

INTERNET PARSHA SHEET  
ON SUCCOS - 5760

B'S'D'

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From: Rafael Salasnik[SMTP:rafi@brijnet.org] daf-hashavua Sukkoth  
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Shemini Atzeret is the Yahrzeit of Fred Bradfield. This month's issues are dedicated to his memory in recognition of his family's generosity in re-establishing the Daf Hashavua

SUKKOTH - FESTIVAL OF HAPPINESS

BY RABBI DAVID SEDLEY, Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation

Sukkot is described in our prayers as 'the time of our rejoicing'. The Rambam (Hilchot Lulav Chapter 8: Halachah 12) explains that happiness is the definition of the festival: "Even though it is a Mitzvah to be happy on each of the festivals, on Sukkot, in the Temple there was an even greater happiness, as it says "You shall be happy before the Lord your G-d seven days" (Vayikra 23:40). Why is happiness associated particularly with Sukkot?"

The answer commonly given is that Sukkot is the harvest festival, and therefore a time of great happiness; having gathered in the crops everyone sees how successful their year was, and enjoys the fruits of their labours. Yet this explanation fails to explain the spiritual importance of these days. Furthermore, if someone's crops failed, how could they too rejoice? Finally, what connection is there between financial success and hut-dwelling?

Rav Yosef Ber Soloveichik, the head of the famous Volozhin Yeshiva, was once passing through Minsk. While he was there one of his former pupils came to visit. Rav Yosef Ber greeted him warmly, and asked "Vos machst du?" - ("How are you doing"?). The man responded "Thank G-d, my business is doing well, my brother-in-law and I have recently opened up a shop that sells sugar. We have already seen blessing, and the price of sugar has just gone up." Rav Yosef Ber listened, thought a moment, then turned to his other guests. A little later Rav Yosef Ber repeated his question to the student, and then a third time, "Vos machst du?" Each time he received the same reply. Eventually he gave up asking, and explained why he was forced to repeat the question three times.

"Everyone knows that a person's lot in this world - his health and possessions, his wealth and poverty, his tragedies and joys, everything that happens to him - all come from the hand of Divine Providence. A person who performs good deeds may be inspired from above to go to a certain place and acquire certain merchandise; to go into business with a particular person; to buy and sell at the most opportune time. This and similar experiences are directed by G-d, who guides man's steps from above in order to bless him with success. The person him/herself, however, is merely the messenger of Heaven. And thus it follows that a person cannot consider one's success one's own, but rather of the One who sent him. The only area of life where a person is able to act for oneself is 'fear of Heaven', as the Sages taught: "Everything is in the hands of Heaven - except for the fear of Heaven".

"For this reason" concluded Rav Yosef Ber, "had the purpose of my question been to enquire about your material success, your business and your possessions, I would have asked 'How is G-d doing by you?' Then you could have properly answered me as you did, that G-d has placed in your heart the inspiration to purchase the sugar, and is seeing to it that you succeed in our business. But as I asked 'How are you doing?' it should have been clear that I was referring to the actions that are dependent upon you, totally within your will and ability to perform. It should have been clear that I was referring to your spiritual attainments. You should have answered the question by telling

me if you set aside a fixed time for Torah study every day; if you support the study of Torah with financial contributions; if you are steadfast in the performance of Mitzvot; if your hand is stretched out to perform acts of charity and kindness; in short, if you act in a way that is pleasing both to Heaven and to your fellow man." (From My Uncle the Netziv pp. 50-54).

There is a saying that a man's home is his castle, and that may be true, but sometimes we can become so caught up in the day to day running of the castle that we lose sight of the person living in it. We even begin to define our successes and failures, our happiness and pleasures, indeed our very selves, in terms of our material possessions, and forget all about who we really are. This contrasts the teaching of the Mishnah (Ethics of the Fathers 3:1). "Who is wealthy? One who is happy with their lot".

Sukkot gives us an annual chance to escape from this. We leave the confines of our home for a week, both physically and spiritually, to find ourselves. The happiness of the harvest is not in whether we made a financial profit or not, but rather in recognising that either way we have not lost sight of who we really are, and what our goals and purpose are. We rejoice in everything which we have, great or small, and extend the spiritual heights which we have reached during Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur into our daily lives.

THE FOUR SPECIES OF SUKKOTH - Lulav, Etrog, Hadassim and Aravot  
RABBI BARUCH DAVIS, Chigwell and Hainault Synagogue

Sukkot is described in the Torah as the festival of the ingathering of the crops, the very end of the agricultural cycle. This is partly why the Torah describes it as the festival of rejoicing par excellence - gather in your harvest and enjoy!

Maimonides, in Guide to the Perplexed, explains that the taking of the four species serves as a constant reminder of the contrast between the harshness of the desert and the Land of Israel, with its fruit-bearing trees and rivers. Thus, to Maimonides, this Mitzvah is a spiritual way of channelling our rejoicing.

But if one cycle is drawing to a close, another is about to start. In Israel, the weeks after Sukkot are an anxious time. Will the country be blessed with good, soaking rains so that the new crops may germinate? The Talmud states that we are judged for rain on Sukkot, and were it not for our wish not to suffer rain in the Sukkah, we would say the prayer for rain on the first day of Sukkot, rather than wait for Shemini Atzeret.

The two special Mitzvot of Sukkot which are not mentioned in the Written Torah - the water libations and the waving of the willow branches - occupy an important position in the Sukkot ritual, and both are strongly connected to the theme of rain.

A number of our sages going back to Mishnaic times, viewed the taking of the four species as a means of earning the merit of G-d's blessing of rain in its proper season. On Hoshanah Rabbah, during the last few circuits with the four species and when we take the willows, the prayers reflect our heartfelt wish for the blessing of rain.

This dual theme of the four kinds - of a celebration of the year past, and prayers for the year ahead, is even reflected in the wavings during Hallel. We wave at *hodu la-Hashem*, giving thanks for what we have, and at *ana Hashem hoshi'a na* - asking G-d to help us in the future.

Our sages have detected other symbolism in the four kinds. Each one represents a different part of the body. Each one represents different types of people in our community, from the most learned and pious at the one extreme, to the non-observant at the other. We are bidden to hold all four kinds together. We serve G-d with our very being. And we draw together all the sections of our community.

The taking of the four species is a most precious Mitzvah. And yet...not today. Sometimes, even where great holiness is indicated by the performance of a positive Mitzvah, we might hold back, for an even higher purpose. That higher purpose is the possibility that Shabbat might be violated.

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RABBI YAAKOV HABER - ACTIVE PRAYER

The waving of the Arba Minim (the Four Species) -- the Na'anu'im-- serves as a focal point of the t'filot of Chag HaSukkot. Interestingly, though, one can fulfill his minimal obligation by merely picking of the Arba Minim (See Sukka 42a). However, the clear implication of many Rishonim is that Na'anu'im are a l'chat'chila d'Oraisa û a Biblically mandated ideal enhancement to the performance of the mitzva (see Rambam (Hilchot Lulav (7:9); also Tosfot and Ritva to 37b who rule stringently in case of doubt, presumably following the rule S'feika D'Oraisa L'Chumra). Indeed, the Mishna in Masechet Sukka (29b see Rashi there) indicates that unlike the Hoshana (myrtle) and Arava (willow) whose minimum size is three t'fachim (handbreadths), the Lulav requires 4 t'fachim. The extra tefach, as the Mishna explains, is necessary "k'dei l'na'nai'a bo" -- in order to wave it. Although the Ba'al Ha'Itur and Me'iri maintain that this requirement for the fourth tefach is only Mi'd'rabbanan, the overwhelming majority of Rishonim and subsequent Poskim maintain that 4 t'fachim is an absolute requirement which would seem to indicate its Biblical origin. Even though the Na'anu'im are only l'chat'chila, the lulav must at least be fit for waving.

Why is signified by this Biblically mandated waving? Furthermore, it is clear from the Mishna (37b) that the Four Minim are to be waved at two places in the Hallel -- once at "Hodu Lashem Ki Tov" -- "Give praise to G-d for He is good" and once at "Ana Hashem Hoshi'a Na" -- "Please G-d, save us now!". These expressions contain drastically different themes. "Hodu" is a call to praise Hashem for his everlasting kindness. "Ana" is a heartfelt prayer for salvation. How does the waving of the Arba Minim enhance these diverse prayers?

What clearly emerges is that the waving of the Arba Minim serves as both a t'fila of bakasha (request) and a song of hoda'ah (praise). But how does the lulav accomplish both tasks? The Mishna in Rosh Hashana (16a) relates that "Be'chag nidonin al ha'mayim" -- on Sukkot the world is judged concerning the amount of rainfall for that year. The four species all require additional watering in addition to rainfall to survive. The Torah even refers to Aravot as Arvei Nachal -- willows that grow by a river. There is even a minority position in Tosfot (34a) that the Aravot must grow by a river to be valid. Even though we do not follow this position (see Shulchan Aruch (647:1) and Mishna B'rura (3)), certainly the Torah highlights the role of water in the Arba Minim. Indeed, one of the textual proofs that the Biblical "Pri etz hadar" (Leviticus 23:40) is a citron is that the word "hadar" is etymologically related to the Greek "hydro" meaning water (Sukka 35a). Hence, the Torah refers to a fruit that needs much additional watering to survive. The waving of the species then, is a form of t'fila for rain. Besides the t'fila for rain on Shmini Atzeret, we pray every day of Sukkot for rain in the Hallel by waving the Arba Minim at "Ana".

But the waving of the Arba Minim symbolizes more than bakasha alone. The Torah refers to Sukkot as the "Chag Ha'asif" (Exodus 23:16) -- the festival of ingathering. The beginning of the fall ushers in the period of gathering the produce from the field into the silos and warehouses. The long, arduous task of carefully sowing, watering, harvesting, and drying is over. The Jewish farmer can finally partake of his bounty. Herein lies the danger of the farmer attributing his material success to his own efforts alone. "Kochi v'otzem yadi asah li es hachayil hazeh" (Deuteronomy 8:17) -- "My strength alone brought about this abundance of wealth." By waving the Arba Minim -- the more prominent and beautiful of the crops -- in the Hallel at "Hodu", the farmer turns heavenward and declares to the Mashgiach Al Hakol (Provider for All): "I thank You, Hashem, for your kindness to me. I am fully cognizant that it is you "Hanosein koach la'asos chayil" -- that crowns my efforts with success, and without Whom there would be no crops to celebrate.

This then can be the underlying meaning of the statement by R. Yochanan (Sukka 37b) that we wave back and forth to the Creator of the

four corners of the world, and we wave up and down to the Creator of Heaven and Earth. R. Yochanan underscores the role of the Na'anu'im as an expression of praise and thanksgiving. R. Yose b'Rabbi Chanina states (ibid.) that we wave back and forth to stop harmful winds and up and down to prevent harmful precipitation. R. Yose emphasizes the bakasha nature of the waving.

These underlying themes of prayer and thanksgiving through mitzvot other than oral t'fila itself appears in other mitzvot as well. Rav Joseph B. Soloveitchik ZT"L, based on earlier sources, explains the blowing of the shofar as a form of prayer without words -- a cry symbolically emanating from the heart of the mispallel (petitioner) (see Y'Mei Zikaron). Similarly, the Gemara in Megilla (4a) derives the requirement of the dual reading of the Megilla -- once at night and once during the day -- from two sources. One is the passage in Tehilim (30) "Lma'an y'zamercha chavod v'lo yidom Hashem Elokai l'olam odeka" -- "in order that my soul sing to you and not be silent, Hashem, my G-d, forever I will thank you." The second is from T'hilim (22) "Elokai ekra yomam v'lo ta'aneh v'layla lo dumiya li" -- "My G-d, I call to you by day and you do not answer, and at night and I am not silent." Rav Betzalel Zolti ZT"L points out that the two sources apparently indicate that Mikra Megila contains the same dual nature as we find regarding the waving of the Lulav. First, it serves as a paean to the Ribono Shel Olam who foiled Haman's plot to decimate the Jewish people. Indeed, the Gemara (Megilla 14a) even suggests that Hallel need not be recited on Purim since the Megila itself serves as the Hallel. However, the reading of the Megilla also serves as a t'fila of bakasha. By reading the narrative of how Hashem has saved us in the past, we implicitly beseech Him that he redeem us from our present exile as well.

The theme of prayer through the performance of mitzvot ma'asiyot -- active commandments -- highlights the recurrent theme of the Seifer Hachinuch. "Acharay hape'ulot nimshachim ha'l'va'vot" -- the mind follows the actions. Praying to Hashem and praising him through words alone does not suffice. We must make use of the Kol Shofar, the Na'anuim, and Mikra Megilla to enhance our communication with the Shomai'a T'filos. Together with the words of our t'filot these mitzvot help stir our emotions in a way that oral prayer alone cannot do. Ultimately though, the goal is the "Avoda She'b'laiv -- Zo T'fila" (The service of the heart which is prayer). The Mispallel with the Shofar, the Lulav and Megilla is urged to elicit in himself an outpouring of his heart and soul to the Source of all coupled with the recognition of his utter dependence on his Creator who his only true source of help. May all of our various forms of t'filot this Sukkot and throughout the whole year be answered L'Tova.

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The Jerusalem Post Internet Edition

SHABBAT SHALOM: Beauty lasts

By RABBI SHLOMO RISKIN

(September 23) "And you shall take for yourselves on the first day the fruit of beautiful trees [pri etz hadar], branches of palm-trees, and boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook, and you shall rejoice (u'samahtem) before the Lord your God seven days. (Lev. 23:40)

How does our Bible define beauty? Of the four items mentioned in the verse quoted, the first introduces a specific aesthetic, which is defined only by the adjective "beautiful," (pri etz hadar) and it is this Hebrew word hadar which is associated with splendor or glory. For example, hiddur mitzva is the term used to describe the performance of a commandment on the highest possible level, which includes searching out the most beautiful of objects required, as well as expending extra time, effort and money.

What is the uniquely Jewish concept of beauty? After all, if "beauty is in the eyes of the beholder," once you tell me what it is that you consider to be beautiful, I'll tell you who you really are. Hence, it would be most instructive to understand why the Sages of the Talmud identify the first of the four species, which is biblically identified as a fruit of a beautiful tree, as

the etrog or citron.

R. Abahu interprets incisively, analyzing the Hebrew hadar to also mean (in addition to beauty) the one who inhabits, literally referring to that particular fruit which lives on the branch from "generation to generation" (season to season) without suffering the natural calamities of wind, storm and rain. No other fruit can come close to the etrog's staying power. The orchards of the world feature many wonderful fruits, but none have the ability to remain on the tree from season to season. Unpicked, they simply fall.

For our Sages, true beauty is expressed by the citron's ability to overcome the blasts of the elements. The etrog will cling proudly to its branch long after a fallen apple has disappeared back into the earth.

Rabbi Joshua Shmidman, in a trenchant article which appeared in Jewish Action of Fall 1997, further connected this Torah notion of beauty with the commandment which obligates us to honor an old person: "You shall rise up before the hoary head, and grant beauty to (v'hadarta) the face of the old man." (Lev. 19:32)

We live in an age where old age is scorned; rather than honoring a hoary head, we lock it away behind closed doors in an institution commonly called a nursing home. If John Keats had lived to a grand old age - he died at 26 - he might have had second thoughts about one of the most famous lines he ever penned: "Beauty is truth, truth beauty - that is all ye know on earth, and all ye need to know." For the youthful, romantic Keats, heir to the Greek tradition in which an aesthetic based solely on beauty qualified as truth, beauty was by definition truth. But as Heinrich Heine, Keats's contemporary, would point out, the difference between Hellenism and Hebraism is that the former worshipped at the altar which claimed beauty was truth while the Hebrews affirmed the exact opposite, that "truth is beautiful." Sadly enough, Hollywood and advertising define beauty in superficial terms - and made it the "truth" by which most people live their lives. What our media extols is the beauty of the moment, the lure of youthful vanity and self-driven obsessions. If you believe television, a syrupy drink loaded with sugar will make you vigorous, and a particular cigarette will make you sexually attractive. The subjects in every ad are trim and voluptuous twenty-somethings. Society gets the message loud and clear: young, strong and shapely equal beautiful. Is it any wonder that so many individuals frantically mask the white in their hair and pay for face lifts, hair transplants and liposuctions?!

How different is the truth of the Talmud, which records how R. Yochanan would stand in the presence all old people, both Jews and Gentiles, even if the person was not learned; he declared that he was honoring their life experiences, their ability to have "made it" through the long haul. (B.T. Kiddushin 33a) The glory of old age runs deeper than what meets the eye. We have to be able to appreciate their constancy, their inner strength and staying power. The old person's lined face is also a pri etz hadar - a badge which bears testimony to the beauty of survival despite harsh winds and tragic obstacles. Hollywood beauty is skin-deep, but the biblical beauty of hadar rises from the core of a person's being.

The Succa contains a similar message. There is a beautiful Yiddish folksong which I insist upon singing during every single one of the Succot meals, called "A Sukkele." It tells the story of a shaky, wind-blown succa barely maintaining itself during the blasts of a typical Eastern-European October night. A young girl, white and trembling, cries to her father that she's afraid the succa is about to collapse. "Don't be foolish and don't allow the frailty of the succa to frighten you," responds the father. "It's been almost 2,000 years now, and the succa still stands."

In the eyes of twentieth-century media, the succa may be a poor excuse for a real home; from a Jewish perspective, it symbolizes the wandering nation, enduring all the vagaries and afflictions of cruel environments and host governments. Hence, for Judaism the nondescript, patchwork succa is a most beautiful expression of festival joy.

I believe it was the Yiddish author Gedalya Bublick who records a conversation between two Jews of a shtetl: - "Did you know Ya'akov

Shmerel, who has just been buried: - "Yaakov Shmerel, with the hooked nose?" - "That's who I mean." - "Yaakov Shmerel with the hunchback?" - "Exactly." - "What a shame that he died; he was such a Sheina Yid. (beautiful Jew)!"

Shabbat Shalom and Hag Sameah The writer is dean of the Ohr Torah Stone colleges and graduate programs; and chief rabbi of Efrat. Copyright 1995-1999, The Jerusalem Post

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From: Ohr Somayach ohr@virtual.co.il OS-Special Succot 5760 SPECIAL DRY LIPS IN PRAYER BY RABBI YAAKOV ASHER SINCLAIR

The four species, the etrog, lulav, hadas and arava correspond to parts of the human body. The lulav is the spine; the etrog the heart; the hadas the eyes and the arava the lips. The four species also correspond to four kinds of Jew: The etrog has both smell and taste. It represents the Jew who has both Torah and good deeds. The lulav, the palm, has taste but no smell.

It represents the Jew who has Torah but not good deeds. The hadas, the myrtle, has a beautiful smell, but its fruit is tasteless. It corresponds to the Jew who has good deeds but not Torah. And the arava, the willow, has neither taste nor smell. The arava represents the Jew who has neither Torah nor deeds.

Which is why it is puzzling that of all the four species, we make the most fuss over the arava. We have a special day on Succot where the arava is the "star" -- Hoshana Rabba. None of the other three species have the honor of a specific day of Succot on which they are remembered. Why is the arava, which represents the least of the Jewish People, celebrated above all the other species?

The message of the arava is that G-d loves our prayers. The lips of a Jew are his most precious possession. And even when our prayers seem dry and empty like the arava, when they come from a humble heart, G-d loves them, listens to them and accepts them. Even from the dry lips of someone who is as lacking as an arava, G-d has nachat. Just as a parent loves the least of his children and takes pleasure when his child tries to please him, so too G-d loves the least of us and takes pleasure from our attempts to please Him, however dry and limited our attempts may be. Sources: Midrash Rabba Shemot 35:4,

Written and Compiled by Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair General Editor: Rabbi Moshe Newman Production Design: Eli Ballon Ohr Somayach International 22 Shimon Hatzadik Street, POB 18103 Jerusalem 91180, Israel info@ohr.org.il http://www.ohr.org.il (C) 1999 Ohr Somayach International

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SUKKOT RABBI EPHRIAM H. STURM

Mankind, recognizing the frailties of life, seeks security. In the state of Israel, diplomats, politicians and citizens demand secure borders. On these shores, we seek economic stability. Our parents and grandparents drummed into us the need to save for the "elterer yurin." Airlines, government buildings—even some elementary schools—have security checks. We seek medical security through insurance plans (which in some cases are like hospital gowns—giving one only the illusion of being covered.) Old timers look back with nostalgia at an earlier age when people did not need deadbolt locks and alarm systems to feel secure in their own homes.

To appreciate the message of Succos in our age of insecurity we turn to two themes: the joy of the harvest and the acknowledgment of the clouds of glory that shielded the Jewish nation in the wilderness. In an agricultural society the farmer plows the land, seeds it, tends it, fertilizes it and weeds it to achieve fiscal security. His fellow men do the same in other endeavors and through other methods. But after all human efforts have been expended, the crops and their profits, which represent security, are only achieved through the beneficence of the Creator who controls the rain, the sun and the world market. Succos tells us that after doing all that is expected of us, real security remains a special gift from Above.

"Not with strength and not with power, but with My Spirit," G-d tells us through the prophet: Physical security cannot be achieved exclusively through might. In addition to courage, sacrifice, and sophisticated weaponry we need the catalytic factor of G-d's Spirit.

Succos addresses this issue by reminding us that for forty years of desert wandering amid hostile nations and marauding bands we were protected and given physical security by the annanei hakavod, the clouds of glory.

Today, though we are not privileged to physically perceive these clouds of glory, we see them through the eyes of faith and belief. When a chassid told the Kotzker Rebbe that another Rebbe is visited in his Succah by the seven giants of Jewish history known as the Ushpizen, the Kotzker told him that he, too, clearly sees these guests in his Succah through eyes of faith.

King David attests to the protective powers of the invisible clouds of glory: "Let all the nations praise Hashem, let all the people laud Him, for His kindness to us." The sweet singer of Israel tells the nations of the world that they and they alone know all the secret plans that they made to destroy us which were frustrated and aborted by G-d's intervention by the hidden clouds of glory.

Therein lies the secret of Succos. A festival attesting to the Jewish faith in Hashem to provide a comprehensive package of security which we symbolize by leaving our homes, our citadels of security, to live under the stars and the protection of the invisible clouds of glory.

Rabbi Ephraim H. Sturm Rabbi Sturm, Executive Vice President Emeritus, National Council of Young Israel. OU.ORG - Your Gateway to the Jewish Internet \_ 1999 - 5759 All Rights Reserved. Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America

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From: Yated[SMTP:yated-usa@yated.com] Yated Neeman  
SUKKOS AND OUR SAGES - SHORT AND SWEET SUKKOS  
VERTLACH BY SHAYA GOTTLIEB

Rav Mordechai of Neschitz lived in abject poverty; his family barely had enough food to eat. Yet all year, he managed to scrape together some pennies enough to buy an esrog for Sukkos. One erev Sukkos, he went to buy an esrog with six rubles in his pocket. As he approached the marketplace, he saw a Jew sitting and crying. "Why are you crying?" Rav Mordechai asked, concerned. "Can I help you?" "I am a water carrier," came the reply, "and my horse just died. Now I will have no way to carry the barrels of water, and will have to go begging." Overcome with pity, Rav Mordechai gave the man the six rubles to buy a horse. As he entered his house, Rav Mordechai said, "Blessed is Hashem who arranged this mitzva for me. All of Klal Yisroel will make a blessing on an esrog, and I will make a blessing on a horse!"

The Chofetz Chaim on Sukkos How did the Chofetz Chaim fulfill the mitzva of Sukka? His sukka was simple, made from planks and doors. He was careful to erect the sukka in a clean place, far away from garbage. The area where the sukka stood belonged to him, and was out of the way of passers-by. The Chofetz Chaim left Radin during World War I and wandered through Russia, suffering great poverty. That year, there were no esrogim available, and the Chofetz Chaim had to use an esrog from the previous year. Though he made the brocho on the esrog, the Chofetz Chaim refused to shake it in shul, so as not to make others, who didn't have an esrog, jealous. Shaking the Arba Minim is a minhag, said the Chofetz Chaim, while causing others pain is clearly forbidden. The Chofetz Chaim would gladly share his esrog with a few partners, as he was unable to afford his own esrog. He would teach others to gladly relinquish their esrog to their friend, in order that the friend should be able to fulfill the mitzva properly.

Chavivus Hamitzva It is well known that Klal Yisroel spends more money on an esrog than on many other mitzvas. Since Klal Yisroel is a wise nation whom it is difficult to mislead, the mitzva of Arba Minim is surely a precious one, whose value is inestimable. If we spend so much money on this mitzva, there must be a very good reason for it. *Sichos Haran*

Better Two than One Rav Eizel Charif, the Rav of Slonim, would be

asked to judge on the quality of individual esrogim before Sukkos. One year, the esrog batch was of inferior quality, and every esrog that was brought before the Rav was disqualified. The esrog dealer was none too pleased. "Rebbe, you are taking away my parnossa!" he complained. "Am I to blame that your esrogim are inferior?" said the Rav. "But I have an idea. Instead of bringing me one esrog, give the townsfolk two esrogim to show me, and I will tell them which is the superior one of the two!"

We Shake in All Directions A baal habayis once approached Rav Yitzchok Elchonon of Kovno and asked whether he should travel abroad in search of parnossa. "Do you have any source of livelihood at all?" asked Rav Yitzchok. "Boruch Hashem, I have enough to eat, but I have not been able to be successful in business," the man replied. "If so, remain where you are," said Rav Yitzchok. "On Sukkos, when we say Hoshea No, we shake the esrog and lulav in all directions: north, south, east and west. However, when we say 'hatzliche no' we stand in our places and don't even shake the esrog and lulav once.

Mah Nishtano A German duke once asked the Rabbi of Berlin, "Please tell me, why don't the children say 'Mah Nishtano' on Sukkos? On Pesach, the family remains in their home, while on Sukkos, everyone moves out to a little hut. Why are they not surprised?" The Rabbi replied, "The children, unfortunately, are used to seeing their parents and family crowded into a hut, suffering from the elements. After all, we are in exile. But on Pesach, they see us acting like kings, which is different than our usual situation in golus. Thus the children ask, 'Mah Nishtano'.

Invite the Common Folk In Rav Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev used to invite the common, plain people into his sukka. When asked why, he explained, "In Gan Eden, the tzaddikim will be sitting in the sukkos oro shel livyoson, and I, a simple man, will want to join. I will be asked, 'What is your merit that you deserve to sit in the sukka?' And I will reply, 'Just as I, Levi Yitzchok, invited the common folk to sit in my sukka, so, too, please let me enter the heavenly sukka!'"

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SUKKOS COMING FULL CIRCLE BY RABBI MORDECHAI  
KAMENETSKY

The Gemarah in Avodah Zarah talks about the future that we all pray will be imminent. It details for us the scenario that will occur after the final geulah, when Hakadosh Boruch Hu and His Torah are known and accepted by all of humanity. The entire world will see the great reward meted to the small nation that endured incessant exiles and suffering while following the Torah scrupulously. Then the idolaters will line up before Hashem and complain, "What about us?" They will complain saying, "had we been given the Torah, we, too, would surely have kept it! Why are you only rewarding the Jewish people?" The Talmud tells us that Hashem in His great compassion will say, "I'll give you one easy mitzvah. If you observe it correctly, fine. However, if you do not, then your complaints are meaningless." The Gemarah tells us He will give them the mitzvah of Sukkah. Hakadosh Baruch Hu will then take out the sun in all the glory of a hot summer's day and the protection of the Sukkah will be no match for its rays. Then the scoffing and cynical idol worshippers will once again show their true colors. They will kick the walls of their Sukkos and abandon the Sukkah in disgust.

The Gemarah, of course, needs an explanation. After all, there are many mitzvos in the Torah. And there are quite a number of difficult ones. Some are conducive to despair and disheartenment even without a broiling sun. Why, then, was the mitzvah of Sukkah chosen to be the cause celebre that differentiates our commitment to Torah and Mitzvos as opposed to our gentile adversaries? Couldn't Hashem have chosen to tangle them with the mitzvah of tzitzis or bind them with tefillin? It may very well be that the Sukkah was chosen for the mitzvah of the final geulah because it has deep roots. It is quite reminiscent of a story that Rabbi Paysach Krohn, tells in his first book in his Magid Series.

Reb Avraham was about to enter a restaurant one late spring afternoon. Upon entering, he noticed a familiar vagrant Jew, known to all as Berel the beggar, meandering outside. Reb Berel, rumor had it, was a formidable Torah scholar back in the old country, but had his life shattered physically and emotionally by Nazi atrocities. He was a recluse, no one knew exactly where or how he lived, but he bothered no one, and not too many people bothered with him. Reb Avraham asked the loner to join him for a meal. He was about to make a business trip up to Binghamton and figured that he might as well prepare for the trip with more than a hot meal, he would begin it with a good deed. Reb Berel gladly accepted the offer; however, when it came time to order, he asked for nothing more than two baked apples and a hot tea. Reb Avraham's prodding could do nothing to increase the poor man's order. "All I need are two baked apples and a steaming tea," he insisted. Reb Avraham's trip to Binghamton was uneventful until the rain and the darkness began to fall almost simultaneously. As if dancing in step, the darker it got, the heavier the deluge fell. All Reb Avraham remembered was the skidding that took him over the divider and into oncoming traffic on Route 17 in Harriman, New York. He came to shortly after two tow trucks had pulled his wrecked car from a ditch and lifted him to safety. Refusing hospitalization, he was driven to a nearby motel that was owned by the Friedmans, a Jewish couple who were readying the place for the summer migrations. Mr. Friedman saw the battered Reb Avraham and quickly prepared a comfortable room for him. His wife quickly prepared a little something for him to eat. She brought it out to a shocked and bewildered Reb Avraham. On her serving tray were two baked apples and a glass of steaming tea!

When the Jews left Egypt, they had nothing to rely on in the vast desert but sheer emunah. They built simple huts, almost in declaration: "Hashem we will do ours, we are sure You will do yours." And hakadosh Boruch Hu tells them, through the navie Yirmiyahu, "Zacharti Loch chessed ne'uraich, ahavas killulosayich, lechtaich acharai bamidbar b'erez lo zoruah. I remembered the kindness of your youth, the love of your nuptials as you followed me in the desert in an unsown land! The Yidden had only their faith in Hashem and the simple huts, those Sukkos, to protect them from the heat, the cold, the wind, and the unknown. And it was only their extreme faith in the glory of Hashem and His Ananei haKovod, "I remember the kindness of your youthful days as you followed Me in an unsowed desert." (Yirmiah 2:2) When the final geulah arrives, once again it will be the simple Sukkah that will stand as the protectorate and advocate of the People who stood for 2,000 years in the face of our most fierce and vile detractors. So, when we enter the Sukkah this year, let us remember that it is only a small Sukkah stop on a long journey to geulah. And when we arrive there, the Sukkah will be there once again to greet us as it were more than 3,300 years ago in Midbar Sinai. And if we observe this year's Sukkos with the enthusiasm of chessed ne'uraich and ahavas killulosayich, then we will be zocheh, once again, to see the Mitzvah of Sukkah protect us. This time, it will be our advocate against our detractors, who will learn that it is only Klal Yisrael who truly love Hashem's commands whether in the desert 3,300 years ago or in the backyards of our homes today!

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From: RABBI YEHUDAH PRERO prero@torah.org  
 YOMTOV - HUTS OR HOUSES? YAAKOV'S SUKKOS LESSON

The Tur Shulchan Aruch writes (Orech Chayim 417) that the three pilgrimage festivals, the "Shalosh Regalim," correspond to our three forefathers, Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov. The festival Sukkos, the Tur writes, corresponds specifically to Yaakov. What is the connection?

In Bereshis, we read of the events surrounding Yaakov's encounter with his brother Esav. Although Esav had sold his birthright to his younger brother, Yaakov, Esav was angered when Yitzchak, their father, gave Yaakov the blessings due to the first born. Before this meeting, Yaakov, while on a trip to retrieve some belongings he left at a camp site, had a struggle with the "guardian angel" of Esav. Yaakov, although slightly injured by the angel, came out of the meeting with a blessing. Yaakov then, with

trepidation, met with Esav. He emerged from this encounter unscathed, and the two brothers went their separate ways. The Torah then tells us (Bereishis 33:17): "And Yaakov journeyed to Sukkos, and built himself a house, and made booths (sukkos) for his cattle; therefore the name of the place is called Sukkos." Yaakov's construction of "sukkos," booths, for his cattle is the link with the holiday which bears the same name. Clearly, there must be more of a link between the holiday and Yaakov than just the word "sukkos."

Yaakov, as just mentioned, was on a mission when he had his run-in with Esav's angel. The Talmud (Chullin 91a) explains how Yaakov came to be alone when he met the angel. "Said R. Eleazar: He (Yaakov) remained behind for the sake of some small jars. Hence [it is learnt] that to the righteous their money is dearer than their body; and why is this? Because they do not stretch out their hands to robbery." Yaakov went to fetch some small utensils left behind because he valued these possessions. Why did Yaakov, and according to R' Eleazar, do all the righteous, treasure possessions? Wouldn't we think that the righteous would value the spiritual more than the physical? The answer lies with the conclusion of R' Eleazar's statement: "They do not stretch out their hand to robbery."

There was a poor man who was scrupulous in his observance of all of the Mitzvos. However, he was so poor that he did not possess a decent cup and basin with which he could wash his hands when it was called for. One night, he dreamt that G-d saw the extent of his penury, his lack of cup and basin, and desire to own one, and G-d then gave him the cup and basin. Upon arising in the morning, lying on the floor next him was the exact same basin and cup which he saw in his dream. This was clearly a gift from G-d, and he treasured it greatly. The man's fortune changed. He became wealthy, and soon undertook refurbishing his house. Upon the completion of the work, the man made one final inspection of the house. He noticed that his cup and basin were missing. He ordered the workers to search through everything until it was found. They were successful, but perplexed. They had assumed this must be a precious cup and basin, fashioned from silver or the like, and that is why the man was worried about its loss. The cup they found, however, was tin and dented, and they could not fathom why the man was so distressed about the loss. After being questioned about this by the workers, the man had one response: "If G-d Himself had given you something, wouldn't that be the most precious item you possess?!" It is this attitude, Rav Chaim Vital says, Yaakov and all righteous people share. They appreciate that every item in their possession, all money that comes their way, is theirs because G-d gave it them, to enable them to better serve Him. It is dear, beloved, cherished, and carefully protected. The righteous do not steal. They do not take that which G-d did not give them. They only have that which G-d blessed them with. They know that G-d gave them this gift to enable them to fulfil the precepts contained in His Torah. They therefore value their possessions as one should value a gift from G-d. This is why Yaakov returned to retrieve his small vessels.

Sukkos is a time when we leave our homes and venture outside, into a temporary dwelling, the Sukkah. The Sukkah should remind us that our life in this world is temporary, just as is our dwelling in the Sukkah. Furthermore, the Sukkah should serve to remind us that just as G-d provided for those who lived in the desert with Sukkos to live in, so too does He provide for us. (See YomTov III:20) Yaakov, the Torah tells us, made "sukkos," "huts," for his possessions. For himself, however, he built a home. The Targum Yonasan interprets this not as a literal house, but rather as a House of Study, a "Bais Medrash." Yaakov had his priorities straight. Yaakov valued his possessions for the right reasons. He invested his money in that which has permanence, a house for Torah study. He provided only a temporary shelter for his "temporary" possessions. This temporary shelter is called a Sukkah. Our Sukkah should teach us the same lesson. We must appreciate, right after the conclusion of the High Holidays, our purpose on this earth. We must value our possessions for the same reasons Yaakov did. We must ensure that we understand what the priorities are in our lives. Our Sukkah should remind us of Yaakov's sukka. Hence, the holiday of Sukkos and Yaakov are indeed inextricably tied, as the Tur stated. (from Matnas

Chaim)

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From: Yeshivat Har Etzion's Israel Koschitzky Virtual Beit Midrash  
:yhe@vbm-torah.org Yhe-holiday: Special Sukkot Journal

This shiur is dedicated in loving memory of Jay (Yaakov Benzion ben Mordechai) Taller, whose yearzeit falls on the first day of Sukkot. Connie and Gerald Steinberg, and family.

#### THE NATURE OF THE MITZVA OF LULAV BASED ON A SHIUR BY HARAV YEHUDA AMITAL

"And you shall take on the first day the fruit of the hadar tree, branches of palm trees ... and you shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days." (Vayikra 23:40) This verse seems to refer to both a one-day and a seven-day obligation. Chazal (Yerushalmi Sukka 3:11; see also Rashi, Sukka 41a) derive from here a distinction between the mitzva of lulav pertaining within the mikdash (Temple) and the mitzva as practiced in the "gevulin" (places other than the Temple). In the Temple, the obligation to take lulav lasts all seven days of the festival, whereas elsewhere the obligation is limited to the first day. According to several Rishonim, there are many other differences between the first day and the rest of the holiday. The Rambam, for instance, believes that the disqualifications listed in chapter 8 of his Hilkhos Lulav render a lulav unfit only on the first day, but do not apply on the rest of the days.

Having established the uniqueness of the first day of Sukkot with respect to the other days, the question can be asked: "What underlies this distinction?"

Rav Joseph B. Soloveitchik (in his Kovetz Chiddushei Torah) explains that the taking of the lulav fulfills different functions on the first day and on the rest of the holiday. On the first day (in the gevulin), the mitzva is a formal one of performing a specific act; however, the seven-day, mikdash-centered obligation is to rejoice before the Lord by means of taking the lulav. Rav Soloveitchik points to the verb usage in the source text as support for his theory, specifically, the shift from "and you shall take" regarding the one-day obligation to "and you shall rejoice" in reference to the seven-day obligation. Rav Yerucham Fischel Perlow (in his commentary to Rav Sa'adia Gaon's Sefer Ha-mitzvot) makes a similar distinction and draws practical ramifications from it. For example, if a person were to take lulav on the first day outside of the Temple, and later he were to arrive at the Temple, he would be required to take lulav again, since the mitzva in the mikdash is one of rejoicing and not merely of lifting.

However, a mishna in Sukka (4:1) presents a difficulty to the above distinction. The mishna discusses the rabbinic decree that when the first day of Sukkot coincides with Shabbat, one should fulfill the mitzva of lulav at home and not at the Temple. (When the first day fell on Shabbat, people would bring their lulavim to the Temple before Shabbat and leave them there. When they came back on Shabbat, there was such a commotion surrounding the lulavim that people would be injured, and the rabbis decreed that people should leave their lulavim at home.) If indeed the requirement of lulav in the mikdash and in the gevulin are completely separate, how could performing the mitzva at home replace the mikdash-oriented obligation? (This, of course, assumes that Yerushalayim was not considered part of the "mikdash" for the purpose of this mitzva.)

Rav Soloveitchik resolves this difficulty by qualifying his original position; the distinction between the one-day and seven-day obligation exists only on the final six days. On the first day itself, however, the two obligations are identical.

Nevertheless, the dual-obligation approach to the mitzva of lulav can be attacked on a more fundamental level. The Rambam, both in Sefer

Ha-mitzvot and in the heading to Hilkhos Shofar Ve-lulav, counts lulav as a single mitzva. Moreover, he cites lulav as an example of a single mitzva which is performed at separate times (Sefer Ha-mitzvot, Shores 13).

From this it can be concluded that the mitzva of lulav is a single mitzva that consists of two intertwining obligations: the requirement to perform the act of taking a lulav, and the aspect of rejoicing. On the first day, both obligations are present, as it had been in the mikdash. Only the rejoicing aspect remains during the final six days, although it is itself a fulfillment of the mitzva of lulav.

Now perhaps we can answer a question which has perplexed many. Mishna Sukka (3:1) ascertains the minimum length of a lulav as three tefachim (handbreadths) with which to shake the lulav. This implies that the obligation to shake the lulav is of Biblical authority, since it is the criterion used to regulate the minimum length of a proper lulav. This presents a difficulty for the Ba'al Ha-ittur, who explains that the obligation to shake the lulav (as opposed to lifting it) is of rabbinical authority.

This difficulty can be resolved in light of our conclusions. The obligation to shake the lulav falls within the rejoicing aspect of the mitzva, which essentially applies only in the mikdash, although rabbinically it has been extended to the gevulin as well. Thus, nowadays, the requirement of shaking the lulav is rabbinical in origin, and it is specifically to this situation which the Ba'al Ha-ittur referred.

(Adapted by Aviad Hacohen; translated by Eli Fischer.)

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From: Rabbi Jonathan Schwartz jschwartz@ymail.yu.edu Internet Chaburah -- Sukkos

Discount Decorations: Desirable Deals or a Disgrace??

Often in the season prior to Sukkos, the prices on the store-bought sukka decorations tends to rise slowly taxing the principle of Hiddur mitzvos ad shlish. However, the same decorations, when purchased on or after January 2nd, can often be bought for a fraction of their Sukkos season cost. Can one buy decorations that were set aside to be sold as Christmas decorations or must he buy specific decorations created for Sukkos?

The discussion of this issue really begins in Shulchan Aruch (Yoreh Deah 139:13). There, the Michaber discusses using a candle that was "of elilim" which, the Michaber rules, cannot be used for the mitzva of Shabbos (candles) or Chanukka (candles) or in the shul. A further clarification of this condition is observed in Orach Chaim (154:11) where the Michaber tells us that specifically candles where the Non-Jew already gave them to the Avoda Zara intending their use for Religious purposes may not be used for candles in shul. The implication is that only when the candles were already in the Beis Avoda Zara are they assur.

The basis for the Psak of the Michaber is the ruling of the Mordechai (4th perek of Avoda Zara 47a). The Mordechai, commenting on the Gemara's question concerning one who bowed to a date-palm as to whether that palm tree can now be used for Lulav notes, that the case specifically concerns itself with a situation where the tree was ALREADY worshipped. However, something merely set aside for Avoda Zara usage has no status of Avoda Zara. The Mordechai explains that this is due to the fact that there is no Hekdesh for Avoda Zara (See Temura 29a). Based upon this ruling, Rav Wosner shlita (Shut Shevet HaLevi II, 57) rules that only the Avoda Zara that has been worshipped is assur but that which has been merely set aside for worship is not assur.

Similarly, the Chasam Sofer (Sha'alos U'Teshuvos, Orach Chaim, 42) rules that something that is merely set aside (Hazmanna) and subsequently has that status changed (Nisbatel) through a process like a sale, need not be a concern of Avoda Zara. Rather, the sale proves that the true intention of the seller was not religious at all, rather for sale in the market.

Based upon these two revelations, it would seem that marketing the

decorations as Christmas decorations is nothing more than a marketing gimmick. As a result, one who buys these items then and wishes to use them for Sukkos has no problem in doing so (see Sukkas Shalom, 31:5).

The difficulty is found in the opinion of the Tzeida L'Derech (p. 122) who quotes Rav Shlomo Min HaHar who held that such practice was assur. The basis for the stringency was found in Shuchan Aruch (Yoreh Deah 141:4) where the Michaber paskins that one cannot possess images that were created by non-Jews. The Taz (9) explains that one who leaves such images in his home may lead others to believe that he worships those images. The Tzeida L'Derech was concerned that one who uses his Christmas decorations in his Sukka may lead the belief that he is saving those decorations for Christmas as well.

Still, Rav Vosner remains lenient. He takes the opinion that even if the same factory was to make decorations with images of Avoda Zara on the decorations (implying some degree of Hazmanna) it only proves that the company wants to sell to many populations. Since the images are made by machine, there is no hazmanna and no thought to ruin the decorations currently in his hand. (Though Rav Vosner obviously cautions the purchaser not to buy the decoration with the Avoda Zara images upon them.) Similar positions are advocated by the Chavos Yair (184) concerning the use of the printing press and Rav Ovadiah Yosef (Yabia Omer, Vol. IV, Y.D. 21). Thus, it appears ok to save a couple of dollars this coming year and replenish one's Sukka decoration supply with the bargain basemewnt sales to be held on or about January 2nd.

Battala News Mazal Tov to JJ Sussman and Aliza Kravetz upon their recent engagement.

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From: RABBI PINCHAS WINSTON [winston@torah.org](mailto:winston@torah.org) | Perceptions - Zos HaBrochah/Simchas Torah: THIS IS The Real BROCHAH!

#### SIMCHAS TORAH

Though Shemini Atzeres and Simchas Torah are on two separate days outside of Israel, they really belong on the same day. They belong on the same day, because, whereas Shemini Atzeres represents the special relationship between G-d and the Jewish people, Simchas Torah celebrates the "document" and "symbol" that alludes to that relationship.

Yes, we are celebrating the end of another cycle of weekly Torah readings, and the beginning of a whole new one. But, equally, if not more important, is the dancing and singing we do over the special and unique bond between Jew and G-d, held-fast together by the Torah itself.

Hence, when we pour out our hearts during the "hakofos" (circuits around the bimah with the Torah scrolls) to the point of delirious exhaustion, either by physically dancing with the Torah Scrolls, or by letting our hearts do the dancing from the distance, we come as close to dancing with the Master of the Universe Himself as we can. It is a wedding dance, of sorts.

In fact, coming out of the Ten Days of Repentance, and after "immersing" ourselves in the "waters" of purity of Yom Kippur, we are like "brides" on our wedding day--ready to unify with G-d under the thatched roofs of our sukkos, which acts like a wedding canopy. Then, having completed the ceremony, we dance away with joy on the eighth day--Shemini Atzeres and Simchas Torah.

One way to get perspective on what we are celebrating on Simchas Torah is summed up in the "Hadran," which is traditionally recited upon the completion of an "order" of Mishnah or a tractate of Talmud. It reads:

We are thankful to you Hashem, our G-d, and G-d of our fathers, that You have placed our portion among those who sit in the Bais HaMedrash and not with those who sit at the "corners." For we arise early, and they arise early; we arise early for words of Torah and they arise early for wasteful words. We toil, and they toil. We arise early and receive reward, and they arise early but are not rewarded. We run, and they run. We run to the World-to-Come, and they run to destruction, as it says, "But You, O G-d, You will lower them into the well of destruction, men of bloodshed and deceit shall not live out half their days ..." (Tehillim 55:24)

Thus, Simchas Torah is the celebration that emerges from a heightened awareness of what was at stake without Torah, and what was gained through Torah. In the words of one "Ba'al Teshuvah":

"In my first year of turning towards Torah, I felt the hero for having left behind a successful secular life for traditional Judaism. So, I told G-d in no uncertain terms,

'Look, I hope You appreciate what I have done for You, G-d, because You know that I could have happily gone the same way as the rest of them!'

In my second year, however, after learning a considerable amount more of Torah, and waking up a bit to just what Torah and Judaism were about, I was somewhat humbled by my newfound realization, and this time told G-d,

'Wow! I didn't know what I was missing! Phew ... thanks for waiting for me. From here on in, G-d, we're partners, right?'

A few years later, when I finally came to appreciate how close I had come to spiritual oblivion, and how G-d, for reasons that I do not know to this very day, saved me from the brink of eternal nothingness, I humbly whispered:

'Dear G-d ... Thank you so much ... I mean SO MUCH ... for waiting for me ... and helping me to do teshuvah. Had it been up to me, I wouldn't have waited ... You really are merciful, like we say. Perhaps You can save the rest of my fellow Jews, and help them, as You helped me!.'

Who wouldn't dance with complete joy, with such a realization, on Simchas Torah?

Issru Chag

But You, G-d, are a shield for me--for my honor, and to raise up my head. My voice--to G-d I cry, and He did answer me from His holy mountain. Selah (Tehillim 3:4-5)

In the previous verses, the name of G-d, Elokim was used. However, in this verse, Dovid HaMelech uses the four-letter, holy Ineffable Name, and the difference is obvious.

Elokim always denotes justice, and that's what Dovid's enemies thought would bring about his own downfall. As Chanina ben Dosa warns, "It is not snakes that kill, but sin itself!" (Brochos 34a). Dovid had made some serious mistakes, and his enemies were counting on those mistakes to act as an "Achilles heel," leaving him spiritually, and therefore, physically, vulnerable.

However, Dovid answers them by invoking the name of G-d that implies G-d in a merciful state, so-to-speak. Elokim may not be his "shield" in the end, but "Hashem" would be--once Dovid did teshuvah, which he did. And history proves who was write in the end.

That's not all that worked in Dovid HaMelech's favor. Rabbeinu Yonah wrote:

"If a sinner is beset with hardship and experiences trouble, and he accepts the suffering as being justified, this will serve as a shield against the many troubles which, strictly speaking, should come upon him ... It is the trait of the righteous to pay their debt and sing to G-d ..." (Sha'arei Teshuvah 4:12)

Hence, Dovid HaMelech's acceptance of his personal troubles--of which he had many--served, in the end, to protect him from even worse evils that, by all rights, should have befallen him. So, too, it is with everyone, which means that complaining does little to rectify a negative situation, whereas good-will acceptance of one's troubles does much to strengthen one's future position.

As a side point, Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, zt"l, sees in Dovid HaMelech's attitude a hint to a well-known symbol of the Jewish people, yet one, ironically, which is not spoken about in any authoritative traditional Torah source: the Magen Dovid. (Pesachim 117b does make mention of the concept of "Magen Dovid"). The six-pointed symbol alludes to Dovid HaMelech's true shield and source of protection: G-d, who rules all six directions of the physical world (Igros Moshe, O.C. 3:15).

This is why Dovid HaMelech, in spite of the political storms raging around him, outwardly displayed confidence in G-d's protection, and speaking confidently about G-d's future help in past tense, as if it was a

matter of fact.

Have a great Shabbos and Yom Tov, A double portion of holiness! Pinchas Winston Perceptions, Copyright (c) 1999 Rabbi Pinchas Winston and Project Genesis, Inc. Rabbi Winston teaches at both Neve Yerushalym (Jerusalem) - <http://www.torah.org/neve/> and Neveh Tzion (Telzstone) - <http://www.neveh.org/> Project Genesis: Torah on the Information Superhighway [learn@torah.org](mailto:learn@torah.org) 17 Warren Road, Suite 2B <http://www.torah.org/> Baltimore, MD 21208 (410) 602-1350 FAX: 602-1351

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From: Aish Lists[SMTP:aishlist@mail.netvision.net.il] Sukkot Holiday with Aish.Edu <http://www.aish.edu/calendar/sukkot/activate.htm>

"HOW TO ACTIVATE YOUR SUKKAH"

You've worked hard, shlepping branches and wood to construct your Sukkah. (Or perhaps you've been invited to share in someone else's Sukkah.) How is this structure relevant to my life in the 1990's?! The source for the Sukkah is in the Torah. When the Jews left Egypt and began wandering in the barren desert, they were unarmed, unprotected, and left vulnerable to the elements of wind, cold, bandits and animals. Since they were constantly travelling, G-d instructed them to build flimsy, temporary booths - called Sukkahs. These hardly provided any protection from the elements! Yet the Jews learned a profound lesson: Safety and security does not come through thick walls and burglar alarms, but ultimately through trust and reliance in G-d. Today, we re-learn that same lesson every year by building our own Sukkah-booths. For an entire week, we leave the comfort and "security" of our homes, and venture out into our flimsy, temporary Sukkah. For an entire week, we absorb the lesson of our ancestors. We eat in the Sukkah, socialize in the Sukkah, and learn Torah in the Sukkah. (In effect everything, except for going to the bathroom, which is considered a dishonor to the Sukkah.) Weather permitting, we even sleep in the Sukkah. The Sukkah becomes our temporary home!

Unlike any other holiday, the Torah refers to Sukkot specifically as the "time of our joy." This reveals to us the true meaning of joy. Is it having a good job, a big bank account, a well-appointed mansion and Italian silk suits? Of course those things are great! But every life has its share of problems, broken dreams and disappointments. So true joy has got to be something more! Sukkot comes along to remind us that just as G-d sustained the Jews in the desert, so too our ultimate success comes directly from G-d. There is no real security without G-d. This is why the holiday of Sukkot falls out at the time of gathering the finished crops into the store-houses -- the season when a person feels pride at the sight of his abundance. G-d loves us and protects us. Getting close to G-d is the greatest pleasure a human being can enjoy. This realization is uplifting and liberating. And this is why Sukkot is called the "time of our joy." This theme is represented by the construction of your Sukkah. The walls can be made of any material, as long as they are sturdy enough to withstand a normal wind. You must have at least two complete walls and a small part of a third wall. The roof can be made of any organic vegetation that is detached from the ground (but not from any finished vessel or from metal or food.) The roof must be sufficiently covered so that it gives more shade than sun during the daytime. Yet it must be sufficiently open so that the stars are visible at night.

It is most important to at least eat a bread meal in the Sukkah on the first night of Yom Tov. Beyond that, if one find it too uncomfortable to be in the Sukkah, the Sages say that you can go back into your house. Because if one is preoccupied with his own discomfort, then he'll miss the whole point of being in the Sukkah anyway! Torah is not meant to be painful. For as King Solomon says, "[The Torah's] ways are pleasant, and all its paths are peace" (Proverbs 3:7). Whenever we sit in the Sukkah and eat food made of grain, we say the following blessing: ... Blessed are You, Lord our G-d, King of the Universe, who sanctified us with His mitzvahs, and instructed us to sit in the Sukkah.

The Kabbalists say that when a Jew dwells in the Sukkah, the presence

of G-d dwells with him. It is as if the Almighty has invited us to enter His holy palace - to sit at His table and share in His goodness. Perhaps this is why Sukkah is one of the few mitzvahs we perform with our entire body. We are literally immersed and bathed in the spiritual energy. Look over your head and see the sky allowing, as it were, heaven to descend through your ceiling and infuse your Sukkah. The Talmud says that in the days of the Messiah, all Jews will dwell together in one gigantic Sukkah. This underscores the need for Jewish unity. Perhaps this is the reason why on Sukkot we take the four species - Esrog, Lulav, myrtle and willow - bind them close together, and wave them in all directions. We declare that all Jews are part of the same unit. And we pledge to discover how all these parts can work together to accomplish our lofty goals. We hope you enjoy your Sukkah. Have a few meals, shmuzze, snooze - and learn a little Torah. Bring out your nice dishes and relish in the splendor. Because for eight days, this is the house where you and your Creator will dwell together.

"Chag Sameyach" - a joyous Sukkot holiday to you and yours.

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From: Ohr Somayach[SMTP:ohr@virtual.co.il] The Weekly Daf Megilah 14 - 20 By Rabbi Mendel Weinbach, Dean, Ohr Somayach Institutions

The Greatness of Torah Study

The study of Torah, says Rabbi Yosef, is greater than even the saving of lives. As proof he calls attention to two biblical passages which describe Mordechai's return from exile to Eretz Yisrael. In the first one (Ezra 2:2), Mordechai is mentioned after four others who came together with Zerubavel after the Persian ruler Koresh granted permission to return. In the second one (Nehemiah 7:7) he is mentioned after five others who accompanied Zerubavel 24 years later when he returned a second time after the building of the second Beit Hamikdash.

Why was Mordechai thus demoted, asks Rabbi Yosef. The answer is that during this interval there occurred the Purim miracle and Mordechai became Persian prime minister. Even though this enabled him to save Jewish lives, he was lowered in his prestige among the sages because he could no longer devote himself to Torah study with the same intensity.

This ruling of Rabbi Yosef is posed by Maharshah as a challenge to a halacha in Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh Deah 251:14. The ruling there is that if a community has collected money for the purpose of supporting Torah study, it may divert those funds to pay a tax levied upon it by a despotic ruler. Although the general rule is that property or money set aside for one sacred purpose cannot be diverted to another sacred purpose unless it is of a more exalted nature, it is sanctioned in this case because there is a danger to the lives of poor people in the community whose inability to pay the tax will bring violent action from the ruler against them.

But if the study of Torah is greater than the saving of lives, asks Maharsha, how can funds collected for this more exalted purpose be diverted to a less important cause?

An interesting answer is supplied by Turei Zahav (ibid. 6): There is no doubt that if one is studying Torah and a situation of lifesaving arises he is obligated to interrupt his study in order to save the life, as "nothing stands in the way of lifesaving," say our Sages. So clearly, Torah study must be interrupted for this purpose, and funds collected for Torah study must be diverted to save the lives of the potential victims of the tax collector. When Rabbi Yosef compares Torah study and lifesaving, he is merely measuring the merit of one who was able to study Torah without the interruption of emergencies to the merit of one whose study was compromised by the circumstances which compelled him, like Mordechai, to divert his time and energy to saving lives. \* Megillah 16b

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From: Mordecai Kornfeld[SMTP:kornfeld@netvision.net.il] Kollel Iyun Hadaf's Dafyomi discussion group Ta'anis 031a: The end of Maseches Ta'anis

THE DAFYOMI DISCUSSION LIST [daf@dafyomi.co.il](mailto:daf@dafyomi.co.il), <http://www.dafyomi.co.il>

Ta'anis 031a: The end of Maseches Ta'anis EFRAIM GOLDSTEIN <EFRAIMG@aol.com> asked: I have heard siyumim in this mesechta many times. All speakers talk about the Soidos Hatorah found in the circle as well as the Tzadikim pointing their fingers at the center ...however, I am still searching for a more satisfying pshat I would appreciate any insights and thoughts on this chazal as well as the connection to the previous piece with 15 of Av thanks for your efforts and work

The Kollel replies: The Gemara's description of the circle of the Tzadikim pointing to the Shechinah in the center teaches that every Tzadik has his own unique Derech in Avodas Hashem, which differs from the Derech of the other Tzadik (and sometimes even appears to be the exact opposite). Every person in the circle is facing a slightly different direction -- and those at opposite sides are facing opposite directions -- but they are all equidistant from the center. That is to say, all of their different Derachim in serving Hashem are acceptable as long as they revolve around Kidush Shem Shamayim. In the future, Hashem will reveal that the approaches of the different Tzadikim were all I'Shem Shamayim, and even though they followed different approaches from one another, they were all doing the Ratzon of Hashem. (Rav Leible Eiger in TORAS CHESED, quoting his grandfather Hagoan Rav Akiva Eiger) (Rav Yakov D. Homnick adds in his explanation of this Gemara that not only are the unique Derachim of the Tzadikim acceptable, but they are \*necessary\*, for if any one Tzadik does not fulfill his particular type of service of Hashem, the



"circle" around Hashem will be incomplete.)

The connection between this and the previous Sugya that discusses the Fifteenth of Av is that the celebration of the Fifteenth of Av represents the Simchah of the future Geulah and the building of the third Beis ha'Mikdash (see Insights). This will come about through the Achdus of the Jewish people, as the Midrash explains regarding the verse, "Vayehi b'Yeshurun Melech b'Hisasef Roshei Am, Yachad Shivtei Yisrael" -- "He is King in Yeshurun \*when the leaders of the people gather themselves together\*, when the tribes of Yisrael are united" (Devarim 33:5). The Fifteenth of Av was always a day celebrating Achdus (the Shevatim became permitted to marry into one another, the tribe of Binyamin was allowed back into the nation, etc.), and that is why the Mishnah says that "anyone who does not know his tribe (i.e. the day on which he is supposed to bring the Etzim for the Mizbe'ach)" brings the Etzim on the Fifteenth of Av. That is also why that day was designated for making Shiduchim.

For this reason we find that even though the Gemara (Megilah 13a) says that the greatest source of jealousy for a woman is the beauty of another woman, on the Fifteenth of Av each woman lent another their garment, creating a tremendous atmosphere of Achdus. (Rav Homnick demonstrates taht what the young women said during their dance reflects Achdus as well; when each person recognizes her own unique strengths and approach to serving Hashem, and they all serve Hashem together in their unique ways, that creates Achdus, just as the circle of the Tzadikim shows.)

For this reason the Masechta concludes with the circle of Tzadikim, showing how to unite the nation and thus to merit the final Geulah and return of the Beis ha'Mikdash that was destroyed on Tisha b'Av -- may we merit to see it with our own eyes, Bimherah Biyameinu.

M. Kornfeld

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From: Mordecai Kornfeld[SMTP:kornfeld@netvision.net.il] Subject: Insights to the Daf: Megilah 13-17 INSIGHTS INTO THE DAILY DAF brought to you by Kollel Iyun Hadaf of Yerushalayim daf@dafyomi.co.il, <http://www.dafyomi.co.il>

MEGILAH 14 (Yom Kipur 5760) - Dedicated by Dovid and Zahava Rubner of Petach Tikva. May Hashem grant them and all of their offspring with joy, fulfillment, and all that they need! HELP THE DAFYOMI ADVANCEMENT FORUM CONTINUE ITS WORK Send a tax-deductible contribution to D.A.F., 140-32 69 Avenue, Flushing NY 11367, USA

Megilah 14 THE TORAH SOURCE FOR RECITING HALLEL AND FOR READING THE MEGILAH OPINIONS: The Gemara says that the Chachamim instituted the reading of the Megilah on Purim because they found a source for doing so in the Torah. They derived, through a Kal v'Chomer, that there is a Mitzvah to give praise to Hashem when He makes a miracle to save us. The Torah relates that the Jewish people sang the Shirah in praise to Hashem when they left Mitzrayim, crossed the Sea, and saw the Egyptians drown. If it is appropriate to sing praises to Hashem when He does a miracle to bring us from slavery to freedom, then how much more so is it appropriate to sing praises to Hashem when He does a miracle to save us from death and gives us life (as in the events of Purim)!

(a) The CHASAM SOFER (Yoreh Deah #233) says that this is a Kal v'Chomer d'Oraisa, since we are deriving the obligation to praise Hashem when He saves us through a miracle from the Shirah that the Jewish people said when they were saved from Mitzrayim which seemed to be a fulfillment of a Torah obligation to sing praise. Accordingly, this would explain the opinion of the BEHAG, quoted by the Ramban in Sefer ha'Mitzvos (Shoreish Rishon), who maintains that Hallel (on Chanukah) and Mikra Megilah (on Purim) are Mitzvos \*d'Oraisa\*. The Kal v'Chomer of our Gemara teaches that there is a Chiyuv d'Oraisa to thank Hashem when He saves us through a miracle.

The Chasam Sofer says that this does not mean that there is a Mitzvas Aseh d'Oraisa to light the Neros of Chanukah and to read the Megilah on Purim. Rather, it means that mid'Oraisa, there is a requirement to make some display of praise to Hashem to show appreciation for the miracle. The Chachamim instituted what form of praise to make -- in the case of Purim, it is the reading of the Megilah. However, even if one does not fulfill the rabbinical requirement but makes any display of praise to Hashem, he fulfills the Torah obligation to praise Hashem for the miracle.

(b) The NETZIV (Ha'Emek She'ilah, Vayishlach 26:1) challenges this explanation of the Chasam Sofer. First, he asks, how can we derive an obligation to praise Hashem every year for a miracle that occurred once, from when the Jews praised Hashem at the Sea for the miracle that occurred then? When they praised Hashem for taking them from slavery to freedom, that Shirah was said \*at the time\* that the miracle actually took place. From there we can only learn that there is an obligation to praise Hashem \*at the time that the miracles occurs\*, but not that there is an obligation to praise Hashem every year on the anniversary of the miracle! How can there be a Chiyuv d'Oraisa for that?

Second, we may ask according to the Chasam Sofer, who understands that the Gemara is saying that we learn from the Shirah at the Sea that there is an obligation to make a display of praise to Hashem for His miracle, why does the Gemara ask that we should also say Hallel on Purim because of this Kal v'Chomer ("Iy Hachi, Hallel Nami Neimra")? What is the question of the Gemara? We make another display of praise for the miracle -- we read the Megilah, send Shaloch Manos, give Matanos l'Evyonim, etc.! Why does the Gemara ask that we should say Hallel, if any display of praise suffices to fulfill the Torah obligation?

Third, the Netziv asks, according to the Chasam Sofer, how can the Gemara (Rosh Hashanah 19b) say that the days of Yom Tov of Megilas Ta'anis were annulled? Those days were all days on which miracles took place, and the Chachamim established them as days of Simchah to give praise to Hashem for His miracles. According to the Chasam Sofer, there is a Chiyuv d'Oraisa to give praise to Hashem for His miracles, and if so, how can those days become annulled so that \*no\* display of praise is made on those days? According to the Chasam Sofer, refraining from giving praise to Hashem on those days constitutes a transgression of a Mitzvas Aseh d'Oraisa! (RAV CHAIM ZIMMERMAN, ztl, in "Agra l'Yesharim," ch. 19-21, discusses this at length and points out that the son of the Rambam already debated this point with Rav Daniel ha'Bavli in Sefer MAASEH NISIM, #1.)

To answer these questions on the Chasam Sofer, we might suggest as follows.

The Kal v'Chomer that teaches that we must praise Hashem when He saves us through a miracle actually includes two parts. First, there is the Kal v'Chomer from the Shirah at the sea which obligates us to praise Hashem \*at the time\* that a miracle occurs. Second, there is another Kal v'Chomer from the annual commemoration of the miracle that the Torah requires us to observe -- the Yamim Tovim. We are obligated by the Torah to observe the Pesach and Sukos as a display of praise to Hashem for the miracles that He did for us many years ago. If we have an obligation to perpetually commemorate a miracle which brought us from slavery to freedom, then Kal v'Chomer we must make a perpetual commemoration of a miracle which brought us from death to life! Thus, the Kal v'Chomer teaches that we must praise Hashem for the miracle when it happens, and also that we must commemorate it each year on the anniversary of the miracle!

Regarding the second question, when the Gemara asks that we should say Hallel on Purim, even though we already perform another display of praise to Hashem for the miracle, the Gemara is asking that we should say Hallel since it should be preferable to use the \*exact\* form of thanking Hashem that is expressed in the Torah (i.e. singing a song of praise, like Hallel, to Hashem). Why should we instead enact a new way of praising Hashem (such as Mikra Megilah)? The Gemara answers (among other answers) that "reading the Megilah replaces the recitation of Hallel." That is, it is certainly appropriate to read the Sefer that was instituted to record the events of Purim. But once we have done that, it is no longer necessary to recite Hallel, since we have already commemorated the events by reading the Megilah.

Regarding the third question, how could the Chachamim annul the days of Simchah of Megilas Ta'anis, it could be that those days were different than Chanukah and Purim. The obligation to praise Hashem for those miracles is \*not\* included in the Kal v'Chomer, and is thus only d'Rabanan. On those days, the miracles that occurred were not obvious and open miracles. A heretic could easily attribute them to natural causes and coincidences (see Ta'anis 17b-18b).

For example, the twenty-eighth day of Adar was instituted as a day of Yom Tov to commemorate the miracle that occurred when the Jews, led by Rabbi Yehudah ben Shamma and his colleagues, held a demonstration to protest the harsh decrees that the Romans had issued against them, and they successfully had the decrees rescinded. That miracle could easily be attributed to natural factors, such as the political pressure exerted by a prominent segment of the population lobbying on behalf of social reform. Other days commemorated the deaths of Roman antagonists, or successfully quelling the protests of Tzedukim to certain Mitzvos, etc. The Chiyuv d'Oraisa to give praise to Hashem for His miracles, as derived from the Shirah, only includes those miracles that are similar to the redemption from Mitzrayim -- open and obvious miracles. It does not include miracles that are not obvious. At Chanukah and Purim, the miracles that occurred were obvious -- on Chanukah, the few and weak Jews defeated the large and mighty army of the Syrian-Greeks, and on Purim, an unexplainable, sudden reversal of the plans of Haman occurred. One moment he was the highest ranking citizen in the country, the next moment he was headed for the gallows -- when it had previously seemed impossible to abolish his evil decrees. Therefore, those miracles are included in the Chiyuv d'Oraisa to give praise to Hashem. (M. Kornfeld)

Megilah 17 HAVING "KAVANAH" TO FULFILL THE MITZVAH OF READING THE MEGILAH QUESTION: The Mishnah says if a person was reading the verses while writing a Megilas Esther, expounding it, or proof-reading it, then if he had Kavanah, he fulfilled his obligation. The Mishnah seems to be saying that one needs Kavanah in order to fulfill the Mitzvah. As such, we would expect the Gemara to use this Mishnah to challenge the opinion that says that Mitzvos do not need Kavanah, just like the Gemara challenges that opinion in Berachos (13a) and in Rosh Hashanah (28b) from the Mishnayos there that say the same thing, that "if one had Kavanah, he fulfilled his obligation," regarding the Mitzvos of Kerias Shema and Tekias Shofar. Why does the Gemara here not ask from this Mishnah on the opinion that says Mitzvos require Kavanah?

ANSWERS: (a) The RAN says that the Gemara here does not ask this question because the answer is inherent in the Mishnah. The Mishnah discusses someone who was reading the verses of the Megilah while writing a Megilah, expounding it, or \*proof-reading\* it. Proof-reading means that he is not reading the words properly, but rather he is reading them just to make sure they are spelled correctly. Even if Mitzvos do not require Kavanah, one does not fulfill his obligation of Megilah by reading it in such a manner, as the Gemara says in Berachos (ibid.). Since the Mishnah includes the case of reading the verses of the Megilah while proof-reading along with reading the verses while writing or expounding the Megilah, it may be inferred that even while writing and expounding the Megilah, the person was only reading it as if he was proof-reading. Since he was not pronouncing the words properly, he does not fulfill the Mitzvah "until he has Kavanah" -- that is, until he has intention to pronounce the words properly (but not that he needs intention to fulfill the Mitzvah). This is the same answer that the Gemara in Berachos gives. When the Mishnah there says that one needs Kavanah in order to fulfill the Mitzvah, the Gemara explains that it means that he was reading it only to check the spelling and therefore he needs Kavanah to read it properly. But he does not need specific intent to fulfill the Mitzvah.

(b) The TUREI EVEN rejects the Ran's answer, because the case of "proof-reading" in our Mishnah is an entirely different case than the cases of "writing" and "expounding" the Megilah. In those cases, the person was already reading the Megilah properly, and yet the Mishnah still says that he must have Kavanah in order to fulfill the Mitzvah! Why does the Gemara not ask from those cases on the opinion that says Mitzvos do not require Kavanah? The Turei Even suggests that perhaps the Mitzvah of Megilah is different than the Mitzvos of Shema and Shofar and all other Mitzvos. When it comes to the Mitzvah of reading the Megilah, everyone agrees that one must have Kavanah, even the opinion that holds that normally, Mitzvos do not need Kavanah. (The reason for this is perhaps because of the special requirement of Pirsumei Nisa involved with the reading of the Megilah.) This explanation is also given by the MAGID MISHNAH (Hilchos Megilah 2:5; see also Lechem Mishnah there who challenges it). We might add that when the Turei Even says that everyone agrees that the Mitzvah of Megilah needs Kavanah, perhaps he does not mean that one must have Kavanah to \*fulfill\* the Mitzvah\*, but rather that it is necessary to have Kavanah to verbally pronounce the words (because of Pirsumei Nisa), and they may not be pronounced inadvertently. The Turei Even cites proof for this approach from the Gemara in Rosh Hashanah (28b). The Gemara there cites a Beraisa which states that if a person was passing behind a synagogue on Rosh Hashanah and he heard the Shofar being blown, or on Purim and he heard the

Megilah being read, "if he had Kavanah, then he fulfilled the Mitzvah." The Gemara says that we see from this Beraisa that Mitzvos do require Kavanah. The Gemara rejects that proof and says that the Beraisa means that he has to have Kavanah that he is hearing a Shofar (but not that he has to have Kavanah to fulfill the Mitzvah), because "maybe he thinks it is the voice of a donkey" and not a Shofar. The Gemara there does not address the statement of the same Beraisa, which says that when passing by a synagogue that is reading the \*Megilah\*, one has to have Kavanah in order to fulfill the Mitzvah. In that case, the Beraisa cannot mean to say that he has to know it is the Megilah being read and not a donkey making noise, because the reading of the Megilah in no way resembles the braying of a donkey! It must be that everyone agrees that one must have Kavanah when reading Megilah, and the Gemara's discussion there was only whether one needs Kavanah for other Mitzvos such as Shofar.

17b THE ORDER OF THE BERACHOS OF SHEMONEH ESREH QUESTION: The Gemara explains the order of the blessings of Shemoneh Esreh. The Gemara explains that the blessing for Selichah ("S'lach Lanu") is the sixth Berachah, because of the verse (Yeshayah 55:7) that says that Selichah (atonement) follows Teshuvah (repentance). The blessing for Ge'ulah is the seventh Berachah, because the final Ge'ulah will occur in the seventh year of a Shemittah cycle. The blessing for Refu'ah comes after Ge'ulah. Even though there is a verse (Tehilim 103:3) that says that Refu'ah immediately follows Selichah, the reason to place Ge'ulah as the seventh blessing overrides that verse. The Gemara then asks why is Refu'ah the eighth Berachah. It answers that since Bris Milah is performed on the eighth day, therefore the blessing for Refu'ah (recovery from illness) was made as the eighth Berachah. What was the Gemara's question? The Gemara earlier quoted a verse that said that Refu'ah immediately follows Selichah, and thus Refu'ah really should have been the seventh blessing, but there was another reason to insert Ge'ulah as the seventh (since the Ge'ulah will start in the seventh year of a Shemittah cycle). Consequently, Refu'ah is pushed off until the eighth Berachah. Why, then, does the Gemara need to search for another reason for why Refu'ah is the eighth Berachah? ANSWERS: (a) The MAHARSHA answers that we need an additional reason for why Refu'ah is the eighth Berachah, because even though we had a reason to make Ge'ulah the seventh Berachah, Refu'ah should still be mentioned immediately after Selichah as the seventh Berachah and override the consideration that the Ge'ulah will be in the seventh year! Hence, the Gemara is asking why does this reason (to put Ge'ulah as the seventh) override the reason to put Refu'ah as the seventh? The Gemara answers that there is an additional reason to make Refu'ah the eighth Berachah. The TUREI EVEN adds that there is an additional reason why Refu'ah should be the seventh Berachah and Ge'ulah the eighth. The Gemara says that the Ge'ulah will only \*start\* in the seventh year, and it will continue into the following year, in which Mashiach ben David will come. That is why the Gemara asks why Refu'ah, instead of Ge'ulah, is the eighth Berachah, since we could satisfy both reasons by making Refu'ah the seventh Berachah and Ge'ulah the eighth! (According to the explanation of the Maharsha and the Turei Even, the Gemara should not have asked "why is the Refu'ah the eighth Berachah," but rather why is it \*not\* the seventh Berachah.) (b) The RITVA answers that since the verse that says Refu'ah follows Selichah is no longer usable, since there is a different source for making Ge'ulah the seventh Berachah, it no longer provides \*any\* indication for where the blessing of Refu'ah should go. Therefore, the Gemara must look for a new reason why it is the eighth Berachah.

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