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From: torahweb@zeus.host4u.net Sent: October 08, 2003 To: weekly1@torahweb.org Subject: Rabbi Yaakov Haber - Chag HaSukkot : The Festival of Divine Providence
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RABBI YAAKOV HABER
Chag HaSukkot : The Festival of Divine Providence

The upcoming holiday of Sukkot overflows with underlying themes. Prayerful motifs accentuated by the waving of the Arba'a Minim and the T'filas Geshem on Sh'mini 'Atzeres, faith and trust in G-d highlighted by the dwelling in a temporary structure, the sukka, joyous exuberance demonstrated by the celebration of the Zeicher I'Simchas Beis haSho'eiva and ecstatic dancing on Simchas Torah, together with the Messianic yearnings expressed by the prayer of meriting the Sukkas 'oro shel Livyasan and the Haftoros' focus on the final apocalyptic battle of Gog and Magog which will usher in the long-awaited blessed Era of Redemption all blend together to form what can be described as a whirlwind of spiritually-elevating activities culminating the intense period of repentance immediately preceding this festival. Here, we focus on but one aspect of one mitzva of the manifold ideas inherent in each of the observances of the festival: the mitzva of dwelling in the sukka.

Many have noted that the main, but by no means the only, theme taught by the sukka is that of Divine Providence and Protection. Both R. Akiva's position that the sukka reminds us of the actual booths built by our ancestors in the Sinai Desert and R. Eliezer's position that it recalls the miraculous Clouds of Glory which surrounded and protected B'nei Yisrael in the Midbar (see Sukka 11b) both serve to underscore G-d's supreme role as Protector both through natural means and through supernatural intervention.

We may suggest that one of the three core fundamental religious beliefs as delineated by R. Yosef Albo in his Seifer Ikkarim, those of 1) Belief in G-d, 2) Revelation of Torah, and 3) Reward and Punishment through Divine Providence (Ikkarim notes that each of Rambam's 13 principles can be categorized under one of these three) are each highlighted in turn by one of the Shalosh R'galim (Three Festivals). Pesach commemorates the miraculous Exodus from Egypt which removed any doubts as to the Existence of an All Powerful Creator who, not subject to the Laws of Nature, could manipulate them at will (see Ramban, end of Parashas Bo, and Omissions of Minyan HaMitzvot I'HaRambam - Mitzvot 'Asei, No. 1). Shavuos of course is the festival commemorating Revelation and the Giving of the Torah. Sukkot completes the cycle by stressing Divine Providence and Protection. The Exodus was not a one-time Divine intervention in the affairs of Man but was evidence of an ongoing

relationship that Hashem has with His creations as manifested by His revealed protection of the Jewish people in the desert for a full 40 years. Our trust in this protection even in periods where G-d's Hand is not openly revealed is based on the foundation of the Midbar experience. Indeed, at a later point in history, when the Jews questioned Hashem's ability to provide for their needs to enable them to pursue Torah study, the prophet Yirmiyahu showed them the sample of the manna stored as a remembrance to demonstrate that just as Hashem provided for their ancestors in the desert, so too does He continue to provide for them throughout history (see M'chilta, B'shalach 16).

The theme of constant Divine Providence is also stressed in T'filas 'Arvis (the evening prayer). Questioning the interlocation of the blessing of "hashkiveinu" between the blessing of "ga'al yisrael" and Sh'mone 'Esrei in seeming violation of the principle of "s'michat ge'ula li'tfila" (juxtaposing the blessing of "ga'al yisrael" to the 'amida), the Talmud (B'rachos 4b) answers that the blessing of "hashkiveinu" is part of a "ge'ula arichta", or one long praise concerning the Redemption. Maharal (N'sivos 'Olam, N'siv HaT'fila 7, s.v. "v'da 'od") explains that "ga'al Yisrael" praises G-d for the one-time Exodus from Mitzrayim. "Hashkiveinu" continues to praise and pray to Him for his continued protection of the Jewish people after that Exodus, for redemption without subsequent protection is incomplete. Based on this idea, it is readily understandable why the b'racha includes the phrase "u'fros 'aleinu sukkas sh'lomecha", "and spread forth upon us the sukka of your peace", and on Shabbat and Yamim Tovim we substitute the normal ending of the b'racha with the phrase "Baruch ata Hashem, haporeis sukkas shalom 'aleinu v'al kol 'amo Yisrael v'al Y'rushalayim", "Blessed are you Hashem Who spreads forth the sukka of peace upon us and upon His entire nation and on Jerusalem". The "sukka" with its underlying motif of Divine Providence and Protection blends in readily with the main theme of the blessing.

The halacha mandating that the s'chach consist of material grown from the ground which has not been shaped into any kind of utensil can also be explained in accordance with this theme. On the one hand, Man is charged to "conquer the world," "v'kivshuha" (B'raishis 1), to utilize its resources and the Laws existent within the cosmos to discover the Wisdom of its Creator and channel its blessings to better and ease the human condition through advances in science and technology. On the other hand, Man must never lose sight of the Grantor of these gifts and never cease to thank Him and serve Him in order to elevate Man's true self by cleaving to His Creator. On the Festival of Providence, we use precisely as our roof, symbolic of protection, those elements which are clearly directly from G-d's blessings, natural materials unfashioned by human hands. This underscores the idea that all of the tools and inventions of mankind are also ultimately results of Divine gifts bestowed with love upon His creations. Rav S. R. Hirsch notes that 'Gog', king of 'Magog', the archenemy of the Jewish people about whom we read in the Haftoros of Sukkot, whose name and country are derived etymologically from "permanent roof", is the antithesis of the sukka-Jew. The Jew is charged to view even his permanent structures fundamentally as sukkot, flimsy and always in need of Divine Protection; Gog views everything as objects of his own accomplishment with no need for any Divine intervention. (See also, "On Makkot and Scientific Endeavors" on Torahweb.org.)

In our current world of uncertainty, when future world history hangs in the balance, let us all incorporate into our essential world-outlook this theme of sukka -- that of our essential need for Divine Protection and assistance for all the blessings of existence and all of human endeavors. As a result, may we merit the fulfillment of the b'racha of the Sukkas Shalom of Hashem Yisborach.

http://www.torahweb.org/torah/2002/moadim/rsac_sukkos.html
[Torahweb from last year]

RABBI YONASAN SACKS

SUKKOS AND HAKHAIL: THE CHALLENGE OF INTEGRATION

Once every seven years, on the second day of Sukkos following the shemita year, all of Klal Yisrael would assemble to hear the melech read from Sefer Devarim. The Rambam explains (Hilchos Chagigah, 3:1) that the very purpose of this mitzvah known as hakhail is to inspire the nation and to instill in each individual a passionate commitment to Torah. The timing of the mitzvah of hakhail, however, is somewhat surprising. During the shemita year, one must refrain from guarding and working his

fields. In an agricultural society, the shemita year is an opportunity to put aside the daily routine and devote oneself to spiritual growth. Hopefully, as the year concludes, one emerges spiritually rejuvenated and energized, well equipped to face the challenges of the coming year. Yet, as the new year begins the Torah commands us to ascend to the Beis Hamikdash to experience hakheil. Why is it so crucial to hear the inspiring message of the melech particularly at this time?

The Meshech Chochma explains the lesson of hakheil: "L'maan yeidun derech Hashem ba'asosam m'leches sodeh v'kerem" – to recognize the ways of Hashem as one works in his field and vineyard. Hakheil challenges each individual to integrate the experience of shemita into his daily routine. Therefore, as the farmer returns to his field, he is called upon to ascend to Yerushalayim.

The message and challenge of integration and synthesis is not limited to hakheil, but extends to Chag HaSukkos. If the very purpose of Sukkos is to commemorate the manner in which Bnai Yisrael traveled as they left Mitzrayim, why do we celebrate Sukkos at this time of year instead of during Chidesh Nissan?

The Midrash and the Maharal underscore the apparent connection between Yom HaKippurim and Sukkos. Perhaps this link can be understood based on the lesson of hakheil.

Yom HaKippurim is a day of taharah, during which we devote ourselves to spiritual growth and perfection. We strive to meet the challenge of "Lifnei hashem titaharu." Unfortunately, when the day comes to an end, and we return to our daily routine, the impact of Yom HaKippurim diminishes. We find ourselves preoccupied with the challenges of daily life without realizing the need to integrate Yom HaKippurim into the other days of the year. Perhaps for this very reason, the Torah insists that soon after Yom HaKippurim we leave our home, our diras kevah, and dwell in the succah. Both succos and hakheil underscore the need to incorporate true kedushah into each day of our life.

From: Kol Torah [koltorah@koltorah.org] Sent: September 11, 2003
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HADASSIM MESHULASHIM BY RABBI CHAIM JACHTER

Perhaps the most challenging aspect of selecting a Kosher set of the Four Minim is finding Hadassim that are Meshulashim. This term refers to Hadassim whose three leaves emerge at the same level. There are many opinions regarding the precise parameters regarding Hadassim Meshulashim; therefore, it seems to be a positive development that today, many sets of Hadassim come in packages that have been checked by a competent rabbinic authority. In this essay we shall seek to discuss many of the issues regarding Hadassim Meshulashim.

Hadas Shoteh Interestingly, the Gemara (Sukkah 32b) refers to a Hadas that is not Meshulash as a "Hadas Shoteh," a psychotic Hadas. An explanation might be that a Hadas that is Meshulash is balanced whereas the Hadas that is not Meshulash is imbalanced. A characteristic of a mentally healthy person is one who is balanced and one who is not mentally healthy is not balanced. Indeed, Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik is quoted by Rav Hershel Schachter (Mipinei Rabbeinu p. 201) as explaining that a Katan (a boy below the age of Bar Mitzva) and a K'tanah (a girl below the age of Bat Mitzvah) are considered to be mentally incompetent ("Lav B'nai Dei'ah Ninhu") because they are not yet psychologically balanced. For example, the Rav notes that, as parents and others who deal regularly with children are acutely aware, when a child is happy, he is thoroughly happy with no bit of sadness evident. On the other hand, when a child is sad, he is completely sad, without any hint of happiness. Rav Soloveitchik asserts that a psychologically healthy and mature individual will never be completely happy or completely sad. Even in moments of great joy and sorrow we seek to maintain our composure and not be entirely swept away by emotion. Accordingly, we can understand why Chazal refer to a Hadas whose leaves are not "balanced" as a Hadas Shoteh."

Understanding the Requirement for Hadassim Meshulashim The Rambam in Hilchot Lulav 7:1-2 outlines the basic definitions of each of the Four Minim. Interestingly, the Rambam mentions the requirement of Hadassim

Meshulashim in his initial presentation and identification of Hadassim as Anaf Eitz Avot. The Rambam writes:

"The term Pri Eitz Hadar that is mentioned in the Torah refers to an Etrog. The term Anaf Eitz Avot refers to the Hadas whose leaves covers its branch and whose three or more leaves are in one stem. If two of the leaves are even and the third leaf is above it, this is not "Avot" [as described in the Torah], rather it is a Hadas Shoteh."

In contrast, the Rambam addresses all of the other details regarding Hadassim considerably later in Hilchot Lulav (8:5) Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik (cited in Reshimot Shiurim to Masechet Sukkah p. 154) quotes his illustrious grandfather Rav Chaim Soloveitchik in explaining why the Rambam presents the requirement of Meshulash separate from all the other Halachot regarding Hadassim. Rav Chaim asserted that a Hadas that is not Meshulash is not merely not an invalid Hadas, it is simply not a Hadas. A Hadas, for example, that has more blackberries on it than leaves is an invalid Hadas, whereas a Hadas that is not Meshulash is regarded a different species – a Hadas Shoteh. This explains why the Rambam presents the issue of Hadassim Meshulashim in his initial description of Hadassim and separate from the other Halachot concerning Hadassim. The requirement for Hadassim Meshulashim reflects of the basic identity of the Hadassim and is not a detail that can be saved for later discussion. Rav Herschel Reichman (in his notes to his aforementioned Reshimot Shiurim) explains that even though a Hadas Shoteh and a Hadas Meshulash grow in the same bush, nevertheless they are considered to be different species regarding the Halachot of the Yom Tov of Sukkot. Rav Reichman adds that even though a Hadas Shoteh and Hadas Meshulash are not considered to be separate species regarding the Halachot of Kilayim (the prohibition to plant different species together), nevertheless a Hadas Shoteh is regarded as a different species regarding of Sukkot. Rav Chaim's assertion has at least two practical ramifications. First is that a Hadas Shoteh is unacceptable on all seven days of Sukkot. Indeed, the Meiri writes (Sukkah 29b) that a Hadas Shoteh is unacceptable all seven days of Sukkot "since it is not a Hadas". Many disqualifications in the Four Minim are acceptable on the last six last of Sukkot (in Eretz Yisrael and the last five days in Chutz La'aretz) such as an Etrog that has a small piece of it that is missing (Chaseir). An Etrog that is Chaseir is acceptable on the last days of Sukkot because even though an Etrog Chaseir is an Etrog with a P'sul (disqualification), it is still defined as an Etrog. On the other hand, a Hadas Shoteh is not considered a Hadas and is thus unacceptable even on the last days of Sukkot. Just as one cannot take a pear instead of an Etrog even on the last days of Sukkot, so too one cannot take a Hadas Shoteh even on the last days of Sukkot. The reason for the leniencies on the last days of Sukkot is because the requirement to take the Four Minim during those days is merely rabbinic in nature. A second ramification is that a Hadas Shoteh is unacceptable even "B'sha'at Hadchak" (a case of pressing need). Indeed, the Rav (ibid) reported that his illustrious father, Rav Moshe Soloveitchik, ruled during the extremely difficult times of World War I that Hadassim that are not Meshulashim are not acceptable even during those times of deprivation. Even though the Rama (O.C. 649:6) rules that one may recite a Bracha on a Lulav HaYavesh (a desiccated Lulav), Rav Moshe felt that a Hadas that is not Meshulash is not a Hadas, unlike a Lulav HaYavesh, which is defined as a Lulav, albeit a Lulav that is disqualified. Just as one cannot take an orange instead of an Etrog even Bisha'at Hadchak, so too one cannot take a Hadas Shoteh even B'sha'at HaD'chak (also see Rama O.C. 646:4 and Mishna Brura 646:15).
Rov Meshulash The Raavad (commenting on the Rambam's Hilchot Lulav 7:2) writes that the Hadas must be "entirely Meshulash or a majority Meshulash". The Rosh (Sukkah 3:10) explains that the Raavad believes that it is best for the Hadas to be entirely Meshulash but it suffices if a majority of the Hadas is Meshulash. The Maggid Mishneh (commenting on the Rambam Hilchot Lulav 7:2) insists that the entire Hadas be Meshulash. The Shulchan Aruch (O.C. 646:5) rules in accordance with the opinion of the Raavad and the Rosh. For an analysis of the dispute between the Raavad and the Maggid Mishneh, see Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik (cited in Reshimot Shiurim to Masechet Sukkah p. 154) and Rav Yigal Ariel (Techumin 11:188-189). For a critique of the Rav's analysis, see my essay that appears in HaDorom 5760. A Hadas must minimally be three Tephachim long (Sukkah 32b). Thus the Hadas must be Meshulash along a majority of its minimum three Tephachim length. Twentieth century authorities, however, engage in a major and unresolved debate about the exact measurement of a Tephach (see the Encyclopedia Talmudit for a summary and sources of the many opinions). According to the Chazon Ish

a Tephach is 3.8 inches, it is 3.6 inches according to Rav Moshe Feinstein and the Aruch Hashulchan, and according to Rav Avraham Chaim Na'eh it is 3.2 inches. I have seen many Hadassim packages that state that these contents are a majority Meshulash according to the Shiur (measurement) of the Chazon Ish. The Chazon Ish (O.C. 146) is uncertain how to gauge whether a majority of a Hadas is Meshulash, and whether we determine it by a majority of the branch or a majority of the leaf levels. It appears to me that the straightforward reading of Mishna Brura (646:18) indicates that we determine it by the majority of the branch. In my aforementioned essay that appears in HaDaram 5760, I present an argument which seeks to prove that this is the correct approach since it is conceptually consistent with the Shulchan Aruch's ruling that it is sufficient for a majority of the branch to be Meshulash. Rav Melech Schachter (father of Rav Hershel Schachter) advises that if a Hadas is longer than the minimum three Tephachim and its bottom part that is longer than the necessary three Tephachim has leaf levels that are not Meshulash, then one should cut off that bottom portion of the Hadas. One must be certain that a Shiur of three Tephachim remain, though, and that he does not cut off the top of the Hadas as this might disqualify the Hadas (see Shulchan Aruch O.C. 646:10). What is a Hadas Meshulash? Accordingly, we see the paramount importance of taking a Hadas Meshulash. We must, however, specifically define the requirement of Meshulash. The Gemara (Sukkah 32b states that "the three leaves should be in one root". Rashi understands the Gemara literally as defining Meshulash as "three leaves that emerge from one bud". Tosafot (ad. loc. s.v. T'latah) comment on Rashi's explanation that "it is a profound stringency, as it is rare to find this". Tosafot suggest a non-literal interpretation of the Gemara (based on a parallel term that appears in Bava Kama 58a) that the three leaves being in very close proximity to each other, even if they do not emerge from one bud, is the equivalent of the three leaves "being in one root". The Rosh (Sukkah 3:8) cites Tosafot's suggestion as authoritative and without any reservations. He writes that the Hadassim are defined as Meshulashim if they are "in one circle". The Shulchan Aruch (646:3, according to the understanding of the Mishna Brura 646:10) rules in accordance with Tosafot and the Rosh. Rashi's definition is not even mentioned by the Shulchan Aruch or its major commentaries as worthwhile accommodating even by the most pious individuals. Tosafot's argument bothers my Talmidim, as it seems that they are merely interpreting the Halacha to suit their convenience. I respond that the Torah is by definition practical and "doable", as is specifically stated in D'varim (30:14) "the matter is very near to you in your mouth and your heart to perform it". The Torah must be possible to implement. If an interpretation of the Tanach or Gemara makes a Halacha nearly impossible to implement in practice, Chazal consider the possibility that the interpretation is incorrect. Indeed, the Gemara (Sukkah 32b) cites Rava's criticizing a stringent ruling that Rabi Tarfon issued in the context of Hadassim Meshulashim, saying that Rabi Tarfon's ruling makes it nearly impossible to fulfill the Mitzva of Hadassim. Tosafot, in turn, criticize Rashi's interpretation in a similar manner. We should note that it seems that the far-reaching leniencies regarding Hadassim Meshulashim that Rama (O.C. 646:3) cites, should be understood in light of this understanding of Tosafot. We must emphasize, though, that Tosafot have a textual basis for their lenient approach and that they did not contrive an interpretation with no basis in the text of the Gemara. Orthodox Judaism utterly rejects the notion that "where there is a rabbinic will, there is a rabbinic way" is heresy (see Rashi, Yoma 40b s.v. Al Titnu Makom La'tz'dukkim). It also seems to be that the Shulchan Aruch codifies the opinion of the Raavad that a majority of the branch being Meshulash suffices because it is difficult to find enough Haddasim that are completely Meshulashim to satisfy the needs of an entire community. Indeed, Rav Yigal Ariel (Techumin 11:177) reports that in his experience supervising the marketing of Hadassim that are grown in the area of the Golan Heights, he finds that after examining hundreds of thousands of Hadassim that only twenty percent of Hadassim are entirely Meshulash, even allowing for minor imperfections in the Hadassim.

Practical Implementation of this Halacha The question remains how to practically implement the requirement that the three Hadassim must be "in one circle". Finding a Hadas whose three leaves are perfectly aligned for the entire length of three Tephachim in accordance with the Shiur of the Chazon Ish, is a very difficult task, as many know from experience. Indeed, I heard Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik state that it took his grandfather Rav Chaim Soloveitchik many hours to find Hadassim that were Meshulashim according to his standards. Rav Yigal Ariel (Techumin 11:177) reports that

in his experience he finds that only a tiny percentage of Hadassim are "perfect" and meet the highest standards. As we stated earlier, this standard cannot be what the Torah expects from every Jew, as it is nearly impossible to implement (though perhaps with genetic manipulation it is possible to achieve – the question remains whether the Torah requires us to engage in such "heroics" in order to fulfill the most stringent standard). A somewhat more practical standard is cited in the name of the Chazon Ish by Rav Shmuel Graineman (Chiddushim U'biurim Sukkah number 5). He considers a Hadas as Meshulash as long as the bases of the three leaves meet at some line, even if there are slight differences between the levels of bases. Pictures and diagrams to make this point clear appear in Rav Yechiel Michel Stern's Halachot of the Four Species p.111. Rav Graineman adds that the Chazon Ish clarifies that he does not consider this to be the absolute baseline Shiur, but that this approach is definitely acceptable beyond any question. Rav Yigal Ariel adds that the basic standard appears to be that as long as the leaves do not blatantly deviate from their row, the Hadas is considered to be Meshulash. It seems to me that this matter probably depends on how close one must examine the Hadassim to insure that they are Meshulashim. Indeed, Rav Yosef Adler reports that Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik examined Etrogim at arm's length. I have heard that was also the practice of Rav Moshe Feinstein. Rav Ariel's assertion is especially convincing if Halacha only requires an examination from an arm's length to determine that the Hadassim are Meshulashim. One should consult with his Rav to determine if a Hadas that is Safek Meshulash (doubtful if it is Meshulash) is acceptable on the last six days of Sukkot when the obligation to take Lulav is merely rabbinic in nature

Conclusion Today it is very common to purchase packaged Hadassim that have been inspected by competent rabbinic authorities. The obvious advantage of this system is that it insures that the Hadassim one purchases are Kosher, as is not simple for a non-expert to determine the Kashrut of a Hadas. It is similar to other relatively recently introduced practices such as meat and poultry that are soaked and salted before purchase and packaged romaine lettuce that is inspected under rabbinical supervision for bugs. These recent innovations enable a larger circle of individuals to properly observe the Halacha. A disadvantage, though, is that it eliminates opportunities for parents and teachers to transmit the hands-on skills necessary for Torah observance to the next generation. It also eliminates a bit of the personal and emotional connection to the Mitzvot we observe by reducing the time that is necessary to invest to insure proper Halachic observance. However, it seems that the advantages of the new system outweigh the disadvantages as we have seen that it is both vital and challenging to insure that one takes Hadassim that are authentically Meshulashim. Of course, one must ascertain that the Hadassim have indeed been inspected by competent rabbinic authority.

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By RABBI DONIEL NEUSTADT
 Rav of Young Israel in Cleveland Heights. A discussion of Halachic topics.
 For final rulings, consult your Rav

KOSHER SCHACH: LAWS and CUSTOMS

The succah, the temporary structure in which we dwell during the Yom Tov of Succos, gets its name from the word schach,(1) the flimsy covering which is placed over the frame or the walls of the succah to protect it from the sun. By definition, a succah may not be a diras kevah, a permanent structure like a house or even a shed; it must be a temporary home. The

schach, therefore, may not be a solid roof or a ceiling.(2) Indeed, even the impermanent material used for schach should not be so thick that it would totally block rain from entering the succah.(3)

There are some basic laws which govern the type of material which can be used for schach and the manner in which it may be placed on the succah.

The following is a digest of the basic rules that govern kosher schach:

1. Only a natural plant substance that originally grew from the ground, but is no longer attached to the ground - such as thin slats of wood(4), loose branches, bamboo or uprooted reeds or stalks - may be used for schach. Schach cannot be made out of synthetic materials such as nylon, or out of non-plant materials such as metal or glass.(5)

2. Schach may not be made from any item which could possibly be mekabel tumah, become ritually impure. Thus anything which qualifies halachically as a "vessel," whether whole or broken, may not be used for schach.(6) In addition, processed substances, such as wads of cotton or strips of canvas, are also disqualified, since the processing changes their natural appearance and they no longer resemble the plant from which they were processed.(7)

3. While schach does not need to be placed on the succah specifically l'shem mitzvas succah, it does need to be specifically placed l'shem tzeil, for the sake of creating shade in the succah. If, for instance, the schach was previously installed for decorative purposes, or to insure privacy, it is not valid and must be replaced l'shem tzeil.(8)

QUESTION: Is there an halachic objection to using a succah with a metal frame?

DISCUSSION: Yes. Although it is permissible to use a metal frame to support the walls of a succah,(9) placing schach directly on the metal frame is problematic because we follow the opinion of some Rishonim who maintain that any object which directly supports the schach must also be made from materials which are kosher for schach.(10) Since kosher schach cannot be made from metal, l'chatchilah one may not place schach directly on top of a metal-frame succah. B'dieved, however, in a case where only a metal-frame succah is available, it is permitted to use this type of succah.(11)

QUESTION: May one use a metal-frame succah l'chatchilah if wood strips are placed over the metal frame and the schach is placed on the wood?

DISCUSSION: Some poskim permit using a metal-frame succah if the schach does not lie directly on the metal, since the schach is no longer touching the metal and being supported by it, but rather by the wood which is directly under it.(12) But other poskim are hesitant about this leniency, since the schach is really being supported by the metal frame, and the wood serves merely as a barrier between the frame and the schach. According to these poskim, the only way to use a metal-frame succah is to use the wood strips in a way that they become the main support for the schach. For example, by placing heavier wooden strips diagonally across the top of the frame and putting the schach on top of the diagonal strips, the wooden strips become the support for the schach rather than the metal frames.(13)

QUESTION: In recent years, specially designed bamboo schach mats have become popular. Is there any halachic objection to using a bamboo mat?

DISCUSSION: While some contemporary poskim are hesitant about permitting bamboo mats for schach altogether(14), and others are leery about introducing non-traditional forms of schach,(15) the majority of poskim(16) agree that there is no halachic reason to prohibit using mats for schach(17) and their use has become wide-spread. The poskim do require, however, that the threads which bind the bamboo rods together be made from material which is kosher for schach, since these threads are considered as "supports" of the schach.(18) Thus the mats should not be woven with nylon or any other synthetic threads, as those materials may not be used for schach. The acceptable mats are woven with unprocessed substances, such as flax strands or reeds. If these are difficult to obtain, some poskim permit using mats which were woven with processed cotton threads as well.(19)

QUESTION: In the face of an approaching storm, is it permitted to nail or tie the schach down to the walls or the frame of the succah?

DISCUSSION: It is permitted to tie the schach down to the walls or the frame of the succah with any string or rope that is available. Although we previously stated that schach supports must also be made l'chatchilah from materials which are kosher for schach, in this case, the rope or string is not considered as support, since under normal weather conditions the schach will remain intact without being tied down.(20)

However, to nail the schach down is not permitted. As explained earlier, a succah must be a temporary structure. When schach is nailed down, especially if it is nailed down so well that it blocks the rain from entering the succah, the succah takes on the character of a permanent structure. Such a succah is not valid, even b'dieved.(21)

QUESTION: Is it permitted to place the schach on the frame before the walls of the succah are erected?

DISCUSSION: No. The succah walls must be put up before the schach is placed upon them.(22) As explained earlier, schach must be placed on the succah l'shem tzeil, for the sake of providing shade. If the walls are not up and there is no structure, the schach's placement does not "create shade."

According to many poskim, schach that was placed on the frame before the walls were put up is invalid even b'dieved and must be removed and replaced.(23)

QUESTION: Does it make any difference who puts the schach on the succah?

DISCUSSION: The basic halachah permits any person - male or female, adult or minor, Jew or non-Jew - to put the schach on the succah as long as it is placed either l'shem mitzvah or l'shem tzeil.(24) Nevertheless, l'chatchilah it is preferable to be stringent and allow only an adult Jewish male to place the schach over the succah.(25)

QUESTION: If it rains during Chol ha-Moed, can one fulfill the mitzvah of succah by sitting in the succah underneath a hand-held umbrella?

DISCUSSION: The poskim agree that it is permitted to do so, even if the umbrella is held at a height of over ten tefachim.(26) Sitting under a hand-held umbrella - as opposed to a patio umbrella which is built into and supported by a table - is still considered as if one is sitting directly under the schach since a regular umbrella is not a stationary, fixed obstruction like a table umbrella. An umbrella moves with every movement of the hand that is holding it and hence cannot be considered a real obstruction. Indeed, it is reported that the Brisker Rav actually sat under an umbrella in his succah.(27)

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FOTNOTES: 1 Rashi, Succah 2a. 2 Tosfos, Succah 2a (s.v. ki). 3 Mishnah Berurah 631:5-6. 4 While the basic halachah permits using planks of wood as wide as 14 inches for schach, it has become customary not to use wood strips which are wider than 3.5 inches; see Mishnah Berurah 629:49, Tzitz Eliezer 15:28 and miluim to ha-Sukah ha-Shalem 8:49.5 O.C. 629:1. 6 O.C. 629:2. 7 Mishnah Berurah 629:12-13. Processed material is kosher for schach min ha-Torah but the Rabbis disallowed its usage due to its changed appearance. 8 Mishnah Berurah 635:1. 9 Care must be taken, however, that the canvas or other material be firmly attached to the frame so that the walls are sturdy enough not to flap around in normal weather. 10 In addition to this opinion, there is another opinion which maintains that even an object which does not directly support the schach, but supports the support of the Schach, must also be made from material which could be kosher Schach. Although Chazon Ish (O.C. 143:3) rules in accordance with this view, Shulchan Aruch O.C. 629:8 and the majority of the poskim do not accept this stringency, and the accepted custom is to be lenient; see Chelkas Yaakov 3:127, Minchas Shelomo 2:55 and Moadim u'Zmanim 1:82. 11 Mishnah Berurah 629:22; 630:58. See also Chazon Ish 143:3 and Minchas Yitzchak 4:45. 12 Based on Bikurei Yaakov 629:9; see Mikroei Kodesh, Succos 1:21. 13 Harav S.Z. Auerbach (Minchas Shelomo 2:55). See Mikroei Kodesh, ibid. 14 Harav Y.S. Elyashiv (quoted in Az Nidberu 2:66 and 12:35). His objection is based on a very strict interpretation of gezeiras tikrah, the rabbinic decree which includes the prohibition against using small pieces of wood which are nailed together for schach, since it appears as if a permanent roof is being placed on the succah. In his opinion, a woven bamboo mat is included in gezeiras tikrah, since here, too, small pieces of bamboo are woven together to create a large mat. See also Tzitz Eliezer 10:29. 15 Chelkas Yaakov 1:187. 16 Harav S.Z. Auerbach (Succah ha-Shalem #7); Shevet ha-Levi 6:74; Az Nidberu 2:61;12:35; Kinyan Torah 4:71. 17 In their opinion, a soft, porous mat which is easily folded or rolled does not resemble a permanent roof at all and is not included in gezeiras tikrah. 18 See Igros Moshe O.C. 1:177 who prohibits using venetian blinds that were made out of wooden slats and are held together by woven material. 19 This is because processed cotton is only invalid for schach miderabanon (because of the lack of resemblance to the plant), and in this case, when it is only being used as a support for the schach it may be permitted altogether; Harav S.Z. Auerbach (ha-Succah ha-Shalem #7); Harav S. Wosner (Kovirtz mi-Beis Levi, vol. 4, pg. 21). 20 See Shevet ha-Levi 6:74 and B'tzeil ha-Chachmah 5:44. 21 Sha'ar ha-Tziyun 633:6 and Aruch ha-Shulchan 629:32. See also ha-Elef Lecha Shelomo 366, 22 Rama O.C. 635:1. 23 Mishnah Berurah 635:10. See Aruch ha-Shulchan 635:5. 24 O.C. 635:1. See Avnei Nezer O.C. 475. 25 Based on Mishnah Berurah 14:4 and 649:14. See Bikurei Yaakov 635:2 and Kaf ha-Chayim 8. 26 Harav S.Z. Auerbach (Halichos Shelomo 2:8-20). See also Sheorim Metzuyanim B'halachah 135:5 and Nefesh Chayah O.C. 629. 27 Ha-Succah ha-Shalem, miluim, 13:4.

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EREV SUCCOS

14 TISHREI, FRIDAY, OCT. 10

Usual Shachris and Mincha services; no Tachanun but Lamenatzayach is said. We conduct ourselves as we do every Erev Yom Tov: we bathe, (many immerse themselves in a Mikveh), and we make our necessary preparations in honor of the Yom Tov and Shabbos. We light candles in the Succah 20 minutes before sunset and the Brachos iLehadlik Ner Shel Shabbos V'yom Tov and iShehecheyanu are said.

FIRST DAY SUCCOS THE HOLY SHABBOS

15 TISHREI, FRI. EVENING, OCT. 10

WELCOMING THE SHABBOS

Nusach Ashkenaz begins with iMizmor Shir Leyom Hashabbosî and Hashem Malach, followed by Mourner's Kaddish (neither Lechu Neranana nor Bameh Madlikin is said). (Since there are many variant customs among those who follow Nusach Sefard, each congregation must follow its own Minhag in these matters.)

MAARIV

Borchu...; Ufros...; Veshamru...; Vayedaber...; Half-Kaddish; Shemonah Esrei of Yom Tov; with insertions for Shabbos including iEs Yom HaShabbos Hazeh Ves yom Chag Hasuccos Hazeh Zman Simchusainu and Mekadesh Hashabbos ViYisroel Vi hazmanim. After Shemonah Esrei: Vayechulu and iMagen Avosî concluding only with Mekadesh Hashabbos; Kaddish Tiskabel. (During the holiday of Succos, it is customary not to make Kiddush or Havdalah in the Shul; the same holds true for Shabbos Chol HaMoed and for Shmini Atzeres. However, if there is a Succah by the Shul, then the Chazzan makes Kiddush and Havdalah there.) Aleinu; Ledovid Ori; Mourner's Kaddish; Adon Olam.

We say Ushpizin in the Succah. We may not make Kiddush on the first two nights before the appearance of the stars. Kiddush for Yom Tov with insertions for Shabbos. We begin with Yom Hashishi Vayachulu and continue with Borei Pri Hagafen, Asher Bochar, Leishev Basuccah; before making the Bracha Shehecheyanu.

On the first two nights one is obligated to eat in the Succah. Even if one suffers distress as a consequence of being in the Succah, or if it rains, one should eat at least an olive's size of bread in the Succah (however one should not make the Bracha iLeishev Basuccahî if it is raining). On the other nights, and during the days, anyone who suffers distress from rain or from any physical condition or malady is exempt from staying in the Succah.

(The entire seven days of Succos, one should eat, drink, and spend his free time in the Succah. Snacks, such as a quantity of bread up to the size of an egg, or fruit of any quantity, need not be eaten in the Succah. One who strives, out of his dedication to the Mitzvah, to do all of his eating and drinking in the Succah will be rewarded [especially if all of his meals with family and friend, are eaten in a Succah]. In the colder climates, one is exempt from sleeping in the Succah.)

(When one does not make Kiddush he should make the Bracha iLeishev Basuccahî after iHamotzi, and he should intend that this Bracha apply to all of his activities in the Succah until the next meal.)

15 TISHREI, SHABBOS MORNING, OCT. 11

SHACHRIS

The customary service for a Shabbos and Yom Tov: Psukei Dazimra; Nishmas; Birkas Yozer; Hakol Yoducha; Kel Adon; Ahava Rabba; Shema; Shemonah Esrei of Yom Tov with all insertions for Shabbos; the Chazzan's Repetition; complete Hallel; One should be particularly careful not to skip or read any word in Hallel incorrectly (see Mishna Brurah Siman 488:2,3 and Shaar Hatzion there.) Kaddish Tiskabel (we do not take Lulav and Esrog today); Ain Kamocha; open Aron; (we do not say 13 Middos on Shabbos); we take out two Sifrei Torah; Brich Shmey; Shema Yisroel; Echod; Gadlu; Al Hakol; Veyazor Vayagon. There are seven Aliyahs in the first Torah from Parshas Emor-Shor Oh Chesev Levit. 22:26-23:44; we place the second Torah next to the first and say a Half-Kaddish over both Torahs; Mafzir reads in second Torah Parshas Pinchas, Numbers 29:12-16; the Haftarah is read from Zechariah 14:1-21; Brachos after the Haftarah, with mention of both Shabbos and Yom Tov in the middle, and with Mekadesh Hashabbos Veyisrael Vehazmanim as the close; Yekum Purkan (no Kah Keili); Ashrei; Yehailu; return the Sifrei Torah to the Aron HaKodesh.

MUSSAF

Shemonah Esrei of Yom Tov Mussaf - iUmipnei Chataenu; we mention Shabbos at all the appropriate places; the additional offerings mentioned are Uveyom Hashabbos and Uvachmisha Asari; Chazzan's Repetition; Kedushah with Adir Adiranu; Nesias Kapaim - the Priestly Blessing is done as on the first day of Rosh HaShonah; Hoshana: iOm Nezurahî (We do not take out a Sefer Torah, nor do we march around the Shul. However the Aron HaKodesh is opened); (Some have the custom of saying the Hoshanas, whether on a weekday or a Shabbos, immediately after Hallel); Kaddish Tiskabel; Ein Kaleikanu; Aleinu; Anim Zmiros; Shir Shel Yom (Psalm of the Day); Ledovid Ori; Mourner's Kaddish; Adon Olam.

MINCHA

Ashrei; Uva Letzion; Half-Kaddish; iVaani Sfilasî; Torah Reading: three Aliyahs in V'zos HaBracha (no Half-Kaddish after Torah Reading); Yehailu; Half-Kaddish; Shemonah Esrei of Yom Tov with insertions for Shabbos; Chazzan's Repetition; (we do not say Tzidkascha Tzedek); Kaddish Tiskabel; Aleinu; Mourner's Kaddish. One should advise women who have not yet said Havdalah in Maariv to say iBaruch Hamavdil Bein Kodesh Lekodeshî before lighting candles or doing some other type of activity that is permitted on Yom Tov but is forbidden on Shabbos.

SECOND DAY SUCCOS

16 TISHREI, MOTZIE SHABBOS, OCT. 11

DEPARTURE OF SHABBOS

(We delay lighting candles and doing any preparations for the second day of Yom Tov until 72 minutes after sunset (under extenuating circumstances, 60 minutes will suffice). At candle-lighting we make the Brachos iLehadlik Ner Shel Yom Tov and iShehecheyanu.

MAARIV

In Yom Tov fashion Barchu...; Ufros...; Vayedaber...; Half-Kaddish; Shemonah Esrei of Yom Tov; We add iVatodiyanu to mark the end of Shabbos. Kaddish Tiskabel; Aleinu; Ledovid Ori; Mourner's Kaddish; Adon Olam; Kiddush in the Succah: Borei Pri Hagafen; Asher Buchar; Boirei Mioray Ha'aysh; Hamavdil Bein Kodesh Lekodesh; and Shehecheyanu; and Leishev Basuccah. (Some say that on the second night the Bracha iShehecheyanu should follow iLeishev Basuccahî the same as last night.)

16 TISHREI, SUN. MORNING, OCT. 12

In the morning, we can make the Bracha over the Four Species from sunrise on (in extenuating circumstances, from when the sky begins to brighten). The Bracha over the Four Species is: iVetzivanu Al Natilas Lulavî and on the first day iShehecheyanu. The Brachos are made with the Esrog held upside down (the pitum facing down) so that the Mitzvah is first performed in its proper manner after the Bracha, when the Esrog is held the right way (with the pitum facing up). One holds the Esrog in the left hand, and the Lulav, with the other species, in the right hand, with the back of the Lulav's spine facing the person holding it. (Some have the custom to take only the Lulav and its species in the right hand before the Bracha, and then to take the Esrog in the left hand after the Bracha, and then to bring both hands together to perform the Mitzvah.) When the Four Species are held together properly, they are [according to Nusach Ashkenaz], shaken three times back and forth in front of the person [who is facing East], three times to his right, three times behind him, three times to his left, three times above, and three times downward.

SHACHRIS

In the usual Yom Tov fashion: Morning Brachos; Psukei D'zimra; Nishmas; Hameir Laiaetz; Shema and its Brachos; Shemonah Esrei of Yom Tov; the Chazzan's Repetition; Lulav; complete Hallel; (we hold the Four Species during the recitation of Hallel and shake them, in the manner prescribed above, [according to Nusach Ashkenaz] during every iHoduî and during the two iAna Hashem Hoshiah Naî, and afterwards, as he says the last iHoduî. The Chazzan shakes them only at the first iHoduî at iYomar Naî and at both iAna Hashem Hoshiah Naî, and afterwards, as he says the last iHoduî. After Hallel, Kaddish Tiskabel (some have the custom to say the Hoshanos immediately after Hallel and before the Kaddish Tiskabel);

Ain Kamocha; open Aron; two Sifrei Torah are removed from the Aron HaKodesh, 13 Middos followed by the special Ribono Shel Olam for Yom Tov; Brich Shmey; Shema Yisroel; Echod; Gadlu; Al Hakol; Veyazor Veyagan; There are five Aliyahs in the same parsha as yesterday (Levit. 22:26-23:44); we place the second Torah next to the first and say a Half-Kaddish over both Torahs; Mafzir in second Torah, same as yesterday, Parshas Pinchas - Numbers 29:12-16; the Haftarah is read from Kings I 8:2-21. Brachos for Yom Tov after the Haftarah; Kah Keili; Ashrei; Yehailu; return the Sifrei Torah to the Aron HaKodesh.

MUSSAF

Half-Kaddish; Shemonah Esrei of Yom Tov Mussaf; the Chazzan's Repetition; Nesias Kapaim - the Priestly Blessing (Ribono Shel Olam and Yehi Razon); after the Chazzan's Repetition; we say the Hoshana: Lemaan Amitach; a member of the congregation holds a Sefer Torah on the central Bimah, while the Chazzan and the congregation march in procession around the Bimah with their Lulavim and Esrogim while saying the Hoshanos; Kaddish Tiskabel; Ein Kaleikanu; Aleinu; Anim Zmiros; Shir Shel Yom; Ledovid Ori; Mourner's Kaddish; Adon Olam.

MINCHA

Ashrei; Uva Letzion; Half-Kaddish; Shemonah Esrei of Yom Tov; the Chazzan's Repetition; Kaddish Tiskabel; Aleinu; Mourner's Kaddish.

FIRST DAY CHOL HAMOED

17 TISHREI, SUN. EVENING, OCT. 12

MAARIV

As is usual for the night following a Yom Tov: weekday Shemonah Esrei; Atah Chonantanu; Yaaleh Veyavo; Kaddish Tiskabel; Aleinu; Ledovid Ori; Mourner's Kaddish.

(If one had forgotten to say Yaaleh Veyavo and suddenly remembered before he began Modim, he can say it now, before Modim. If he had already begun Modim and then he remembered that he had forgotten to say Yaaleh Veyavo, he must return to the beginning of Ratze. If he had already stepped backward at the conclusion of the Shemonah Esrei [or even if he had only said the second: iYehiyu Laratzon Imrei Fii before moving his feet], he must repeat the Shemonah Esrei. This applies throughout the nine days of the Yomim Tovim. By Birkas HaMazon (Blessings after a meal) too, if one omitted Yaaleh Veyavo and remembered after he concluded the third Bracha, (Boneh Yerushalayim), but did not yet begin the fourth Bracha (Hakel avinu), he should say the compensatory Bracha: iAsher Nasan...i. If he had already begun the fourth Bracha, on Yom Tov he must begin again because of the omission of Yaaleh Veyavo. However, on Chol HaMoed (Intermediate Days) one does not have to repeat Birkas HaMazon if he forgot Yaaleh Veyavo.)

At home we make Havdalah only on wine (Borei Pri Hagafen and Hamavdil) in the Succah. The Bracha Leishev Basuccah is not made in Havdalah.

17 TISHREI, MON. MORNING, OCT. 13

SHACHRIS

(According to Nusach Sefard and the Vilna Gaon, one does not wear Tefillin at all during Chol HaMoed [the Intermediate Days.] Those who do wear Tefillin during Chol

HaMoed, do so without the Brachos (some have the custom to make the Brachos, but in an inaudible voice). Customary weekday order of prayer: Mizmor Lasodah is said; Yaaleh Veyavo in Shemonah Esrei; everyone, including the Chazzan removes their Tefillin before Hallel; we take the Lulav [for the manner of taking the Lulav see Shachris of the Second Day of Yom Tov]; before (with no Shehecheyanu) and during Hallel; Kaddish Tiskabel after complete Hallel; we take out one Sefer Torah and read four Aliyahs from Parshas Pinchas, Numbers 29:17-25, in the section dealing with the Additional Sacrifices of Succos; the Kohen reads Uvayom Hasheini, the Levi reads Uvayom Hashlishi, the Yisroel reads from Uvayom Hariviyi and the fourth Aliyah reads Uvayom Hasheini and Uvayom Hashlishi; Half-Kaddish; Yehailu; Ashrei; Uva Letzion; (no Lamenzatzayach); Half-Kaddish.

MUSSAF

Shemonah Esrei of Yom Tov Mussaf; the additional offerings mentioned are of Uvayom Hasheini and Uvayom Hashlishi; Chazzan's Repetition; weekday Kedushah (according to Nussach Ashkenaz); Hoshana: iEieroch Shuii (as on Yom Tov, on each of the Intermediate Days of Succos, a Sefer Torah is taken out and held by a congregant on the Bimah while the other congregants march around him with their Four Species); Kaddish Tiskabel; Aleinu; Shir Shel Yom; (Psalm of the Day); Ledovid Ori; Mourner's Kaddish.

MINCHA

Ashrei; Half-Kaddish; Shemonah Esrei with Yaaleh Veyavo; Chazzan's Repetition; Kaddish Tiskabel; Aleinu; Mourner's Kaddish.

SECOND DAY CHOL HAMOED

18 TISHREI, TUESDAY, OCT. 14

Maariv, not including Atah Chonantanu; Shachris, Lulav, Hallel and Mincha as yesterday; Torah Reading: Four Aliyahs from Parshas Pinchas, Numbers 29:20-28; Kohen Uvayom Hashlishi; Levi - Uvayom Hariviyi; Yisroel - Uvayom Hachamishi; Fourth Aliyah - Uvayom Hashlishi and Uvayom Hariviyi; Half-Kaddish; Yehailu; Ashrei; Uva Letzion; (no Lamenzatzayach); Half-Kaddish.

MUSSAF

Shemonah Esrei of Yom Tov Mussaf; the additional offerings mentioned are of Uvayom Hashlishi and Uvayom Hariviyi; Hoshana: iEven Shesia.

THIRD DAY CHOL HAMOED

19 TISHREI, WEDNESDAY, OCT. 15

Maariv, Shachris, Lulav, complete Hallel and Mincha exactly as yesterday; Torah Reading: Four Aliyahs from Parshas Pinchas, Numbers 29:23-31; Kohen - Uvayom Hariviyi; Levi - Uvayom Hachamishi; Yisroel - Uvayom Hashishi; Fourth Aliyah - Uvayom Hariviyi and Uvayom Hachamishi; Half-Kaddish; Yehailu; Ashrei; Uva Letzion; (no Lamenzatzayach); Half-Kaddish.

MUSSAF

Shemonah Esrei of Yom Tov Mussaf; the additional offerings mentioned are of Uvayom Hariviyi and Uvayom Hachamishi; Hoshana: iKayl Lemoshaosi.

FOURTH DAY CHOL HAMOED

20 TISHREI, THURS. MORNING, OCT. 16

Maariv, Shachris, Lulav, complete Hallel and Mincha exactly as yesterday; Torah Reading: Four Aliyahs from Parshas Pinchas, Numbers 29:26-34; Kohen - Uvayom Hachamishi; Levi - Uvayom Hashishi; Yisroel - Uvayom Hashviyi; Fourth Aliyah - Uvayom Hachamishi and Uvayom Hashishi; Half-Kaddish; Yehailu; Ashrei; Uva Letzion Goel; Half-Kaddish.

MUSSAF

Shemonah Esrei of Yom Tov Mussaf; the additional offerings mentioned are of Uvayom Hachamishi and Uvayom Hashishi; Hoshana: iAdon Hamoshia; Kaddish Tiskabel; Shir Shel Yom; (Psalm of the Day); Aleinu (Psalm of the Day); Ledovid Ori; Mourner's Kaddish.

HOSHANA RABBA

21 TISHREI, THURS. NIGHT, OCT. 16

MAARIV

Same as yesterday. (Many have the practice to stay awake on the night of Hoshana Rabba steeped in the study of Torah; there is also a practice to have a public recitation of the entire Chumash Devorim and the Book of Psalms (Tehillim) after midnight of Hoshana Rabba.)

21 TISHREI, FRIDAY MORNING, Oct. 17

SHACHRIS

From the perspective of its status as a Yom Tov, Hoshana Rabba is the same as any other of the Intermediate Days. However, many extra prayers are added to the service on Hoshana Rabba. The reason for this is that throughout the Yom Tov of Succos we are judged concerning the fate of our water supply. On Hoshana Rabba, the judgement is finalized. The conclusion of any period of Judgement is our last chance to influence the Divine Judgement and, therefore, it is of great importance to us. The Chazzan wears a Kittel. The custom, as on the High Holy Days, is to begin the services with the Shir Hayichud (for the sixth day); Anim Zmiros, followed by Mourner's Kaddish at the beginning of services. Then we say Adon Olam; the regular morning blessings, followed by the usual morning order; Psukei Dazimra; Mizmor Lasodah is said, followed by the Psukei Dazimra of Shabbos and Yom Tov, except for Nishmas, which is omitted; Yishtabach; Half-Kaddish. (Many say Shir Hamaalos Mimaamakim between Yishtabach and the Half-Kaddish); regular weekday Shachris: Barchu; Yozer Ohr...; Ahava Rabba; Shema; weekday Shemonah Esrei with Yaaleh Veyavo; Chazzan's Repetition; taking of the Lulav; complete Hallel; Kaddish Tiskabel; Ain Kamocha; open Aron; 13 Middos; followed by the special Ribono Shel Olam for Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur; We take out one Sefer Torah; Brich Shmey; Shema Yisroel; Echod; kadosh VaNora; Gadlu; Al Hakol; Veyazor Veyagen;

four Aliyahs from Parshas Pinchas, Numbers 29:26-34; Kohen -Uvayom Hachamishi, Levi - Uvayom Hashishi, Yisroel - Uvayom Hashviyi, fourth Aliyah - Uvayom Hashishi and Uvayom Hashviyi; Half-Kaddish; Yehailu; Ashrei; Uva Letzion; Half-Kaddish.

MUSSAF

In usual Yom Tov fashion, Shemonah Esrei of Mussaf of Yom Tov (the Additional Offerings are Uvayom Hashishi and Uvayom Hashviyi); Chazzan's Repetition; Kedushah of Naarizecha (Nusach Sefard: Keser); Adir Adirainu etc. At conclusion of Chazzan's Repetition, we take out all of the Sifrei Torah from the Aron HaKodesh and bring them to the Bimah where members of the congregation hold them while the rest of the congregation, led by the Chazzan, march around the Bimah seven times with their Lulavim and Esrogim; all of the Hoshanos for Hoshana Rabba are said; when we get to iTaaneh Emunimi we put the Four Species down and we take the special Aravos of Hoshana Rabba (the custom is to take five stems that are bound together) into our hands (anything that invalidates the Aravos of the Four Species during Succos invalidates these Aravos on Hoshana Rabba); at the end of the Hoshanos we beat the Aravos against the floor five times according to custom (some, following the custom of the Ari zil, wait until after the completion of the Kaddish after the Hoshanos before beating the Aravos); Kaddish Tiskabel; Ein Kaleikanu; Aleinu; Shir Shel Yom; Ledovid Ori; Mourner's Kaddish; Adon Olam.

We conduct ourselves as with every Erev Shabbos and Yom Tov: we bathe, (many immerse themselves in a Mikveh), and we make our necessary preparations in honor of the Yom Tov and Shabbos.

From: RabbiWein@jewishdestiny.com Sent: October 09, 2003 Subject:

Rabbi Wein's Weekly Column

THE HALACHIC SUCCAH

RABBI BEREL WEIN

All of us know that a succah should have four walls, that the walls should be the height of the succah itself and that the walls should be in close proximity to the roof - the schach. Right? Well, not really. The halacha, the tradition of the Oral Law from Sinai that governs Jewish life, has greatly modified these seemingly straightforward arrangements. The Talmud in tractate Succah derives from verses in the Torah that a succah requires only two walls plus only a small fraction of a third wall. It also states that the height of the walls need not match the height of the succah itself as long as the walls come within three "fists" of the ground, and three "fists" of the roof of the succah itself, or rise at least ten "fists" from the ground. Furthermore, the Talmud allows walls that are as much as six to eight feet away from the end of the succah roof to be used. It does so by stating that we visualize the walls as "bending" towards the succah roof and figuratively touching that roof. Thus, the halachic succah, which is "kosher" for use on Succot, is a pretty pale imitation of the "real" succah - the physical structure that we usually imagine.

One of the prime ideas behind the mitzvah of succah is that an invisible heavenly force that sustains life and limb protects Israel - in fact, all of humankind. It is not the sturdy house with its creature comforts that grants us security. The great Hillel in Avot taught us that the more one has, the greater are one's concerns and dangers. Rather, it is this flimsy, seemingly unfinished shed that is our true place of refuge. It represents the psychological and spiritual place of serenity and security that our soul seeks to find in this world. It is really the halachic, almost imaginary, succah that has sustained Israel throughout its long, difficult and challenging history. Rabbi Moshe ben Nachman (Ramban) was forced to debate a Jewish apostate, Pablo Christiani, on the merits of Judaism as opposed to Christianity. This occurred in 1263 in the court of King James I of Aragon. The apostate Jew, who was then already a rising and ambitious star among the Church's clergy in Spain, vigorously attacked Judaism and the Jews as being antiquated and stubborn by not realizing that Christianity had superseded its covenant with G-d. Rabbi Moshe ben Nachman answered that the survival of the Jewish people, after twelve centuries of uninterrupted persecution, was itself a sign that G-d's covenant with Israel had in no way been abrogated. What shall we say today, seven hundred and fifty years later? The Jewish people still live? The State of Israel is a reality? Apparently our halachic succah, flimsy as it may appear to outsiders, continues to survive and protect, but not without cost, pain and sacrifice. But there is no free succah in this life of ours.

The Israeli government is currently building a strong and realistic fence to separate us from our neighbors who wish to destroy us. The fence is a matter of continuing and disturbing controversy both within Israel and especially with our erstwhile friends and governments throughout the world. There is great debate as to whether the fence will really help our situation. It has already cost a fortune and it will cost another fortune to finish. The fence will certainly make it more difficult for terrorists to walk across our

territory; yet, no one claims that it will be a real solution to our situation and its attendant sacrifice of innocent people. I do not contend that we do not need such a fence. But I do contend that the emphasis and propaganda about it is misleading. It creates in our minds – and in the minds of the general population, a feeling of having a sturdy succah. It becomes a matter of such importance that we are willing to fight with our only major "friend" in the world about it. In reality, we ought to build a more "halachic" succah with a national consensus, a better society, and a stronger national reservoir of faith and tradition. Such a succah - ephemeral, almost invisible and spiritual as it surely is, will increase our pride, and will undoubtedly create a higher and stronger fence that our enemies will be more unlikely to breach.

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From: RABBI RISKIN'S SHABBAT SHALOM LIST
[parsha@ohrtorahstone.org.il] Sent: October 08, 2003
Shabbat Shalom: Shabbat Sukkot By Shlomo Riskin

Efrat, Israel - This magnificent three-week Festival period – Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot – may be viewed and experienced in two dimensions at the same time: the universalist, nationalist dimension, and the particularist, individual – family dimension. Rosh Hashanah is the day in which the world was born, hayom harat olam; it is when the sigh-sob truah sound of the shofar cries out against the tragedies and injustices of an imperfect world and the sharp, joyous tekiyah sound reminds us of our responsibility – and ability – to help perfect the world in the Kingship of G-d by conveying the moral message of ethical monotheism, a G-d who demands justice, compassion and peace. On Yom Kippur the Almighty declares His readiness to forgive the nation Israel of its great sins – the idolatrous golden calf, the faithless cowardice of the scouts and, on a contemporary note, the hubris and unpreparedness of the Yom Kippur War – with the vision of our Holy Temple reaching out to all of humanity, "for My house is a House of Prayer for all nations:

Sukkot is truly the climax of the season, taking us out of our egocentric, partisan homes and ordaining that we surround ourselves with fruits of the Land of Israel and live beneath a roof of universal vegetation through whose spaces we look up at the stars. The total number of bullocks sacrificed in the Holy Temple during the Sukkot Festival was 70, symbolizing the seventy nations of the world. Finally comes Shemini Atzeret, which announces the onset of the rainy season: rain, which ensures good crops and sufficient nutrition, is after all the gift of G-d to the world.

Shemini Atzeret quickly moves into the uninhibited joy of Simhat Torah, the festival of our Rejoicing in the Law, when all Torah Scrolls are taken out of the Holy Ark and become the focus of frenzied dancing not only in the Synagogues but also outside, in the streets. Thus the period ends by our literally and publicly activating what we introspectively prayed for at the outset of this most meaningful and demanding holiday season: the Torah must be taken out into the public domain, into the universal marketplace, to imbue the world with its message of "Thou shalt not murder" and "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

However, Judaism understands only too well that one dare not focus on humanity without concentrating on individuals. One cannot be a concerned universalist without hearing the cries of one's next door neighbor. One ought not rally in the streets on behalf of Rwanda while taking advantage of one's spouse; there is no macro without the micro, every "whole" is comprised of individuals, unique and inviolate "parts" ('ein bikhlah ela mah sheyeish bifrat', teaches one of the Talmudic rules of hermeneutics). Yes, it is the Jewish mission to convey the message of ethical monotheism to a world which threatens to destroy itself with nuclear explosives in the hands of fanatic terrorists; the people of the covenant must perfect the world in the Kingship of our G-d of justice, compassion and peace. But first we must perfect ourselves: not only our nation, but our community, not only our community but our family, and not only our family but our very individual selves. Indeed, we must start with our selves!

An older disciple once approached the renowned Rav Yisrael Salanter, (1800-1870) founder of the Ethicist (Mussar) Movement in Judaism, and sought permission to spread the ethicist and moralist message of the Master to the far recesses of Germany and Austria. Rav Yisrael searchingly responded: "And is the City of Salant so imbued with my teachings that you can afford to leave Lithuania? And is the street on which you live so morally inspired that you can teach in another community? And is your own family

so careful in their conduct that you can preach to other families? And what of you, yourself, my beloved disciple? Are you on such a high level of ethical integrity that no one would dare respond in derision to your teaching, that no one could say to you, "Before you ask me to remove the flint from between my teeth, you had better remove the beam from between your eyes!"...

And so Rosh Hashanah ushers in a ten-day period of Repentance and introspection. Yes, it is the time when we must be mindful of the need to perfect the world, but we must first attempt to perfect ourselves. Yes, it is necessary to re-create the world, but the greatest test of our creativity lies in our ability to re-create ourselves. Rosh Hashanah may be the day in which the world was born, but it is also the "day of judgment," when every individual passes before the Almighty to be personally evaluated and judged, when each of us must evaluate and judge him/her self from the perspective of the standards of the Divine.

Yom Kippur may be a historic and national day of Forgiveness, a day in which we invoke our Holy Temple as a "House of Prayer for all nations," but it is first and foremost a day in which the individual stands in isolation from the world in the presence of the Divine. No food, no drink, no sexual relationship – with almost the entire day to be spent in G-d's house. Each of us rids ourselves of all materialistic encumbrances, separates ourselves from physical needs and blandishments, enters a no-man's land between heaven and earth, between life and death, dons the non-leather shoes worn by the mourner, and in effect feels what its like to mourn for oneself! What will my epitaph say? What kind of a life have I led? What is the nature of the legacy that I would leave behind, were I to be taken from the world tomorrow, today? "Repent one day before you die" – and re-evaluate your life from the perspective of human mortality. This is your chance, perhaps your last one, to stand purified before the Divine."

And then comes Sukkot, the individual and his home, the person and his family. For one week leave your fancy and possibly expensive surroundings, go back to basics, spend seven days with your spouse and children in a simple nature-oriented hut. Remember that "when familial love is strong, a couple can sleep on the edge of a sword; but when familial love has gone sour, a bed of sixty miles does not provide sufficient room" (B.T. Sanhedrin 7a). Forget the televisions and videos; bring the special guests of the Bible into your simple but significant space, commune with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Aaron, Joseph and David, Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, Lea, Miriam, Deborah and Ruth. Introduce them – rather than Michael Jackson and Madonna – to your children, and sing and speak and share together. Remember – and communicate – that important is values not venues, content not coverings, inner emotions and not external appearances. And let the succah lead you to Simhat Torah to the love and joy of Torah, which will help form the kind of individuals and families who can build communities and ultimately change the world. Shabbat Shalom and Hag Sameach.

You can find Rabbi Riskin's parshiot at: www.ohrtorahstone.org.il/parsha/index.htm Ohr Torah Stone Colleges and Graduate Programs
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Subject: Corrected Kol Torah Sukkot KOL TORAH A Student Publication of the Torah Academy of Bergen County Sukkot 15-21 Tishrei 5763
October 11-17, 2003 Vol.13 No.6 The entire staff of Kol Torah wishes all of its readers a Chag Sameach, as well as a G'mar Tov.

AN ANALYSIS OF TWO ESSENTIAL SUKKAH STORIES BY RABBI CHAIM JACHTER

Introduction Occasionally Chazal seek to impart a message by relating a story. The message of a Mishnah that relates a story is often more powerful and memorable than a Mishnah that teaches only pure Halacha. The Mishnah's story is even more powerful when the characters are great sages whose words we regularly study and now have the opportunity to learn from their actions in addition to their words. In this essay we shall analyze two stories that are presented in the Mishnah towards the end of the second chapter of Masechet Sukkah. An analysis of these stories will greatly enhance our appreciation of the Mitzvah of Sukkah.

Eating a Snack Outside the Sukkah The Mishnah (Sukkah 25a) teaches that one is permitted to eat a snack ("Achilat Arai") outside the Sukkah.

The subsequent Mishnah (Sukkah 26b) relates that Rabban Yochanan ben Zakai was given a small quantity of food to taste and that he asked that the food be brought to the Sukkah for him to eat. Similarly, Rabban Gamliel was offered two dates to eat and some water to drink and he requested that these items be brought to the Sukkah for him to eat. On the other hand, when Rabi Tzadok was offered a snack to eat on Sukkot he chose to eat it outside the Sukkah in accordance with the rule articulated in the previous Mishnah. The Gemara (Sukkah 26b-27a) explains that the stories in the Mishnah teach that one has options regarding snacking outside the Sukkah. One option is to follow the baseline Halacha and eat snacks outside the Sukkah. Another legitimate and Halachically meaningful action is to be Machmir (strict) and refrain from consuming even small amounts of food outside the Sukkah. The Rambam (Hilchot Sukkah 6:6) and the Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 639:2) codify these both approaches as entirely legitimate Halachic options. It is important to note that the Halacha presents both obligatory activities and optional tasks. This is important to note as the Chumash presents two models regarding Mitzvot. One model is Moshe Rabbeinu relaying to us Hashem's command us to observe various Mitzvot. The second model is the Avot voluntarily observing Mitzvot. Rav Kook refers to these phenomena respectively as Torat Moshe and Torat Avraham. Rav Yehuda Amital once stated in a talk to alumni of Yeshivat Har Etzion that the Halacha presents us with these two models within many Mitzvot that we observe. For example, we must keep Shabbat from sunset on Friday evening until nightfall on Saturday evening. However, the Halacha also requires that we supplement Shabbat by adding Tosefet Shabbat. Although there are some basic parameters regarding the requirement of Tosefet Shabbat, every individual is essentially given the option to decide how much he should add to Shabbat. Similarly, in regards to the Mitzvah of Sukkah, there are both non-negotiable obligations and areas of options for each person to decide what is appropriate for him.

The Mishnah's Connection to Churban Bayit Sheini When studying this Mishnah with the TABC Y9 Gemara Shiur of 5763, we noticed that the characters in this Mishnah are central rabbinic characters involved in the stories surrounding the destruction of the second Beit HaMikdash (see Gittin 55b-56b). We wondered about the connection between the issue of eating snacks outside the Sukkah and Churban Bayit Sheini. I suggested that perhaps this Mishnah implicitly presents a remedy to the spiritual malaise that was responsible for Churban Bayit Sheini. Chazal (Yoma 9b) state that the sin of Sinnat Chinnam (baseless hatred) caused the destruction of the second Beit HaMikdash. The Netziv in his introduction to Sefer Bereishit elaborates on this point. He writes that the Jews of the time were very pious and assiduously studied Torah. However, they regarded anyone who differed from them in their style of Yirat Shamayim as a heretic. Our Mishnah presents a remedy to this spiritual malady as it presents two equally legitimate and viable options in the manner in which one may observe the Mitzvah of Sukkah. We do not regard either option as "too frum" (Mechzei K'yuhara) or "too liberal" or "too modern". Joshua Strobel suggested another approach to this Mishnah. He noted that the aforementioned Gemara in Gittin records that Rabi Tzadok fasted for forty years before the Churban in an effort to convince Hashem to relent and not destroy the Beit HaMikdash. He also noted that Rabban Gamliel and Rabban Yochanan ben Zakai did not fast in the manner of Rabi Tzadok. The Mishnah in Sukkah, on the other hand, presents a contrasting situation where Rabban Gamliel and Rabban Yochanan ben Zakai were strict about a matter of eating and Rabi Tzadok was lenient about a matter of eating. The Mishnah might be teaching a lesson regarding balancing our actions and emotions. Rav Yosef Adler cites Rav Yosef Soloveitchik's explanation of the Shvil Hazahav (moderate path) that the Rambam vigorously advocates in Hilchot Deot. The Rav explains that the Shvil Hazahav is not achieved by being moderate about every issue. Rather one is considered a moderate if the sum total of his actions represents a moderate path. In other words, even a moderate is sometimes aggressive and sometimes passive. One achieves the desired status of a moderate if the aggregate of his actions represents a balanced approach to life's challenges. Our Mishnah presents such a model of moderation as Rabi Tzadok who was strict in the context of fasting before Churban Bayit Sheini was lenient regarding eating a snack outside the Sukkah. On the other hand, Rabban Gamliel and Rabban Yochanan ben Zakai who were lenient regarding fasting before the Churban were strict regarding eating a snack outside the Sukkah.

The Story of Shamai and his Grandson The Mishnah (Sukkah 28a) relates a story that when Shamai's daughter-in-law gave birth to a boy, Shamai would remove part of the roof of the room of the newborn and placed Schach on the opening so that the infant would be in a Sukkah. Many Rishonim and Acharonim wonder what Shamai sought to accomplish by doing this. What could the newborn child derive from the fact that he technically was "sitting" in a Sukkah? Recall that a minor is not obligated in Mitzvot. Rather, the parents are obligated to train the child to lead a life of Torah and Mitzvot (Mitzvot) after his or her Bar or Bat Mitzvah. Accordingly, it is difficult to determine what Shamai was seeking to impart to his infant grandson. See the Otzar Meforshei HaTalmud (Sukkah 1:973) for a list of authorities who grapple with this problem and a summary of many of their approaches.

Rav Soloveitchik's Explanation of Shamai Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik (cited in Reshimot Shiurim to Masechet Sukkah p.104) cites the ceremony of Hakhel as a precedent for Shamai. The Torah (D'varim 31:12-13) commands all Jews to congregate in the Beit HaMikdash for the Hakhel ceremony during Sukkot of the post-Shemittah year. The Torah specifically commands men, women, and children to attend this magnificent event. The Ramban (ibid) understands the Gemara (Chagigah 3a) as teaching that even infants should be brought to Hakhel in order to "bring merit to those who bring them." The Rav suggests that the newborn did not benefit from his being in a Sukkah. Shamai, however, did benefit from his constructing a Sukkah for his newborn grandchild. Rav Soloveitchik's insight teaches at least two vital lessons in Torah Hashkafa (outlook). First is that Chinuch of children (and others) has the potential to benefit not only the child but also the parent. Indeed, one communal Rav stated in a talk that he delivered at the 5762 convention of the Rabbinical Council of America that the introduction of "Kiruv programs" in his Shul not only attracted previously non-observant Jews to live Torah lives but also breathed life into many peoples' otherwise moribund spiritual lives. Those who engaged in the outreach benefited as much and if not more than the people they were seeking to impact. Chazal (Makkot 10a) express this point by recording Rabi Yehuda HaNasi's observation that "I have learned much from my Rebbeim, and even more from my colleagues, but I learned the most from my students". Etan Ehrenfeld added that this Mishnah also highlights the role of a grandfather in the Chinuch of his grandchildren. Indeed, Rav Soloveitchik emphasized numerous times in his Shiurim the role of a grandfather in the Chinuch of his grandchildren and the Rav fulfilled this teaching with his grandchildren, as he stated publicly. The Rav quoted in this context the title that the Rambam (Hilchot Kriat Sh'ma 1:4) gave Yaakov Avinu – "the grandfather." Indeed, I have heard the Rav quoted as saying that the Jewish people are known as B'nai Yisrael and not B'nai Avraham or B'nai Yitzchak because Yaakov Avinu is the only one of the Avot whom we find in the Chumash who engaged in the Chinuch of his grandchildren. I believe that I once heard that the Rav explains that Yaakov Avinu is awarded the title "the grandfather" for this reason as well.

David Ginsberg, though, questioned Rav Soloveitchik's explanation of Shamai's actions. The Rambam (Hilchot Chagigah 3:6) compares the Hakhel ceremony to the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai (see Rav Menachem Leibtag's Shiur to Parashat Vayeilech, www.tanach.org, where he fully develops this point). Thus, it is appropriate to summon infants to Hakhel because Hakhel parallels the Mount Sinai experience when the entire nation, including infants, gathered to receive the Torah. Accordingly, it does not seem appropriate to extrapolate from the Hakhel experience that one should involve an infant in any other Mitzvah. One might answer that since the Mitzvah of the Sukkah commemorates Am Yisrael's residing in Sukkot during our forty-year sojourn in the desert, it is appropriate to involve an infant in the Mitzvah of Sukkah since infants also resided in Sukkot during our years in the Midbar.

Other Explanations of Shamai The Rashash (Sukkah 28a) cites the Maharshal's explanation of Shamai's actions. He explains that Shamai did not make the Sukkah for his infant grandson. Rather, Shamai had a grandson who was of an age that he could appreciate the significance of a Sukkah. This little boy, however, was still highly emotionally attached to his mother who had just given birth to another child and remained with his mother in the room when she tended to her newborn infant. Shamai made the Sukkah for the older child who was in the same room as the infant, not for the infant who could not yet appreciate the Mitzvah of Sukkah. The Rashash finds textual support in our version of the Mishnah that does not state that Shamai's daughter-in-law gave birth to a boy. Instead, it merely states that she gave birth, lending credence to the Maharshal's claim that

the older sibling was in the house simply because he wished to be with his mother who was confined to the house tending to her newborn. The sex of the newborn was irrelevant because even if it were a girl (recall that women are excused from the Mitzvah of Sukkah) Shamai would have made the Sukkah for the older sibling. My Talmidim were somewhat less than satisfied with this explanation since "Ikhar Chaser Min HaSefer", there is not much direct evidence in the Mishnah for this seemingly speculative interpretation. Etan Ehrenfeld responded, though, that the Gemara (Sukkah 28b) specifically states in connection with the Shamai story "Chisurei Mechsara," that something is missing in the text of the Mishnah that we are left to infer independently. Etan suggests that perhaps the Maharshah felt that there is "Chisurei Mechsara" about other aspects of the Shamai story that the Mishnah leaves us to infer independently. Finally, the Talmidim noted that there is no conclusive "rational" explanation for Shamai's actions. Accordingly, there is much room left for a "Chassidic" or mystical explanation that there is something so special about being in a Sukkah that even a newborn can be spiritually nurtured in that unique environment.

Conclusion In matters of secular law only the technical arguments made by judges and legal scholars are relevant. The scholars' and judges' personal behavior has no impact in the determination of the law. Thus, for example, if the nine Supreme Court justices were to sell Cuban cigars on the steps of the Supreme Court Building in Washington one afternoon, selling the cigars would not thereby be rendered a legal activity. However, seeing Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik drinking "non-Chalav Yisrael" milk in the Yeshiva University cafeteria, or scrupulously adhering to the Rambam's ruling that one wash his hands before engaging in Tefillah, or teaching women Gemara at Yeshiva University's Stern College does establish a precedent for his Talmidim regarding these matters. Similarly, the stories told about our great sages from all generations teach us volumes on how to think and conduct ourselves as Torah Jews.

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Bar-Ilan University's Parashat Hashavua Study Center
Sukkot 5763/ September 21, 2002

ETROG UNDER THE MICROSCOPE
PROF. DANIEL SPERBER
Naftal-Yaffe Dept. of Talmud

How should one examine the Arba Minim (Four Species, specifically the Etrog and Lulav)?

Anyone who has milled around in the marketplaces of Israel where Arba Minim are sold for Sukkot is well acquainted with the sight of people examining the tips of lulavs with magnifying glasses, or looking for the "pintele" (black dots) on the etrog with the same magnification. The question arises as to how meticulous one should be in examining and searching for possible blemishes when purchasing one's lulav set. With regard to aravah (willow branches) the Halakhah (Shulhan Arukh, Orah Hayyim 647.2) states: "A willow whose top has been lopped off is not permissible." The Mishnah Berurah comments on this as follows (par. 10): That is, if the tree has been lopped off, but if its leaves have been lopped off, even if they were at its top, it does not necessarily follow [that it is not permissible]. With regard to the myrtle having groups of three leaves it says: "If most of its measure is triple, it is kosher after the fact, even if it is not triple at the top" (Rema 646.5). As for the lulav, it says, (Bayit Hadash, 645; Vilna Gaon's commentary loc. cit. note 1; Mishnah Berurah, loc. cit.): "The center one [renders the lulav] invalid when most of it is split." It appears from these sources that there is no need for super-meticulous examination under a magnifying glass. However, all the posekim agree that from the outset "we are commanded to take the most select for the lulav, one whose leaves are not at all

separated" (Shulhan Arukh, Orah Hayyim 645.1, in Rema's commentary), or, "The commandment holds for the entire regulation length of the myrtle, that is be avot ("leafy trees" i.e. that its leaves cover the entire branch) (loc. cit. 646.5), etc.

What is meant by "not at all" or "entire" in these halakhot: is it what we see with the unassisted eye, or what is revealed under the magnifying glass? Do the words, "may he who is very strict be blessed," apply to those who are meticulous in their examination of the species? Or are such persons in the category of "not being rewarded for this, being nothing but commoners" (hedyot, to use the words of Hizkiya borrowed from another context, Jerusalem Talmud, Tractate Berakhot end of the second chapter, and J.T. Shabbat chapter 1. See Hagahot Maimanot on Sukkah 10.2; Rema, Orah Hayyim 639.7; also cf. Beit Yosef on the Tur, Orah Hayyim 32). Rabbi Jehiel Michal Epstein (Byelorussia, 1829-1908), in Arukh ha-Shulhan, Yoreh De'ah (published between 1898 and 1904), chapter 84.36, wrote:

It has been written in the name of learned scientists that a person who looks at vinegar through a magnifying glass, called a spectiva, will see vast numbers of crawling things. But in vinegar there is nothing to fear, since, as has been explained, the crawling things that come about afterwards (betalush) were permitted by the Torah. Indeed, I have heard that in all sorts of water, especially rainwater, there are loads of tiny organisms not visible to the naked eye. In my childhood I heard from someone from afar who had looked through a lens that magnified tens of thousands of times and seen all sorts of creatures in the water. According to this, how could we possibly drink water when these creatures are indigenous to it? But the truth is that the Torah did not forbid that which the naked eye does not see, for the Torah was not given to angels; for if it were not so, [how would we deal with the fact that] several scientists have written that the air, too, is full of tiny creatures, and when a person opens his mouth he swallows some of them, but probably it is "only air that fills their mouths" [a play on Job 35:16], but even if it be so, since the eye does not command them, they are of no consequence. But anything which the eye can see, even if in bright sunlight only and very tiny, is considered to be a sheretz (forbidden crawling things).

Perhaps he had heard of the discoveries made by Dr. Robert Koch (1843-1910), who with the aid of a microscope in 1876 first discovered anthrax germs, and regarding such things R. Epstein ruled that "if not visible to the naked eye, they are of no consequence."

This question was also addressed by Rabbi Ovadiah Yosef in his Responsa Yehaveh Da'at, par. 47. A query was sent him whether "worms ... that are visible only in a microscope, are forbidden?" His responsum, in which he typically reviews with great expertise all the literature on the subject by latter posekim, is based on remarks by the author of Hokhmat Adam (in Binat Adam, rule 38, par. 49), who rejected the view expressed in Sefer Ha-Brit (by R. Pinehas Eliyahu Horowitz of Vilna, Bruna 1793), that wine cannot become vinegar until it has bugs in it, for if one looks at vinegar with a microscope one would see that it is full of swarming bugs, and therefore it is forbidden to eat vinegar, even if it has been strained. Hokhmat Adam says that the injunction, "he shall not drink vinegar of wine" (Num. 6:3) applies only to the Nazirite, "but that means that others may ... for surely the Torah spoke only of what was visible to the eye".

Likewise, Meorei Or (Ken Tahor, Hullin 58b; 88a) says that the creepy things that are seen through the microscope in wine and flour were not of concern to the Sages at all, but only those things that could be seen by the [naked] eye, even if very small.

Tiferet Yisrael (on Avodah Zarah 2.6, Boaz sect. 3), tells of a great scholar who wished to permit eating fish with scales that could only be seen through a microscope, "and the whole world rose up against him,... and the issue subsided and was mentioned no more". The same goes for blemishes and nicks in the slaughtering knife- that those marks visible only through a microscope does not render the slaughtered animal impermissible (Ha-Me'asef, Booklet 2, par. 42, cited in Yehaveh Da'at, loc. cit.).

As for making a distinction between a magnifying glass and a microscope, it is generally accepted by many posekim that anything which is not visible to the normal eye, but can only be seen by means that significantly enhance vision, i.e., beyond average normal sight, halakhically is not considered of account, and as said there in Tiferet Yisrael: "For it is the view of the Torah that one should rely only on what can be seen by a normal human eye, without a magnifying lens."

Similarly, R. Shlomo Kluger, in Responsa Tuv Ta'am ve-Da'at (Tenina, Kuntres Aharon, par. 53), maintains that examining with a magnifying glass is irrelevant in terms of the halakhah.

In the same spirit Rabbi Joseph Mashash ruled in Responsa Mayyim Hayyim par. 259 that an etrog which has been examined and found without blemish, but that under a magnifying glass is shown to have several punctures, is strictly kosher.

According to this approach, it is doubtful that those who are so meticulous as to examine their lulavs and etrogs under a magnifying glass merit any reward for these efforts. They might even be considered unlearned, as Hizkiyah said in the Jerusalem Talmud. Therefore, some other source must be found if one wishes to substantiate the practice of examining arba minim under a magnifying glass.

From: National Council of Young Israel [YI_Torah@lb.bcentral.com] Sent: October 09, 2003 11:30 AM To: List Member Subject: Divrei Torah: Sukkot and Shemini Atzeret/Simchat Torah

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The Unity of Our People

FOUR SPECIES: FOUR TYPES OF PEOPLE

The holidays celebrated in the month of Tishrei are of comprehensive significance and when experienced in their proper spirit, we can derive from them inspiration in our service of G-d during the whole year following.

Let's take a closer look at the mitzvah of lulav and etrog. The Midrash (Vayikra Rabbah 30:12) explains that it symbolizes the unity of the Jewish people. The fulfillment of this mitzvah requires us to hold together the four different species of the date palm (lulav), the myrtle (hadas), the willow (aravot), and the citron (etrog).

These four species are noticeably different from one another. The etrog has both a pleasant taste and a pleasant fragrance, it is the fruit of the tree from which the lulav is taken. The date has a pleasant taste, but no fragrance. The myrtle has a pleasant fragrance, but no taste. And the willow has neither fragrance nor pleasant taste.

Taste symbolizes Torah study because understanding Torah gives us a concrete pleasure, similar to the sensation of experiencing a pleasing flavor. Smell symbolizes the fulfillment of mitzvot because the principal in every mitzvah (also those which are appreciated intellectually) lies in the meaning of the Hebrew word "mitzvah"—the acceptance of the yoke of Heaven; commandment meaning G-d commanded and we follow. Therefore, their observance may be less tangibly gratifying than Torah study in much the same way that smelling something is less gratifying than tasting it.

An extension of this symbolism enables us to see each of the four species as representing different types of individuals. The etrog represents a person who studies Torah and fulfills the Mitzvot. The lulav represents one who focuses mainly on studying Torah but does not perform Mitzvot with that level of excellence. The myrtle represents one who fulfills Mitzvot but is not so involved in the studying of Torah. And the willow represents a Jew who is less involved in both.

Fulfillment Depends on One's Connection With His Fellow Man The Mitzvah of the lulav and etrog demonstrates that no individual can attain fulfillment unless he is willing to go beyond himself and join together with his fellow man. Even the etrog, the species which symbolizes both the virtues of Torah study and the observance of Mitzvos, cannot be used for the Mitzvah on Sukkot, unless it is taken in hand and held together with the humble willow. By the same token, no matter how much we develop ourselves as individuals, we cannot reach our true potential without the help of others. The unity of our people as a whole is an indispensable ingredient in the growth and progress of every individual.

The concept of unity is so central to this Mitzvah that it is reflected also in the characteristics of the individual components of the Mitzvah. Our sages (Sukkah 32a) stipulate that a lulav may be used for the Mitzvah only if the leaves are bound together. The only species of myrtle that may be used for the Mitzvah is that which has successive rows of three leaves each. In each row, the three leaves must be level with each other. The species of willow used also expresses the concept of unity, since it grows in bunches (Shabbos 20a).

Growing From Our Contract With Others The motif of unity is also reflected in the etrog. Indeed, because the etrog represents a category of

people whose potential for achievement is greater than that of others, its emphasis on unity must be greater.

The etrog expresses the concept of unity by virtue of the fact that it grows on the tree for an entire calendar year (Sukkah 35a) and is exposed to all the seasonal variations and changes of climate. Not only does the etrog withstand all these influences, but it responds positively to them; each of these influences contributes to its growth.

We must learn from the etrog, and not merely tolerate people of all kinds—including those with characters and personalities very different from our own—but actually grow through contact with their divergent perspectives. As the Mishna (Avos 4:1) teaches, "Who is wise—one who learns from every man."

Stages in a Sequence

The Lubavitcher Rebbe, zt"l, explains that these expressions of unity on Sukkos are related to the motif of unity in the holidays that directly proceed it, Rosh HaShana and Yom Kippur. There is, however, one difference between the approach to unity of Sukkos and that of the Days of Awe.

During the Days of Awe, our awareness of unity stems from the unique spiritual experiences of those days during which we all step beyond our individual selves and establish contact with the fundamental G-dly spark in our souls. At the level of soul where no separation exists between a Jew and G-d, no difference exists between one Jew and another. On Rosh HaShana and Yom Kippur, we are thus able to pray together as a collective entity.

Despite the intensity of this experience, it has a drawback. Since the feeling of unity we experience on the Days of Awe stems from a level in our souls far above that of our ordinary everyday thought processes, after the holidays have passed and we return to the realm of ordinary experience, we may revert to a feeling of separation. Sukkos teaches us that we must remain unified, even on a level where a person's individual identity is taken into consideration, where one of us is an etrog and another a willow. We still stand united, bound together in one collective entity.

The sequence of the holidays is vital. The all-pervasive experience of the Days of Awe and the essential awareness of unity that they evoke prepare us for the lesson of unity taught by Sukkos. The intense spiritual service of the Days of Awe jolts us out of our self-consciousness and enables us to reorient our values so that we can relate to each of our fellow men, as we ought.

A Joyous Bond of Oneness This progression towards deeper unity reaches its peak on Simchas Torah, when the scholarly and the unlettered, the observant and the non-observant, Jews from every background and way of life, join together in exuberant dancing with the Torah scrolls. Personal differences that at other times could divide them, fade away.

While Sukkos teaches us that even as individuals we stand together as a unified people, Simchas Torah takes us even further. At this time we lose all conciseness of our individual identities: we see completely beyond ourselves. The experience of Simchas Torah is not, however, a return to the level of the Days of Awe during which we transcend our individuality through a spiritual service, linking with others above the level of ordinary experience. For on Simchas Torah, the absolute bond of togetherness is revealed within ordinary material experience in the midst of eating, drinking, and dancing.

At this festival where Jewish unity is of its main themes, let's take this opportunity to unite ourselves with other Jews through assisting the non-observant Jew and giving him the opportunity to fulfill the Mitzvah of lulav and etrog. Do it with a smile and you'll see how warm the response will be. And through intensifying our unity, we shall merit the coming of Moshiach which, as promised by the prophets, "they will be crowned by external joy" (Yeshayahu 35:10). May this take place immediately.

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