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From: owner-weeklydt@torahweb2.org on behalf of TorahWeb.org
[torahweb@torahweb.org] Sent: Wednesday, October 04, 2006 10:33 PM
To: weeklydt@torahweb2.org Subject: Rabbi Hershel Schachter - One Continuum of Jewish History

the html version of this dvar Torah is located at:
http://www.torahweb.org/torah/2006/moadim/rsch_succos.html
Rabbi Hershel Schachter

One Continuum of Jewish History

Some chassidim have the practice of leaving shul, after shacharis, each day of Succos, in order to shake their lulav in the succah before reciting Hallel. The origin of the minhag most probably was that one who had slept in the succah all night would wash his hands first thing in the morning and recite the bracha over the lulav right after sunrise. But based on

Kabalah sources there has developed a minhag that even when one has not slept in the succah, and even if it's not first thing in the morning, one should combine the two mitzvos of succah and lulav[1].

The mitzvah of succah symbolizes the survival of the Jewish people during the forty year period after leaving Egypt prior to entering Eretz Yisroel (under the leadership of Yehoshua bin Nun). By now this mitzvah has also come to represent the miraculous survival of the Jewish people through all the exiles and all the pogroms they suffered. The mere existence of our people today is really "stranger than fiction"[2] and supernatural!

On the other hand, the mitzvah of lulav represents those time periods when the Jews lived in Eretz Yisroel. The farmer would dance before Hashem thanking Him for the bounty He had blessed him with[3].

Perhaps the idea behind combining the two mitzvos of the lulav and the succah is to emphasize the idea that all of Jewish history was charted out by Hashem. There are those who feel that the many years we spent in golus were an accident of fate, and that now that we have our own Jewish medinah in Eretz Yisroel, we ought to discontinue the study of the Babylonian Talmud along with all the other seforim composed during those years of golus. They feel that we should disassociate ourselves from everything that was developed during the golus period. This is not our approach. One of the reasons given by the rabbis of the Medrash as to why Avraham Avinu was referred to by the Torah as "Avraham Haivri", and the entire Jewish nation after him are known as "ivrim" is because he came mei'ever hanahar (from the other side of the river)[4]. The rabbis did not mean this simply as a geographic description. They meant to bring out that Avraham maintained all the principles of faith he had discovered "on the other side of the river" even after Hashem gave him Eretz Yisroel.

The Talmud (Avodah Zara 5a) records a tradition that Hashem showed Adam Harishon a book that consisted of "dor dor vachachamav -each generation and its Torah scholars". In that book there was mention of Rav, Shmuel, Ravina and Rav Ashi as leading figures in the development of the Torah Shebeal Peh in Bavel (Bava Metziah 85b - 86a). Towards the end of the tochacha in parshas Bechukosi (Vayikra 26:44) we read that even when the Jews will be in golus, Hashem will not have totally despised them or totally rejected them, because of the bris (the covenant) that He had previously made with them. The Talmud (Megillah 11a) takes that passag as an allusion to the prominent leaders that Hashem had sent to guide us.

The two mitzvos of Succos - the succah and the lulav - represent the two parts of Jewish history; the years of golus and the years of living in Eretz Yisroel. We believe that all is from Hashem, and that all that Hashem does is always for the good[5]. Even during periods of hester ponim [6] it is not the case that Hashem was not watching over us! Hashem was hiding from us in such a way that we could not see His face (i.e. hester ponim), but all the while He was, so to speak, "peeking through the cracks" (see Shir Hashirim 2:9) and looking after us[7]. Hashem has guided, from behind the scenes, the history of the Jewish people, as well as the development of the Torah Shebeal Peh, in such a way that both reach successful conclusions.

[1] Based on Shalah, masechet Succah (p. 75d), referred to by the Magen Avraham (652, 3).

[2] Which is the title of an English book on Jewish history
[3] see Rambam in Morah Nevuchim (3, 43) and "Insights of Rabbi J.B. Soloveitchik", by Rabbi Saul Weiss, p. 103

[4] see Rav Soloveitchik's essay on Avraham Haivri, section 4, in "Five Droshos"
[5] see Berachos (60b) where the famous story about Rabbi Akiva is recorded.

The rabbis felt that even something that seems to us to be absolute evil, really contains something good which we can not perceive. Some have commented on the expression used in the Torah (Devarim 25:19) in connection with the mitzvah to wipe out Amalek "from under the heavens", that the connotation is that from Hashem's perspective (mai'al hashomayim) there is some good in Amalek also. And indeed the rabbis of the Talmud had a tradition (Gittin57b) that many years later, descendants of Haman (the Amaleiki) converted and learned Torah in Bnei Brak. See also Sanhedrin 96b.

[6] see Devarim 30:17-18 and 32:20

[7] see Yad Haktanah pp. 39, 242

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[innernet@gmail.com] Sent: Sunday, October 23, 2005 4:38 AM To:
innernet@innernet.org.il Subject: InnerNet - "The Joy of Sukkot"
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"THE JOY OF SUKKOT"

by Rabbi Berel Wein

* * *

The awe and introspective contemplation of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur induce a state of spiritual awakening that allows one to truly enjoy and be happy on Sukkot, the festival called "zman simcha'sainu - the time of our joy." There is a great lesson in this progression of holidays which is applicable to every facet of our lives. We are accustomed to think that joy is a spontaneous emotion, requiring no previous training, planning, or accomplishment. The holiday of Sukkot - the time of joy - instructs us otherwise. For without Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, there would not be Sukkot. Without serious preparation, sacrifices of time and wealth and effort (even deprivation and fasting), "joy" in Jewish terms is not lasting and ultimately not even meaningful.

[Without this preparation], joy becomes "a good time," "a night out," something which temporarily gives us distraction, but - like drinking seawater - never really satisfies us. So we must condition ourselves to the necessity of preparation and training if we want the experience of joy to influence us in an authentic way.

* * *

A second lesson of Sukkot is that joy is not a singular, unique emotion that is achieved in a vacuum. The holiday of Sukkot has many mitzvahs connected to it. There is the commandment regarding the sukkah (the booth constructed by Jews to eat and sleep in during the week of the holiday) itself, and there are the commandments that relate to the esrog, lulav, hadasim, and aravos (citron, palm branch, myrtle and willow which are used as part of the Sukkot ritual in the synagogue and home) - the four species of plants that are symbolic of G-d's bounty and blessing on this harvest festival. The synagogue service includes hakafos and hoshanos - the processions around the synagogue and the special poems composed for recitation during those processions.

The mitzvahs of Sukkot may be defined as joy-enhancers. They gladden and enlighten us, they make the holiday meaningful to our younger generation in a fashion that no other means of communication can approach. They provide the spiritual connection that allows our joy to be internalized and memorable, forever subject to recall and self-study.

Jewish tradition knows no other form of commemorating meaningful joy except for the connection of such potentially joyful times to Torah and the G-d of Israel. Sukkot and its wealth of mitzvahs make this point tellingly clear to us.

* * *

One of my lifetime dreams has been to celebrate the holiday of Sukkot in Jerusalem within the confines of my own sukkah. This Sukkot, my dream has been realized. On my beautiful balcony there stands a wonderful sukkah made of wood and canvas. And my sukkah is wonderfully furnished with a comfortable cot to sleep on, a spacious table for our family and guests, even a conversation nook to seat our drop-in guests and friends. But

the finest accessory to my sukkah is Jerusalem itself. I have found that the realization of many of my dreams is somehow disappointing, because reality hardly ever lives up to fantasy.

But not so when the dream is of a sukkah in Jerusalem. When a human dream is tied to a spiritual cause, to Jerusalem, to Sukkot, its actual realization never disappoints. For the mitzvah always transcends human definitions and expectations. To do a holy act, a godly deed, automatically uplifts and ennobles the one who performs. In so doing, the person is saved from the disappointment which almost always accompanies purely physical accomplishments. This is also part of the message of Sukkot and helps us understand even more clearly the joy and happiness that are an integral part of this great holiday of Sukkot.

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From: Halacha [halacha@yutorah.org] Sent: Thursday, October 05, 2006 6:52 PM Subject: Weekly Halacha Overview- Sukkot Double Issue
Succot to Go Dear Friends,

Shalom, I hope this note finds you and your family in good health. We are pleased to present to you the first segment of this year's "Shalosh Regalim-To-Go" Series.

This is an initiative started by Yeshiva last year. It is our way of inviting all to benefit from the wonderful energy of the Yeshiva's Beit Midrash. The learning this Sukkot focuses on Kohelet, the book of Tanach read on the last days of the holiday. Part of the learning focuses on a contemporary issue as seen through the context of Kohelet.

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Wishing you and your family a Chag Sameach

Byedidut, Rabbi Kenneth Brander Dean, Center for the Jewish Future Center for the Jewish Future

Eating Outside of the Sukkah BY RABBI JOSH FLUG

The Torah (Vayikra 23:42) commands us to live in a sukkah for the seven days of Sukkot. This mitzvah is not limited to eating in the sukkah. It includes many activities that one would normally perform in one's home. Nevertheless, eating in the sukkah is one of the activities that is central to this mitzvah. As such, there are specific halachot relating to what one must

eat in the sukkah and what is permissible to eat outside of the sukkah. This article will discuss the parameters of these halachot.

What Constitutes Achilat Arai?

The Mishna, Sukkah 25a, rules that one may eat a snack (achilat arai) outside of the sukkah. The Gemara, Sukkah 26a, states that the quantity of an achilat arai is the amount of food a yeshiva student eats in the morning on his way to the beit hamidrash. Tosafot, ad loc., s.v. Tarti, state that this amount is a k'beitzah (the size of an egg). [The different opinions regarding the halachic standard of k'beitzah were presented in a previous issue.] This means that it is permissible to eat less than a k'beitzah outside of the sukkah. This ruling is codified by Shulchan Aruch 639:2.

The Gemara, Yoma 79b, presents two opinions regarding eating fruit outside of the sukkah. Tosafot, op. cit., rule in accordance with the opinion that it is permissible to eat fruit outside of the sukkah, even if one eats a large amount of fruit, because the eating of fruit is always considered an achilat arai. According to Tosafot, the only food item that must be eaten in the sukkah is bread. Rabbeinu Asher, Sukkah 2:13, cites the opinion of Rabbeinu Meir (Maharam MiRutenberg) who follows the stringent opinion in the Gemara that one may not eat fruit outside of the sukkah. Rabbeinu Asher notes that Rabbeinu Meir would agree that it is permissible to eat less than a k'beitzah of fruit outside of the sukkah. Rabbeinu Asher then quotes the opinion of Rabbeinu Peretz that the leniency of eating fruit outside of the sukkah does not apply to meat, fish and cheese (meal-food items).

Shulchan Aruch, op. cit., rules that one may eat fruit outside of the sukkah. Although Shulchan Aruch does not rule explicitly regarding meat, fish and cheese, Mishna Berurah 639:13, notes that Shulchan Aruch implies that it is permissible to eat these items outside of the sukkah. Nevertheless, Mishna Berurah 693:15 presents a compromise to this discussion. He rules that if one establishes a meal with these items, he should (but is not required to) eat in the sukkah. If not, he is technically exempt from eating in the sukkah.

There is a further discussion regarding non-bread products of the five grains (wheat, barley, rye, oats and spelt). Rabbeinu Asher, op. cit., notes that even if one disagrees with Rabbeinu Peretz regarding meat, fish and cheese, one might include food items made of the five grains among the list of food items that must be eaten in the sukkah. Rabbeinu Asher's son, Rabbeinu Ya'akov, Tur, Orach Chaim 639, codifies this position, as does Shulchan Aruch, op. cit. Nevertheless, Tur notes that one is not required to eat an item of the five grains (that is not bread) in the sukkah unless it is part of an established meal. Mishna Berurah 639:15, defines established meal for these purposes as either eating with a group of people or eating a large quantity of food. Magen Avraham 639:6 (according to the understanding of R. Akiva Eger, ad loc.) disagrees (with Tur) and maintains that one may not eat more than a k'beitzah of the five grains outside of the sukkah. Mishna Berurah 639:15, does mention his opinion. [Regarding pat haba'ah b'kisinin (cakes and cookies), R. Mordechai Karmi, Ma'amar Mordechai 639:2, rules that one should recite a beracha if he eats in an established manner, even if he does not eat the quantity that would require him to recite hamotzi. This ruling is codified by Mishna Berurah 639:16.]

When does one recite a Beracha?

The Gemara, Sukkah 45b, records a dispute regarding the frequency of the beracha of Leisheiv BaSukkah. Shmuel is of the opinion that the mitzvah of yeshivat sukkah is one elongated mitzvah. Therefore, one beracha is recited at the beginning of Sukkot and one does not recite any more berachot after that first beracha. R. Yochanan is of the opinion that one recites the beracha of Leisheiv BaSukkah all seven days of Sukkot. Tosafot, ad loc., s.v. Ehad, note that R. Yochanan does not limit the frequency to once a day. Rather, according to R. Yochanan, every time one enters the sukkah to eat, drink or sleep, he recites a new beracha.

Rabbeinu Tam (cited in Mordechai, Sukkah no 5765) is of the opinion that one should only recite the beracha of Leisheiv BaSukkah upon eating a meal. All other activities are covered by the beracha that one

recites at the meal. This ruling is codified by Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 639:8.

One can question whether the ruling of Rabbeinu Tam to only recite Leisheiv BaSukkah upon eating a meal is a function of eating constituting the only activity that warrants a beracha, or whether the beracha is a function of performance of an activity that would otherwise be prohibited to perform outside of the sukkah. This seems to be the subject of a dispute between R. Ya'akov of Lisa, Derech HaChaim, Dinei Yeshivat HaSukkah, no. 16, and R. Avraham Danzig, Chayei Adam 147:13. Derech HaChaim is of the opinion that one should not recite a beracha unless he eats a k'beitzah of bread in the sukkah. He is clearly of the opinion that one only recites a beracha in a situation where it would be prohibited to eat that food item outside of the sukkah. However, Chayei Adam maintains that one may recite a beracha upon eating a k'zayit (if he is established in the sukkah). He seems to be of the opinion that the beracha is not a function of the prohibition to eat outside of the sukkah. Rather, eating is the only activity that warrants a beracha and when one eats a k'zayit, he may recite a beracha.

Mishna Berurah (639:46 and Sha'ar HaTziun 639:84) rules in accordance with the opinion of Derech HaChaim. Mishna Berurah also applies the discussions of what one is required to eat in the sukkah to the discussion of whether to recite a beracha. [See Mishna Berurah 639:13, 639:15 and 639:16. One noteworthy exception is Mishna Berurah's ruling that if one eats a small quantity of Mezonot for Kiddush on Shabbat or Yom Tov, he should recite Leisheiv BaSukkah (see Mishna Berurah 639:16).]

Other Exemptions from Eating in the Sukkah

There are certain situations where one is exempt from eating in the sukkah. The Mishna, Sukkah 25a, states that those who are traveling to perform a mitzvah are exempt from eating in the sukkah. The Gemara, Sukkah 26a, cites a Beraita that states that travelers who are not traveling for mitzvah purposes are exempt from the sukkah during the daytime but not during the nighttime hours. The Mishna also exempts the infirmed and their caretakers from eating in the sukkah.

R. Moshe Feinstein, Igrot Moshe, Orach Chaim 3:93, rules that the leniency for travelers who are not traveling for mitzvah purposes is limited to business travelers. If someone is traveling for leisure purposes, he is not exempt from eating in the sukkah.

The Mishna, Sukkah 28b, states that one is not required to eat in the sukkah if it is raining. [This exemption does not apply to the first night of Sukkot. See "Eating in the Sukkah on the First Night of Sukkot".] The Gemara, Sukkah 29a, cites a Beraita that states that one is not required to return to the sukkah after it stops raining. [Rashi, ad loc., s.v. V'yardu implies that the exemption from returning to the sukkah after it stops raining only applies if one sat down insider to start the meal. This is codified by Mishna Berurah 639:38.]

Ritva, Sukkah 29a, s.v. Tannu Rabanan, writes that one is not required to eat in the sukkah if there are rain-clouds in the sky and it appears as if it is going to rain. R. Shalom M. Schwadron, Da'at Torah, Orach Chaim 639:5, notes that most poskim reject Ritva's opinion. However, he is unsure whether one should recite a beracha if one eats in a sukkah while a storm is approaching.

Hiddur Mitzvah BY RABBI JOSH FLUG

When one performs a mitzvah, he has the option of performing the mitzvah in a manner that fulfills the minimal requirement or he can perform the mitzvah in a manner that glorifies the performance of the mitzvah. Performing a mitzvah in a glorified manner is known as hiddur mitzvah. This article will discuss the parameters of hiddur mitzvah and how hiddur mitzvah relates to the four species of Sukkot.

The Concept of Hiddur Mitzvah

The Gemara, Shabbat 133b, cites a Beraita that derives from the verse (Shemot 15:2) "zeh keli v'anveihu," this is my G-d and I will glorify him, that one should glorify G-d through the performance of mitzvot. Therefore, one should have a nice sukkah, a nice lulav, a nice shofar, nice tzitzit and a nice sefer Torah. Ra'avad (cited in Chidushei Anshei Shem, Berachot 38a, no. 2) suggests that hiddur mitzvah is a biblical concept. Ritva, Sukkah 11b s.v. V'Ee, writes that hiddur mitzvah is a rabbinic concept.

The Beraita includes on its list of items nice covers for a sefer Torah. This implies that the cases and covers used to store an item used for a mitzvah are also subject to hiddur mitzvah. Accordingly, having a nice lulav or etrog case would constitute a fulfillment of hiddur mitzvah. However, one can argue that one cannot bring a proof from the covers of a sefer Torah. Rambam, Hilchot Sefer Torah 10:10, writes that there is a special mitzvah to beautify a sefer Torah. As such, sefer Torah may be the exception to the rule. Nevertheless, the Mishna, Sukkah 45a, states that in the times of the Beit HaMikdash, the aravot for the simchat beit hasho'eiva were placed in gold vases prior to their use. This seems to indicate that there is some element of hiddur mitzvah in having a nice case for a lulav or etrog.

Hiddur mitzvah has subjective standards as well as objective standards. The requirement to have "nice" items used for the mitzvah clearly has no objective standards. There can be two sukkot that look nothing alike and the construction of both can be a fulfillment of hiddur mitzvah. Yet, there are certain aspects of hiddur mitzvah which are objectively defined. For example, according to Tosafot, Baba Kamma, 9b s.v. Ad, the size of the item is a factor in hiddur mitzvah. Regarding b'rit milah, the cutting of certain strands of flesh is a form of hiddur mitzvah (Shabbat 133b).

Hiddur Mitzvah and the Four Species

Hiddur mitzvah is particularly important regarding the mitzvah of taking the four species. The Torah (Vayikra 23:40) refers to the etrog as a p'ri eitz hadar, a beautiful fruit. The implication is that regarding the etrog, hiddur is an essential part of the mitzvah. In fact, the Gemara, Sukkah 29b, applies the requirement of hadar to all four species and therefore, certain flaws will invalidate these four species.

Beyond the inherent requirement to have species of beauty, the theme of hiddur mitzvah as an enhancement of the mitzvah is manifest in numerous ways. First, the Gemara, Sukkah 11b cites a Beraita that records a dispute between R. Yehuda and Chachamim as to whether tying the lulav, hadasim and aravot together is necessary to fulfill the mitzvah. According to R. Yehuda, it is an absolute requirement. According to Chachamim, the Gemara explains that there is no requirement, but tying them together constitutes a fulfillment of hiddur mitzvah.

[R. Eliezer of Metz, Sefer Yerei'im no. 422, notes that the implication of the Gemara is that the type of knot that one must use is one that is prohibited to tie on Yom Tov. Therefore, Sefer Yerei'im rules that one should tie the three species together with a double-knot. Sefer Yerei'im's ruling is codified by Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 651:1. This prompted R. Yosef ben David of Salonika, Beit David, Orach Chaim no. 454, to question the practice that many people have to bind the three species together using a woven lulav holder that has compartments for the hadasim and the aravot (koitscheklach). He claims that the double-knot is an objective form of hiddur mitzvah and if one does not use a double-knot, he does not fulfill the hiddur mitzvah properly. R. Eliakim Gotnow, Agurah B'Ohalecha, Orach Chaim no. 33, claims that this form of hiddur mitzvah is subjective. The goal of this hiddur is to bind the three species together which is accomplished by these lulav holders. Furthermore, the lulav holders are nicer than a standard double-knot and therefore it is preferable to use the lulav holders. Mishna Berurah 651:8, cites the opinion of Agurah B'Ohalecha, implying that one may rely on his opinion.]

Second, Rambam, Hilchot Lulav 7:7, writes that there is a fulfillment of hiddur mitzvah by increasing the number of hadasim beyond the minimum requirement of three hadasim. Rabbeinu Asher, Sukkah 3:14,

explains that there is no prohibition of bal tosf (the prohibition of adding unnecessary items to a mitzvah or adding entire mitzvot) because the additional hadasim serve a purpose in enhancing the mitzvah. Regarding increasing the number of aravot, Ran, Sukkah 17a (first paragraph), rules that it is prohibited because increasing aravot does not constitute hiddur mitzvah. [Ran is explaining the opinion of Rambam that one may not increase the number of aravot. In truth, Rambam struggled with this issue and concluded in his later years that it is permissible to increase the number of aravot. See Birkat Avraham no. 31, by R. Avraham the son of Rambam.]

Third, the Gemara, Sukkah 42a, states that one fulfills the mitzvah of taking the four species from the moment one lifts them. Nevertheless, the Gemara, Sukkah 41b, cites a Beraita that records the minhag of Anshei Yerushalayim who would hold the four species the entire day. R. Yosef D. Soloveitchik, Shiurei Maran HaGrid, Sukkah pg. 197, explains the opinion of Tosafot, Sukkah 45b, s.v. Echad, that the practice of the Anshei Yerushalayim was based on hiddur mitzvah.

Hiddur Mitzvah with Multiple Etrogim

R. Yosef D. Soloveitchik (of Brisk), Beit HaLevi 2:47, raises the following question regarding hiddur mitzvah: Suppose someone already fulfilled the mitzvah of taking the four species and later in the day he attained an etrog that was nicer than the one he used for the mitzvah. Should he repeat the mitzvah using the nicer etrog? Beit HaLevi suggests that one cannot fulfill hiddur mitzvah unless it is in the context of fulfillment of the primary obligation. Since this individual already fulfilled the mitzvah, he cannot fulfill hiddur mitzvah separately.

A similar question is posed by Beit HaLevi's son, R. Chaim Soloveitchik (cited in Mikra'ei Kodesh, Sukkot Vol. II, no. 9). Suppose someone has two etrogim. One is certainly valid but is not particularly nice and the other is very nice but is questionably valid (it may be the product of a lemon graft). Which etrog should be used first? R. Chaim asserts that one should take the etrog of questionable validity first because if one takes the one which is certainly valid, his fulfillment of the mitzvah would be complete and he would not gain by using the etrog that has more hiddur mitzvah value. However, if he takes the questionable etrog first and it is in fact valid, he will have a greater fulfillment of the mitzvah. If it is not valid, he will fulfill the mitzvah with the other etrog.

Expenditures for Hiddur Mitzvah

The Gemara, Baba Kamma 9b, states that one should add one-third in order to fulfill hiddur mitzvah. Rashi, ad loc., s.v. B'Hiddur, explains that if one has a choice of two items to be used for a mitzvah and one is nicer than the other, one should spend one-third more for the nicer item. Tosafot, ad loc., s.v. Ad, explain that one should purchase an item one-third larger than the minimum requirement. Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 656:1 quotes both opinions but sides with the opinion of Tosafot.

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From: ZeitlinShelley@aol.com Sent: Monday, October 17, 2005 4:09 PM To: ZeitlinShelley@aol.com Subject: Thoughts to Have While in the Sukkah By Rabbi Moshe Meir Weiss

Attachments: Thoughts to have While in the Sukkah - Sept 2005.doc

Thoughts to Have While in the Sukkah

By Rabbi Moshe Meir Weiss

Why do we celebrate Sukkos for seven days? After all, the Sukkah commemorates the Clouds of Glory that shielded us in the desert for a full forty years when we came out of Mitzraim. How does seven days commemorate and connect to forty years?

The Sefer Matamim answers succinctly that the seven days symbolize the seven sets of clouds that surrounded us in the Midbar. There were four

clouds encircling us on all four sides. There was another above us that protected us from the sun during the day and the frost at night. A sixth cloud was below us in order to level the ground and kill the venomous snakes and scorpions. The seventh preceded us to direct us and lead the way.

We find the theme of seven repeated often on Sukkos. Besides the seven days and seven clouds, there are the seven parts of the lulav and esrog; namely, one lulav, one esrog, three hadasim, and two aravos. There are the seven Ushpizin; Avraham, Yitzchak, Yaakov, Moshe, Aharon, Yosef and Dovid. There are seven special mitzvahs; namely the Four Species, the Sukkah, Simchas YomTov, and the Water Libation. All of these allude to the central theme of Sukkos – the commemoration of the seven Clouds of Glory that accompanied and sheltered us throughout our stay in the wilderness.

This commemoration is considered so vital that, while for most mitzvahs it is sufficient simply to have in mind that one is doing the command of Hashem, this is not good enough when it comes to the precept of Sukkah. As the Ba"ch poskens, since the Torah expressly states, "L'maan yeidun doroseichem ki baSukkos hoshavti es B'nei Yisroel – In order that your generations shall know that I sheltered B'nei Yisroel in Booths (i.e. the Clouds of Glory)," it is insufficient to merely sit under the schach with the mere thought of fulfilling G-d's will. Rather, one must actively consider Hashem's miracle of the Divine Clouds while eating in the Sukkah.

Why such an insistence on recalling this event? Furthermore, why do we commemorate specifically this miracle when, during that era, there were so many other wonders like the miraculous manna, the manna? Or, like the incredible well of Miriam which wasn't a mere well? Rather, it was a giant reservoir sufficient to quench the thirsts of three million people. Indeed, it was more like a traveling Niagara Falls following us around for forty years. Or, like the great miracle that our shoes never deteriorated? And these are naming but a few!! Why indeed do we zoom in and concentrate solely on the miracle of the clouds? The Chida answers by pointing out that the shield of the clouds was the only gift we received in the desert without first complaining. Our food and drink came only after murmuring and complaining. Therefore, they did not merit notice in future generations.

The lesson is clear. We will only attach significance and importance to that which comes about without complaints. What a contemporary lesson this is for our daily lives! How easy it is to complain in Shul! "The aliyos are not equitably distributed." "Seudah Shlishis is not to our liking." "The leining is not up to snuff." There is never any shortage of complaints. Indeed, your Shul doesn't need further donations of complaints and criticisms. It already has more than its share! If you want to stand out, make a difference and be remembered in the future! Give ideas instead of complaints! Roll up your sleeves and help instead of just offering your constructive criticism!

As an aside, if you never sweated over preparing the leining, don't shout-out your corrections with irritation. Better yet, when you stop complaining, you might even try out a compliment or two instead. Here are some examples. "I don't know how you prepared this double parsha. It would have taken me months, if I could have done it at all." "Rabbi, you've done it again! That drasha really hit home!" Don't wait to go to the Rabbi and tell him how good his pinch hitter's drasha was while he himself was away.

The Mishnah Brurah explains that since the Clouds of Glory were the first miracle that occurred as we left Mitzraim, they became the springboard to generate in us a memory of all the other miracles. Therefore, according to the saintly Chofetz Chaim, Zt"l, we should indeed commemorate and discuss, right in the Sukkah, all the many miracles that occurred in the desert. Indeed, the Gemora in Sukkah tells us that they used to hang on the schach clusters of grapes and other delicious fruits with garlands of wheat, etc. This was not only to symbolize that Sukkos is the Chag HaOsuif, the Festival of Ingathering when we thank Hashem for the bounty that we are able to gather into our homes for the winter. Rather, I believe it is also to highlight the miraculous manna that tasted like any fruit or sustaining wheat.

If you want to be adventurous, you might even hang some cosmetics on your schach since the Medrash tells us that Hashem miraculously rained down with the manna "tachshitei noshim," adornments for women. How fitting that Hashem considered Shalom Bayis so important that, in a place where there were no cosmetic shops, He miraculously sent beauty aids down from Heaven. We can point out to our families that this is really no surprise since Heaven is known as the Place where Hashem makes Peace. Like we say in our thrice-daily Shemone Esrei, "Oseh Shalom Bimromav."

Here is another vital point to ponder while enjoying the rarified and happy atmosphere of the Sukkah. When someone enters a diet center for a three-week program, he is not trying to lose all the weight in the three weeks. Rather, he is engaging in a training program to condition himself to acquire new habits and attitudes that he hopes will remain with him long after he finishes the program. Similarly, when we sit in the Sukkah contemplating that we are together with the Holy Ushpizin, under the "tzeila d'heimnusa," (the Zohar's phrase for the schach's symbolism of Hashem's Divine protection), we are very careful not to get angry, to not speak about others, or even to indulge in wasteful chitchat. Nor can we say, "It is too holy in here. Let's go inside!" for during the Sukkos festival we are charged to make the Sukkah our primary place of residence and live in it as if it were our house.

Thus, we are forced to look for fruitful activities to do in the Sukkah. Reading the daily news about the Mets and the Jets just doesn't feel right in the presence of Avraham Avinu. So, we are 'forced' to take out a sefer, study with our children, or spend meaningful time with our mate. After living this way for seven days, the hope is that, through the conditioning we had in the 'airlock' of the Sukkah, we will continue this careful behavior throughout the rest of the year.

In this vein, the Sukkah commemorates exactly our sojourn through the wilderness when Hashem put us in the great training camp of the desert where we studied Torah uninterruptedly for forty years as an intensive preparation for our entry into normal life in Eretz Yisroel. Hashem wanted that, after the practice of forty years of learning, it would become part of us and continue to be with us even after we left the Midbar. We use that same system every year on Sukkos as we explained above.

So, we have a lot to think about in the Sukkah. May we use its atmosphere wisely, and merit the blessings of a healthy and joyous Sukkos.

To receive a weekly cassette tape or CD directly from Rabbi Weiss, please send a check to Rabbi Moshe Meir Weiss, P.O. Box 140726, Staten Island, NY 10314 or contact him at RMMWSI@aol.com. Attend Rabbi Weiss's weekly shiur at the Landau Shul, Avenue L and East 9th in Flatbush, Tuesday nights at 9:30 p.m. Rabbi Weiss's Daf Yomi shiurim can be heard LIVE on Kol Haloshon at (718) 906-6400. Write to KolHaloshon@gmail.com for details.

From: innernet-owner@innernet.org.il on behalf of Heritage House [innernet@gmail.com] Sent: Tuesday, October 03, 2006 4:16 PM To: innernet@innernet.org.il Subject: InnerNet - "Meaning of the Sukkah" INNERNET MAGAZINE October 2006

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"MEANING OF THE SUKKAH"

by Rabbi Asher Meir

* * *

On the fifteenth of Tishrei the seven-day holiday of Sukkot begins. During this holiday we leave our regular dwellings and live under a thatched roof.

The word "sukkah" comes from a root meaning to cover or shelter. It refers especially to a booth that provides shade from the sun, but not protection from rain and cold. In the Torah, G-d commands us to dwell in

such a booth for the seven days of the holiday "because I sat the Children of Israel in booths when I brought them out of Egypt" (Leviticus 23:43).

Some say that the "booths" refer to the Clouds of Glory which, according to tradition, sheltered us from adversity in the desert. Others say that they refer to actual booths. In either case, the significance of these booths is that our shelter was provided for us directly by God. By sitting in these makeshift booths instead of in our elaborate houses, we show that ultimately we place our reliance in G-d -- not in ourselves. This reminds us of our forty years in the desert when we relied directly on G-d for all our basic needs such as food (the manna), water (the miraculous wells), and shelter (the booths).

While the sukkah must be made of natural materials, it may not be completely natural. It must be humanly arranged with specific intention to use its shade.

Why is the very structure that comes to remind us that our protection is in the hands of G-d invalid unless we make it ourselves?

Our dependence on G-d does not mean we are supposed to be helpless. On the contrary, we are required to actively create a proper abode for God's presence. It is exactly when we have our snug houses, yet leave them for the booths we have specially prepared, that we show that even our self-help relies ultimately on God. "If G-d does not build a house, its builders have labored in vain" (Psalms 127:1). But if the builders do not labor at all, G-d will not build the house for them.

* * *

It is significant that our dependence on G-d is not symbolized by a structure without any roof at all, but by a roof of leaves and branches which must provide some minimal level of protection -- more shade than sun. If the shelter is provided by a growing natural object, then nature is dominating us; if on the contrary we use specially-prepared materials, then we are dominating nature. By taking the middle path of arranging natural material without preparing it, the sukkah booth exemplifies our partnership with nature.

The question is how we try to transcend this natural level. When we seek a superior material shelter by sitting in our fancy dwellings, we show that we are on a higher material level than that of nature -- we are thinking, sophisticated beings. But when we seek a higher level of spiritual shelter by sitting in a sukkah of mitzvah, then we show that our unique advantage over animals is not in our cleverness -- which is an advantage in degree only -- but in our unique human spirituality.

Ideally, the thatch should not be so dense that rain cannot penetrate.

This is a level of protection approaching that of a regular dwelling, implying our reliance on our own sophistication.

* * *

Further, there is special importance to communality in the mitzvah of sukkah. The house we live in all year symbolizes privacy and separateness, but at Sukkot we leave this edifice and dwell in a temporary booth that provides much less privacy and partition between us. We are accustomed to say that on Sukkot each individual leaves his permanent dwelling and enters a temporary one; to a lesser extent, we may say that each person leaves his private dwelling and enters a communal one.

As we leave our private houses and enter our modest booths, we abandon our pretensions at self-importance and acknowledge that we are dependent on God. Then we are suddenly conscious that we are all really equal before Him.

Excerpted with permission from "Meaning in Mitzvot." Published by Achy/Feldheim - <http://www.feldheim.com>.

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From: **Rabbi Shlomo Riskin's Shabbat Shalom Parsha Column**

[Shabbat_Shalom@ohrtorahstone.org.il] on behalf of Rabbi Shlomo

Riskin's Shabbat Shalom Parsha Column

[parshat_hashavua@ohrtorahstone.org.il] Sent: Wednesday, October 04,

2006 6:57 AM To: Rabbi Shlomo Riskin's Shabbat Shalom Parsha

Column Subject: Shabbat Shalom: Sukkot by Rabbi Shlomo Riskin

Shabbat Shalom: **Sukkot By Shlomo Riskin**

Efrat, Israel – One of the most beautiful aspects of the Sukkot pageantry are the four species which we bring into our homes, our sukkot and our synagogues, and over which we recite our psalms and praise to G-d. Jewish law dictates that these four indigenous products of Israel are to be held together as we chant the blessings and wave the species: the etrog (citron), which has both taste and fragrance and therefore Midrashically symbolize those Jews who study Torah and perform good deeds, the lulav (palm branch) which has taste but not fragrance thus symbolizing the Jews learned in Torah but devoid of good deeds, the hadas (myrtle) which has fragrance without taste symbolizing those Jews with good deeds but without Torah learning and the aravah (willow) which has neither taste nor fragrance, neither Torah learning nor good deeds.

Jewish custom dictates that the latter three are actually bound up together with branches of the palm tree while the etrog is held in close proximity (it would be awkward to include the etrog in the bond). In this sense these four species become a natural continuation of the major theme of our High Holy Day prayer: "And may all Your formed beings be in awe of You, and may all Your creations bow down before You, so that they all may form a single and united bond to do Your will with a full heart." Just as all of G-d's creations must coalesce into one bond (agudah) so do these four species – representative of every kind of Jew across the Jewish spectrum – form together as one (eged).

It is especially significant that the aravah – symbolizing the Jew with neither learning nor deeds – is an integral part of the united Jewish people. There is a famous Hassidic dictum that the Hebrew word for congregation – TSiBuR - comprises three consonants, each standing for another type of Jew: TS is the first letter of tsaddik or righteous person; B stands for beinoni or the average Jew, and the R standing for the rasha or wicked Jew. A full Jewish community must consist of every stripe and every type of Jew. The Tsemah Tsedek (a 19th century leader of Habad) illumined this concept in a very beautiful way. He teaches that the Jews are Biblically compared to the stars of the heaven and the dust of the earth. Stars are a complimentary analogy since they light up a darkened sky; dust of the earth seems rather derogatory, since dust is trod upon and spat upon. The great rabbi explained however that the dust only seems to be of lesser significance. Once you dig deeply and reach into the recesses of the earth, you discover the greatest of natural resources, gold and oil. Hence the Jew who appears to be an arava has the potential to become – and may in actuality already be the truest of tsaddikim.

Those who assume a less kindly attitude towards the aravah – type Jew may very well argue that I am conveniently forgetting what we do on Hoshanah Raba, the last day of the festival of Sukkot . Do we not then remove the aravah from it's bond with the etrog, lulav and hadas, and separate it, taking it by itself. Following my earlier symbolism, might that

not suggest that we cannot afford to have the other species of plant life – or the other types of Jewish communal life – come into too close contact for too long a time with the aravah Jew. And if isolation were not enough, we then proceed to take the hapless aravah and bang it on the ground 5 times until it becomes very much smattered and wilted. How does that fit into my earlier theory?

The Sacred Zohar, based upon the symbolism first suggested by the Bible itself where it is described as the "willows near a stream" (aravei nahal Lev. 23:40), comes to the rescue of the aravah. Because of its perennial proximity to water, and because waterways generally flow in a constantly replenishing stream which provides sustenance and life, the willow is identified by our mystical tradition with G-d's loving kindness (hesed), one of the highest and most exalted of the Divine Attributes (Sefirot). The earth, which often serves as a dam and limitation to the water's generous overflow, symbolizes G-d's stern Judgement (Din or Gevurah). During the judgment period of the festivals of the Hebrew month of Tishrei, we are petitioning the Almighty to allow His loving kindness to overcome His stern judgment; indeed, it is in this spirit that we conclude our festivals with Shmini Atzeret on which we pray for G-d's life giving rain, His waters of purity and vitality. The aravah may not look, taste or smell very impressively, but for the mystical tradition it represents the zenith of the four species. And when we use it to smite the earth, we are merely acting out our desire for G-d's loving kindness to vanquish His stern judgment.

Now we can understand why the great rabbi Levi Yitzhak of Bereditchev would specifically invite the aravah Jews into his sukkah. Most people are not what they make themselves appear to be, or even how others perceive them to be. Society often takes on the external form of a masquerade party, in which – when the masks are taken off – almost everyone is surprised to see the real person under the mask. Rabbi Levi Yitzchak especially valued the aravah: for whom it could become and even for who it actually was, albeit hidden from the public eye. And even if the aravah Jew truly proved to be without learning and without deeds, Rabbi Levi Yitzhak would still have wanted him as an honored Sukkah guest "After all", he would say "everything is in comparison when I come to the true and eternal world, I myself would like a seat in the great Sukkah of Leviathan, where father Abraham makes the blessings and Moses our teacher provides the Torah classes and King David sings the songs. The keeper of the gate may very well try to refuse me admission, seeing that throughout the generations there have been many more learned than I and more pious than I. My response will then be that it is in the merit of my having invited the aravah Jew into my sukkah, I would like to have the merit of having a seat – even if it be at the very end – in the Sukkah of Leviathan.

Chag Sameach and Shabbat Shalom

From: Rav-Kook-List@googlegroups.com on behalf of Rabbi Chanan Morrison [ravkooklist@gmail.com] Sent: Wednesday, October 04, 2006 10:54 AM To: Rav Kook List
Subject: [Rav Kook List] **Rav Kook on Sukkot: All of Israel in One Sukkah**

Sukkot: All of Israel in One Sukkah

The Talmud [Sukkah 27b] makes a remarkable statement regarding the holiday of Succoth:

"For seven days ... all who belong to the people of Israel will live in "sukkot" (thatched huts) [Lev. 23:42]. This teaches that it is fitting for all of Israel to sit in one sukkah."

What does this metaphor - the entire people sitting in a single sukkah - mean?

As long as we are dominated by our faults and controlled by our defects, national consensus and unity are unattainable. However, this unfortunate state is repaired after we have experienced the holiness of Yom Kippur. When our world has been illuminated by the light of teshuvah (repentance) and the entire Jewish people has been purified from sin's defiling influence,

the soul's inner purity becomes our predominate force. Then we merit an ever-increasing harmony in the nation's diverse views and conflicting outlooks.

With the arrival of the holiday of Succoth, we absorb the light of Torah and a radiance of awe and love for truth. All viewpoints and ideas become integrated and unified. We are elevated and attain a perfect unity - a unity that spreads its holy light over all the dispersed communities of Israel. During this holy time, it is as if the entire Jewish people is sitting together in one sukkah.

"This is the very essence of the mitzvah of sukkah. One should concentrate on being part of the entire people of Israel, with profound love and peace, until it may be considered as if all of Israel dwells in one sukkah." [Likutei Halachot of R. Nathan of Nemirov]

[adapted from Mo'adei HaRe'iyah p. 96]

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From: weekly-halacha-owner@torah.org on behalf of Jeffrey Gross [jgross@torah.org] Sent: Wednesday, October 04, 2006 7:07 PM To: weekly-halacha@torah.org Subject: Weekly Halacha - Succos

WEEKLY-HALACHA FOR 5767

By Rabbi Doniel Neustadt

Rav of Young Israel in Cleveland Heights

A discussion of Halachic topics.

For final rulings, consult your Rav

SUCCOS: SHE'ALOS U'TESHUVOS

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

DISCUSSION: The succah, the temporary structure in which we dwell during the Festival of Succos, gets its name from the word schach,(1) the flimsy covering 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 keva, a permanent structure such as 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 nonpermanent material used for schach should not be so thick that it would totally block rain from entering the succah.(3)

There are two basic rules which govern the type of material that can be used for schach and the manner in which it may be placed on the succah. The following are the basic rules that govern kosher schach:

* 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)

* 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 plant substances, such as wads of cotton or strips of canvass, are also disqualified, since the processing changes their natural appearance and they no longer resemble the plant from which they were processed.(7)

While some contemporary poskim are hesitant about permitting bamboo mats for schach altogether(8) and others are leery about introducing non-traditional forms of schach,(9) the majority of poskim(10) agree that there is no halachic reason to prohibit using mats for schach(11) and their use has become widespread. The poskim do require, however, that the threads that bind the bamboo rods together be made from material which is kosher for schach, since these threads are considered as "supports" of the

schach.(12) Thus, the mats should not be woven with nylon or any other synthetic threads, as those materials may not be used for schach (see above, 5 Tishrei). 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 that were woven with processed cotton threads.(13)

QUESTION: Does the schach need to be placed on the succah l'sheim mitzvas succah?

DISCUSSION: While there is no requirement to place the schach on the succah specifically l'shem mitzvas succah, it does need to be specifically placed l'sheim tzeil, i.e., 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'sheim tzeil.(14)

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

DISCUSSION: No. The succah walls must be put up before the schach is placed upon them.(15) 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'diavad and must be removed and replaced.(16)

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 mitzvas succah or l'shem tzeil.(17) Nevertheless, l'chatchilah it is preferable to be stringent and allow only an adult Jewish male to place the schach over the succah.(18)

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

DISCUSSION: It is permitted to tie down the schach to the walls or the frame of the succah with any string or rope that is available. Although we previously stated that l'chatchilah schach supports must also be made from materials that 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.(19)

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'diavad.(20)

QUESTION: When reciting Havdalah over wine (or grape juice) in the succah, does one recite leishiv ba-succah?

DISCUSSION: The general rule is that leishiv ba-succah is recited only before a kevius seudah, a sit-down meal consisting of at least a k'beitzah (approx. 2 fl. oz.) of either bread or cake. Sitting in the succah merely to drink wine (or grape juice), even if the drinking takes place with an entire group and for a long period of time, is not considered a kevius seudah and a blessing is not recited.(21) Some poskim rule, therefore, that leishiv ba-succah is not recited over wine when it is drunk for Havdalah.(22)

Other poskim, however, make a distinction between drinking wine just for enjoyment and drinking wine in the performance of an important mitzvah such as Havdalah. In their opinion, the blessing of leishiv ba-succah is recited when wine is drunk for Havdalah, since the mitzvah of Havdalah elevates the drinking and gives it the dignity of a kevius.(23) Although either opinion may be followed as there is no prevalent custom, those who want to avoid a potentially questionable situation should make sure to eat some bread or cake immediately after Havdalah, which allows them to recite leishiv ba-succah according to all opinions.(24)

FOOTNOTES: 1 Rashi, Succah 2a. 2 Tosafos, 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. Min ha-Torah, processed material is kosher for schach but the Rabbis disallowed its usage due to its changed appearance. 8 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. 9 Chelkas Yaakov 1:187. 10 Harav S.Z. Auerbach (Ha-Succah ha-Shalem #7); Shevet ha-Levi 6:74; Az Nidberu 2:61; 12:35; Kinyan Torah 4:71. 11 In their opinion, a soft, porous mat that is easily folded or rolled does not resemble a permanent roof at all and is not included in gezeiras tikrah. 12 See Igrus Moshe O.C. 1:177 who prohibits using venetian blinds that were made out of wooden slats and are held together by woven material. 13 This is because processed cotton is invalid only mi-deRabanan for schach (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 (Koveitz mi-Beis Levi, vol. 4, pg. 21). 14 Mishnah Berurah 635:1. 15 Rama, O.C. 635:1. 16 Mishnah Berurah 635:10. See Aruch ha-Shulchan 635:5. 17 O.C. 635:1. See Avnei Nezer, O.C. 475. 18 Based on Mishnah Berurah 14:4 and 649:14. See Bikurei Yaakov 635:2 and Kaf ha-Chayim 8. 19 See Shevet ha-Levi 6:74 and B'tzeil ha-Chochmah 5:44. 20 Sha'ar ha-Tziyun 633:6 and Aruch ha-Shulchan 629:32. See also Ha-Elef Lecha Shelomo 366. 21 Mishnah Berurah 639:13. 22 Shevet ha-Levi 6:42. 23 Chazon Ish (quoted in Rivevos Efrayim 1:428) and Luach Eretz Yisrael. 24 Harav Y. Y. Kanievsky (Orchos Rabbeinu, vol. 2, pg. 228); Harav S.Z. Auerbach (Shemiras Shabbos k'Hilchasah 58:22), who recommends reciting the leishiv ba-succah before borei peri ha-gafen; see Minchas Shelomo 2:58-35 and Ma'adanei Shelomo, pg. 70. Weekly-Halacha, Copyright © 2006 by Rabbi Neustadt, Dr. Jeffrey Gross and Torah.org. The author, Rabbi Neustadt, is the principal of Yavne Teachers' College in Cleveland, Ohio. He is also the Magid Shiur of a daily Mishna Berurah class at Congregation Shomre Shabbos. The Weekly-Halacha Series is distributed L'zchus Doniel Meir ben Hinda. Weekly sponsorships are available - please mail to jgross@torah.org. The series is distributed by the Harbotzas Torah Division of Congregation Shomre Shabbos, 1801 South Taylor Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44118 HaRav Yisroel Grumer, Marah D'Asra. Torah.org: The Judaism Site <http://www.torah.org/> Project Genesis, Inc. learn@torah.org 122 Slade Avenue, Suite 250 (410) 602-1350 Baltimore, MD 21208