiven status.

It is a time ripe to appreciate Hashem and all that He does for us and hence repent out of love.

We take the Lulav Etrog Hadasim and Aravot that represent the different members of our

community and bring them together in unity. We enter our Succot to show our faith. No matter what the weather (unless we are Mitsaer – harmed by it) we go out, leaving the luxury of our homes entering a temporary dwelling for seven days.

We are surrounded by the Succah representing newly found Kedusha. As our Sages note the numerical value of the word Succah is 91 which represents Hashem's Name (written plus pronounced). We are sitting in Hashem's shadow.

Pesach time is a time of spring, the birds are out, the sun starts to shine, and people might get carried away and lose sight of the real reason we enter the Succah. Therefore, Hashem placed Succot at a time of year, when people are generally preparing to enter their houses not leave them, in order that we show our faith. More importantly, it comes at a time when we have achieved our repentance of fear and we can now build on that to gain repentance out of love, thus terminating a process that began 51 days earlier.

■ CHAG SAMEAH



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KIDS TIME

מ נ ש ה א ד י נ ו ג ג ד
 ש מ י ם ה ר מ ר ה נ ק ה
 ה ק ה ל ק ד ו ו ד ג י ע
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 ק ד ב ב ח ח פ י ד ב ש ג
 צ א ע ב ד ל ב ר א ב מ
 ו ש ר כ ת ק ר ה ד י ע ת
 ב ע צ ם ן ל כ ח ב ן ק מ
 כ נ ש ר ן ל ה י מ ל ם ה

הצור	אקרא	שמים	משה
כנשר	הבל	חלק	ימות
אסתירה	בעצם	לבבכם	ירדן





SUCCOT INSIGHTS

Rabbi Menachem M. Junik

Beis Gavriel Lubavitch, Federation.

The Gemoro Sukka Daf 27b states

“כל ישראל ראויים לישוב בסוכה אחת” – all the Jewish people are fit to sit under one Sukka. Now, while this sounds very nice, it is obviously impossible for the entire Jewish people to fit under one sukka and fulfil the Mitzvah together. If so, what is the true meaning of this statement? “What relevance does this have to the Yom Tov of Sukkos and how can we apply it to our understanding of what this Yom Tov is all about?

Let us focus for a moment on another unique Mitzvah of the Yom Tov of Sukkos – the Daled Minim, the four species.

This Mitzvah requires that one take four different species of plant life and tie them together as one, making one Bracho. The Chazal teach us that each of the four Minim represent a different type of Jew. The Esrog represents the good smelling and good tasting Jew who is involved in the learning of Torah and fulfilment of Mitzvos, the Lulav (which comes from a date palm) represent the good tasting Jew who is involved in the learning of Torah, the Hadas representing the good smelling Jew who involves oneself in the fulfilment of Mitzvos, and the Arava which represents the Jew who still needs to improve in both his learning and his fulfilment of Mitzvos.

On Sukkos we take of each type, tie them together, and make one Brocho. If one of the Daled Minim is not included – the Mitzvah was not fulfilled. Each one is necessary.

This teaches a very powerful lesson about the makeup of the Jewish people. Every single Jew, no matter his/her strengths and weaknesses, is critical to the Jewish people as a whole. The Esrog Jew and the Arava Jew are equally a part of Am Yisroel and are equally necessary. Achdus Yisroel and Ahavas Yisroel - Jewish unity does not mean we cease to have our own self-identity, or must all conform to one way of serving Hashem. Each of the Minim remains unique, remains different, has its own characteristics, and yet are all tied together as one. True

unity is when we can appreciate each person for their own unique talents and recognise that each and every Jew has their place within Am Yisroel, and contributes in a way that no one else can.

There are very few Mitzvos in the Torah that require involvement of the entire body to be fulfilled. Mikvah and Sukka. What sets Sukka apart is that, whilst Mikvah requires an intense process of cleaning and preparation, Sukka on the other hand, is fulfilled with no prior preparation. The entire person is invited to come into the sukka – just the way they are.

This is the power and the message of Sukkos. To accomplish and bring forth a unity amongst Jews, whereby no matter the level that the Jew is holding in their personal Avodas service of Hashem – we are all one and are all equally necessary as Am Yisroel. From the purest Jew, to a Jew who is carrying much baggage – we are all able to sit in the same sukka!

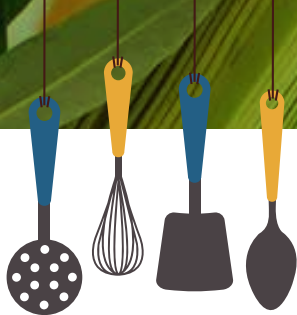
We just came from the holiest days of the year – Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, where each person focuses on their personal life and personal connection with Hashem, requesting and beseeching Hashem for a good year. Following that, we must realise and recognise that “**בְּרַכְנוּ אִמִּינוּ בְּלִנוּ כְּאֶחָד**” – the greatest Brochos come when we can show Hashem that we are united, that we love and hold each fellow Jew close, no matter the circumstance. We can then take the energy and power of Sukkos into Shmini Atezers and Simchas Torah where Hashem enjoys and dances together with His only child in the most private chambers and showers us with brochos for the entire year. ■



RECIPE

ROASTED FIG & SQUASH SALAD

By Tanya Ohana From Garlic & Ganache



INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 butternut squash, peeled and cut into chunks
- 4-5 figs, checked and cut into wedges
- 1 cup of chickpeas, drained
- extra virgin olive oil, to drizzle
- 1/2 tsp thyme
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 2 tsp silan (date syrup)
- 2-3 cup rocket/arugula
- pomegranate molasses, to drizzle



METHOD

- Preheat oven to 200°C/400°F
- On a lined sheet pan, place butternut squash chunks and chickpeas on it, sprinkle salt, pepper and thyme and drizzle olive oil on top.
- Roast for 15 mins and remove from oven. Place figs on tray and drizzle some olive oil over figs and silan over whole tray.
- Roast for further 15 mins or til starting to char - figs will darken and caramelize
- Allow to cool and place on bed of arugula. Drizzle with some pomegranate molasses before serving

ENJOY!

Tanya

SUCCOT 5782

Rabbi Avraham Citron

Walford Road Synagogue, Shaare Mazal Tov



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?"

Kabdeihu vechashdeihu, 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 kabdeihu v'chashdeihu is 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 Avos, "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.

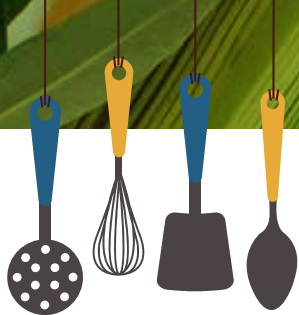
We understand that all that we have is really Hashem's. What seems stable and what seems to be permanently yours only appears as such. One moment we are sitting at the top of the world, and then, G-d forbid, everything changes...Sitting in the fragile sukkah, unprotected from the elements, we come to 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 kabdeihu without chashdeihu! ■

RECIPE



POMEGRANATE, FIG & PISTACHIO LOAF CAKE

By Tanya Ohana From Garlic & Ganache

INGREDIENTS

FOR SYRUP

- 3 tbsp honey
- 3 tbsp orange juice
- 1 tbsp oil
- 1/2 tsp orange blossom water (optional)
- 2-3 figs, checked and sliced
- handful pomegranate seeds
- In a small sauce pan, bring the liquid ingredients to a boil and continue to boil for 3-4 mins until colour deepens
- Pour into a lined and greased 2lb loaf tin
- Layer fruit on top of the syrup, starting with figs and filling cracks in between with pomegranate

FOR BATTER

- 1/2 cup oil
- 1 cup sugar
- 3 eggs
- 1/2 tsp orange blossom water (optional)
- 1 cup pistachios (without kernels), blitzed
- 1/2 cup ground almonds
- just under cup self raising flour (or same amount of plain flour + 2tsp extra baking powder)
- 1 tsp baking powder
- pinch of salt



Really been experimenting in the world of figs as you can see ! But if you're looking for a different cake to nibble on this Succot, that's not the standard honey cake, here's a great option. The orange blossom water is optional but adds such floral notes and lightens the loaf - highly recommended and it's not overpowering- in small amounts- at all!

METHOD

1. Preheat oven to 180°C/350°F
2. Beat together oil, sugar and eggs until creamy
3. Add orange blossom water and dry ingredients until smooth batter formed
4. Pour batter on top of fruit and place into oven
5. Bake for 45-50 mins - until skewer comes out clean - after 30 mins check if becoming too dark cover with foil
6. Leave to cool for 10 mins in tin before turning out then leave to cool completely before cutting

ENJOY!

Tanya



SUCCOT – THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE USHPIZIN

Rabbi Eli Mansour

The Zohar, in Parashat Emor (p. 103b), elaborates on the significance of the “Ushpizin,” our inviting our patriarchs as our guests to the Succa (listen to audio recording for precise citation). Rabbi Abba, as the Zohar cites, notes that when the Torah introduces the command to reside in the Succa, it says, “Ba’Succot Teshbu Shibat Yamim” (“You shall reside in Succot for seven days”), in the second person form, and then says, “Yeshbu Ba’Succot” (“they shall reside in Succot”), in the third person. The meaning of these two phrases, Rabbi Abba explains, is that we first tell the Ushpizin to come and sit in the Succa, and then we sit ourselves. The word “Teshbu” refers to our inviting the guests to sit, and then the second term – “Yeshbu” – refers to our own sitting in the Succa.

The Zohar then proceeds to describe the practice of Rav Hamnuna Saba, who would joyously enter the Succa and proceed to the inner section of the Succa, as the Ushpizin should not be invited near the door. He would announce, “Let us invite the Ushpizin,” and then set the table, stand up, recite the Beracha over the Succa, and then say, “Ba’Succot Teshbu Shiba Yamim – sit, holy Ushpizin, sit, the Ushpizin who bring Emuna!” He would then lift his head and jubilantly exclaim, “How fortunate are we!” citing the verse, “Ki Helek Hashem Amo” – “For G-d’s portion is His nation.”

The Zohar adds, however, that a crucial part of the Ushpizin concept is bringing joy to the poor, either

by inviting them to one’s Succa together with the Ushpizin, or by giving them charity in the Ushpizin’s honor. The Ushpizin derive enjoyment not from the food served in the Succa, but rather from the assistance lent to the poor, and thus besides inviting the Ushpizin into our Succa, we must also ensure to care for the needy as part of our hosting these special guests. ■





ARE WE IN CONTROL OR ARE WE CONTROLLED BY OTHERS?

Rabbi Amos Azizoff

Chabad of Borehamwood and Elstree

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, G d 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 G d 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. ■

OUR CHACHAMIM



Rabbi Meir Shapira • “The Rav of Lublin and Creator of Daf Yomi”

It was the 3rd of Elul, 5683 (1923). Participating in the first general assembly of Agudath Israel was Rabbi Meir Shapira, who arose and proposed the idea of studying “one page per day of Talmud.”

Beginning on Rosh Hashanah 5684,

Jews around the world would begin studying one page of the Gemara each day following the order of the tractates, starting from Berachot and ending at Niddah.

Rabbi Meir Shapira, who was a tremendous orator, described to his eminent audience – which included all the Torah greats of the world – the goal of studying by page. He put it in these terms: “How great it is! A Jew travels by boat and takes a tractate of Berachot in his arm. He travels for 15 days from Eretz Israel to America, and each day towards evening he opens the Gemara and studies the daf. When he arrives in America, he enters a Beit Midrash in New York and finds Jews studying the very same page that he studied that day, which allows him to happily join their study group. He discusses matters with them and they answer his questions, and the Name of Heaven is glorified and sanctified. Another Jew leaves the United States and travels to Brazil. He returns to the Beit Midrash and finds people immersed in the very page that he studied that day. Can there be a greater unity of hearts than this? What’s more, until the present time there are many tractates that people do not study, tractates that are ‘orphans’ and which only exceptional people concern themselves with. Now the daf will rectify this situation. The idea of Daf Yomi rests on the teachings of the Sages: Rabban Gamliel said, ‘I was once traveling on a boat when I saw another boat that had broken apart. I was distressed over the fate of a Talmid Chacham, Rabbi Akiva, who had been aboard. When I reached dry land, he came and debated before me in Halachah. I said to him, “My son, who pulled you up?” He said, “I came across a board [daf] from the boat and I grabbed it. I bowed my head towards every wave that went over me” ’ [Yebamot 121]. The era in which Rabbi Akiva lived is considered to have been one of the most difficult in the history of the Jewish people. Yet despite this, Rabbi Gamliel saw that Rabbi Akiva succeeded in making 24,000 disciples and gave the Torah back its crown. This is why Rabbi Gamliel phrased his question as ‘My son, who pulled you up?’ meaning: ‘Reveal to me the secret of your success.’ To that, Rabbi Akiva replied, ‘I came across a board [daf] from the boat’ – I found a simple solution, a daf from the boat, and that daf saved me. The word daf has two meanings: A board, and a page of Gemara. I came across a page of Gemara and I grabbed it; I assembled listeners and taught Torah in public. The Torah is our life and saves us from all troubles.” (Heard from Rabbi Yosef Dov Soloveitchik, the Rav of Boston, who said on that occasion: “It seems to me that as far as this metaphorical explanation goes, I see it as he does”).

All the eminent listeners who had gathered to hear Rabbi Shapira’s speech accepted his proposal with great enthusiasm,

and Rabbi Shapira was applauded. A proclamation was issued by the Assembly: “Orthodox Jewry throughout the world takes upon itself to study exactly one page each day, beginning with tractate Berachot on Rosh Hashanah 5684 (1923).”

After the evening prayer on Rosh Hashanah, the Rebbe of Ger said to his chassidim, “I am now beginning to study the Daf Yomi.” These few words from the mouth of the Rebbe caused great excitement in the hearts of tens of thousands of Ger chassidim, and everyone wanted to study tractate Berachot. Thus Rabbi Meir Shapira became known as the father of Daf Yomi.

When Rabbi Shapira paid a visit to the Chafetz Chaim in Radin, the Chafetz Chaim crowned him with the title of “the inventor of Daf Yomi.” The Chafetz Chaim said to him, “I love you enormously. Do you know why?”

“Probably because of Daf Yomi,” Rabbi Shapira responded.

“You have done a tremendous thing, and in Heaven they are greatly rejoicing because of your initiative. You should know that there, in the World of Truth, it is the study of Torah that is most respected. Every Jew merits being honored in relation to the amount of Torah that he studied in this world. In the World to Come, we do not say, ‘Welcome Rabbi Yaakov,’ or ‘Welcome Rabbi Chaim.’ Rather, it is ‘Welcome to the one who studied tractate Berachot,’ or ‘Welcome to the one who studied tractate Shabbat.’ There in Heaven, there are thrones of glory for those who have studied Torah, and engraved on each throne is the name of a tractate, such as Berachot, Shabbat, Eruvin, and so on. In the World to Come, each person is seated on the throne of the tractate that he studied. Consequently, not long ago there were many empty thrones there, for those who studied Torah only studied the tractates that they came across in their younger years, leaving the others for exceptional individuals to study. Yet now because of your proposal, the thrones of all the tractates will be filled, and the joy in Heaven will be beyond measure! That is why you deserve the greatest congratulations!” (From Rabbi Moses M. Yosher in his book *The Chafetz Chaim*).

As the Chafetz Chaim and other Tzaddikim and Gaonim said of him, “How great is the merit of Rabbi Meir because of Daf Yomi!”

When he left this world, one of the Tzaddikim of the generation exclaimed: “All the Tannaim and Amoraim went to meet him to bring him into Gan Eden, for there is no Rav in Israel who taught as much Torah to the public as Rabbi Meir through his Daf Yomi, and there is no other Rav who revived several tractates of the Talmud. This is why the reward that awaits him is without equal.”

Rabbi Meir Shapira was born on Adar 7, 5647 (1887) in the city of Schatz, Romania. His father, Rabbi Yaakov Shimshon, was a descendant of Rabbi Nathan Shapira of Krakow, the author of *Megalleh Amukot*. ■

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THE LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL

Rabbi Aharon Gabay

Ohr Yisrael Synagogue Elstree - JRoots Educator

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. ■

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