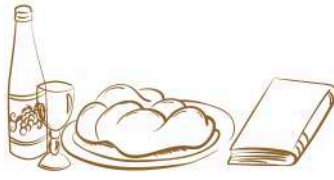


THE COMMUNITY PARSHA SHEET



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RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL
TAL Founder & Director

CREATING THE REAL JOY OF SUCCOT

What an incredible few weeks we've experienced! Just when we think it's over, we realize that it's really just beginning. As we move through this sacred time of year, we've crowned G-d as King on Rosh Hashanah, sought forgiveness on Yom Kippur, and now we arrive at the final leg of the journey—the joyous festival of Sukkot. But what is Sukkot really about, and why do we celebrate it at this time of year?

Rabbi Akiva states that the sukkah commemorates the physical booths (sukkot) that the Jewish people lived in during their 40 years in the desert. Rabbi Eliezer, on the other hand, teaches that the sukkah represents the Ananei Hakavod, the Clouds of Glory, which protected the Jewish people throughout their wanderings.

Both explanations offer deep insight into Sukkot's meaning, but they also raise a question: If Sukkot is so closely tied to the Exodus from Egypt, why don't we celebrate it in the spring, when we observe Pesach? Why sit in the sukkah now, during the fall?

The Tur (OC625) states that if we were to dwell in sukkot in the springtime—when we actually left Egypt—people might mistakenly think we're just going outside to enjoy the beautiful weather. Sitting in sukkot in the cooler fall months (but not yet in the cold of winter) makes it clear that we're doing this because G-d commanded us to. It is not for comfort, but for devotion.

The Vilna Gaon in his commentary on Shir HaShirim offers a fascinating idea.

After the sin of the golden calf, the Clouds of Glory were taken away from the Jewish people as a consequence of their actions. Moshe Rabbenu ascended to Heaven to pray for forgiveness and to receive the second set

of tablets. When Moshe descended on Yom Kippur, he brought not just the Luchot Shniot (the second tablets) but also a message of forgiveness.

But the story doesn't end there. On the day after Yom Kippur, the 11th of Tishrei, Moshe instructed the Jewish people to begin collecting materials for the Mishkan, which would house G-d's presence. For two days, they brought their donations, and on the 15th of Tishrei, they began the actual construction of the Mishkan. It was on that day—the 15th of Tishrei—that the Clouds of Glory returned. And this, the Vilna Gaon explains, is why we celebrate Sukkot in the fall: because it marks the day when G-d's presence visibly returned to the people.

Sukkot is known as Zeman Simchateinu, the time of our joy. On a simple level, this refers to the agricultural aspect of the holiday—it is Chag HaAsif, the time when farmers would gather their produce after a year of hard work. Seeing the fruits of their labour, they would naturally feel a deep sense of joy. But there's a much deeper level to this happiness.

Building on the Vilna Gaon's explanation, we can ask: Why didn't the Clouds of Glory return immediately on Yom Kippur, when the Jewish people were forgiven? Why did it take a few more days?

Rabbenu Yonah, in his Sha'arei Teshuva, explains that forgiveness alone is not enough. Even if G-d has forgiven us and removed the punishment for our sins (on Yom Kippur), that doesn't necessarily mean we have fully restored our relationship with Him. True reconciliation requires action. The Jewish people had to prove their renewed commitment to G-d by building the Mishkan, a dwelling place for His presence. Only after they united in this sacred task did the Clouds of Glory return.

This idea highlights an important aspect of Sukkot. With the sin of the golden calf, the Jewish people were divided, confused, and lacking in Emunah (faith). Different groups

HEICHAL MOSHE @ TAL
WED 16TH OCT
 Candle lighting: 5:51pm
 Mincha followed by Arvit: 5:45pm

THURS 17TH OCT - 1ST DAY SUCCOT
 Shacharit: 8:45am followed by Kiddush
 Mincha followed by Arvit: 5:40pm
 Candle lighting (latest): 6:50pm

FRI 18TH OCT - 2ND DAY SUCCOT
 Shacharit 8:45am followed by Kiddush
 Mincha followed by Arvit: 5:40pm
 Candle lighting (latest): 6:46pm

19TH OCT - SHABBAT HOL HAMOED
 Shacharit 8:45am followed by Kiddush
 Shabbat ends: 6:46pm

WED 23RD OCT - HOSHANA RABBAH
 Midnight learning followed by Shakshuka
 breakfast | Candle lighting: 5:36pm
 Mincha followed by Arvit: 5:30pm

THURS 24TH OCT - SHEMINI ASERET
 Shacharit 8:45am followed by Kiddush
 Mincha followed by Arvit and Hakafot 5:30pm
 Cocktails & Refreshments
 Candle lighting: 6:37pm

FRI 25TH OCT - SIMCHAT TORAH
 Shacharit 8:45am followed by Communal
 Lunch 1pm | Mincha followed by Arvit: 5:20pm
 Candle lighting: 5:32pm

26TH OCT - SHABBAT BERESHIT
 Shacharit 8:45am followed by Kiddush
 Motzei Shabbat: 6:33pm

*Shana Vechatima
Tava lekol Am
Yisrael*

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Shmuel Cohen

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had different ideas, and this disunity led to chaos, with some even falling into idol worship. But the return of G-d's presence required unity—a shared commitment to rebuilding their relationship with Him. The people came together, united in their passion to serve G-d, and it was this unity that brought the Clouds of Glory back.

This brings to mind an incredible story shared by Rabbi Ephraim Waxman about his wife's grandfather, a powerful example of how unity and caring for others can ripple across generations.

Rabbi Waxman's wife's grandfather escaped from Vienna with his wife and three children during the Holocaust. They ended up in France, along with thousands of other refugees, all desperate to escape the Nazis. While there, he noticed a man who looked like a sailor and approached him, asking if he was indeed a sailor. The man replied, "I'm a captain."

The grandfather asked, "Where is your ship going?" The captain responded, "We are sailing tomorrow to England."

Excitedly, he pleaded, "Can my family come with you?"

The captain answered, "Sure, but you

need a visa. You can come with as many people as you can gather, but good luck—everyone is trying to get one."

The grandfather walked for miles and eventually found a mob of people crowding around the consulate, all trying to get visas. Desperate, he prayed to Hashem for help. Suddenly, a massive thunderstorm broke out, and as people scattered, he managed to push through the crowd and reach the steps of the building. There, he found himself face-to-face with the consulate.

He told his story, and the consulate, moved by his desperation, agreed to give him the visa. The grandfather reached for his passport—only to realize he had left it with his wife, miles away. In that moment, he looked up to Heaven, overcome with despair, and fainted.

When he came to, the consulate brought him water and asked what was wrong. He began to cry again, saying, "I forgot my passport."

Amazingly, the consulate responded, "Don't worry. I will sign and stamp on my own paper and write that anyone on this paper has a visa and must be allowed entry to England. When you get back write the names of your family below."

Grateful beyond words, the grandfather left the consulate. But then, he had a realization: This paper could save not just his family, but as many Jewish people as he could find. He rushed through the streets, gathering hundreds of Jews. The next day, he showed up at the ship with an entire congregation of Jews, all with visas, and together they were saved.

We are all one family. When we come together with a shared sense of purpose, we are strong. The Clouds of Glory returned to the Jewish people not only because of their yearning to be with G-d and build a Mishkan, but also because they did it together, with unity and dedication. And when we, too, come together, there is no limit to what we can accomplish, no limit to the joy we can experience.

As we sit in the sukkah, let us remember that true strength and joy come from unity—from thinking of others and building a community that brings G-d's presence into our midst. May this Sukkot inspire us to strengthen our unity, deepen our relationship with G-d, and bring the joy of His presence into our lives for generations to come.

Chag Sameach!



RABBI DAVID BAADANI

Director - TAL Chazanut Program

שמחת בחגך... והיית אך שמח

How will we commemorate the massacre that occurred last Simchat Torah? Should we cry, or should we dance?

One of the most brutal massacres in Jewish history was the destruction of the metropolis of Betar by the Roman legions. The Jerusalem Talmud records that they slaughtered Jews until their horses were covered in blood up to their noses. Emperor Hadrian forbade the Jews from accessing their dead. It wasn't until Emperor Antoninus took the throne that we were permitted to gather and bury the bodies. This was a deliberate effort, following the Bar Kochba Revolt, to finally crush the Jewish spirit — 56 years after the destruction of Jerusalem. But it failed. Why? Thanks to the wisdom and resilience of our sages.

How did they decide to commemorate

the massacre? Until then, when Jews would thank G-d for their bread, they recited three blessings. The sages added a fourth, praising G-d for being good and doing good, because the bodies had not decomposed, and they received a proper burial. We still say this blessing to this day.

But what about the tragedy? And the outrage? The sages put all that aside because they knew the very existence of the nation was at stake. Tears and outrage have their place, but they won't save a people from extinction. Gratitude for every ray of hope will.

Our sages understood that when you tell the story, you must consider what your children will hear. Memory is not about the past; it is the foundation upon which we build the future. You can't build a beautiful future on an edifice of tears, but you can build it by celebrating our resilience, our love for Torah, and our love for one another. That is Simchat Torah, which is why this year we must dance and sing with even greater joy than ever before. That will be our victory against enemies who wish

to crush our spirit.

Who was attacked on that last Simchat Torah? A nation that dances on Simchat Torah. This is highly significant—our enemies describe us as a nation that dances. On that day, the Jewish people were dancing, and we continued to dance throughout the year. We danced with our heroic soldiers, we danced when the hostages were released, and we will continue to dance with gratitude to Hashem for the good He has done for us and for the good that is yet to come.

This is how they want to be remembered: happy, full of life, dancing.

As the Romans eventually learned, they and their horses will perish into the dust of history, while we will dance and sing until the whole world dances with us.

In memory of First Sergeant Tzur Avraham ז"ל. Fell on the 10th of Sivan, 5784, during the Iron Swords War.

Continuing Tzur's joy



RABBI DANNY FISHER

Director - TAL Boys After School Programs

SUCCOT

סוכות in the Torah is called חג הסוכות due to the Mitzvah which takes place during this time. The Bnei Yissoscher asks why is the Yom Tov written in the plural and not in the singular "חג הסוכה". The Bnei Yissoscher gives an answer based on the Gemorah in Succah. The Gemorah mentions that the Torah repeats סוכות three times all in the plural to teach us different Halochos regarding a סוכה, for example regarding the Scach and the walls. The Bnei Yissoscher adds another answer,

that one who fulfils the Mitzvah of סוכה will in the future merit to sit in the סוכה of the 'Levyoson' as well as canopies that Hashem will make for the righteous. Chazal teach us that even the canopies of the righteous will not be equal, and each צדיק will be ashamed of his friend who has a bigger canopy than he does. That is why the Yom Tov is called חג הסוכות in the plural because each Succah is not comparable to each other. Maybe we can suggest the following, סוכות is a time of unity amongst ישראל. We see that the ארבע מינים all represent different types of people from ישראל and we shake the ארבע מינים altogether on סוכות. Some shuls have the wonderful custom on

סוכות to go 'סוכות hopping'. Families go from one Succah to another visiting their friends סוכות. There is also a Mitzvah to visit one's Rebbe/Rabbi on סוכות. People invite guests into their Succah, and many have the custom of 'Ushpezon' each night inviting them into their Succah. The Torah says חג הסוכות to teach us the importance of unity amongst כלל ישראל, the importance of inviting guests into our Succah, and going out of our way to visit our friend's סוכות. What better merit do we have straight after Yom Kippur then showing such unity amongst כלל ישראל!

חג שמח



RABBI BENJI STONE,

TAL Chavruta Program

SUCCOT INSIGHTS

During Yom Kippur we restored our relationship with Hashem. On Sukkot we learn how that relationship should affect our everyday lives.

The principal lesson we learn is that Hashem has made comprehensive provision for all our needs. This lesson is multi-faceted.

In the first instance we learn that Hashem will take care of our material requirements. We are instructed to sit in a succah during the season when farmers are gathering in their crop to show that we should not look to our own abilities as our source of income. The succah reminds us of the shelter provided directly by Hashem to our ancestors in the midbar (wilderness) with no effort required on their part (Kli Yakar, Vayikra 23,42).

In the mitzvah of the arbah minim lies the message that we have been given all the tools we need to make the contribution required from us.

The etrog has three distinctive features:

1. It is a "pri" (fruit).
2. It grows on a tree.
3. It is described in the Torah as "hadar" (splendid; Vayikra; 23,40). This description refers not just to its appearance, but also to the fact that the etrog and the tree on which it grows are identical in taste (Succah 35a).

R' Shimshon Rafael Hirsch z"tsl notes that each of the other three minim display or symbolize only one of these characteristics. The lulav frond comes from the fruit bearing

date palm. However the lulav itself clearly does not taste like the fruit it helps produce. It symbolizes the "pri" without the "hadar".

The haddass is hadar in precisely the same way as the etrog is hadar. Aside from its pleasant, ordered appearance the fragrance held in its leaves extends throughout the shrub from which it is picked. However the haddass is not a "pri" and has no connection to fruit production.

The aravah displays none of the above characteristics. It is neither pri nor hadar. It is simply etz (wood).

These singular characteristics possessed by the three minim in fact signify three distinct stages in the development of the etrog. The aravah points to the tree on which the etrog is to grow. The haddass stores a fragrance or taste which it might transmit to a fruit but does not. Finally the lulav passes all its flavour to a fruit – without retaining any residual flavour itself.

The etrog symbolizes creation perfected, whilst the other minim symbolize the developmental stages in that creation. Through commanding us to take these minim at the same time as the etrog, the Torah is telling us that the factors which combine to form the glorious creation are as important as the creation itself.

Rav Hirsch z"tsl writes that the minim are a metaphor for different types of individual. The aravah is the simple, modest person with no special attributes. He may go about his life without much obvious success at all. The hadass alludes to the individual who displays and contains inherent beauty and substance. The lulav points to the individual who works tirelessly and productively, without receiving recognition.

Just as each of the minim themselves

represent a crucial stage in the development of the etrog, so too the individuals which they symbolize are to realize that their lot in life is all that they require to play their part in Hashem's masterplan.

Another aspect of the central lesson of sukkot is the idea that a person is sure to get what has been set aside for him. No-one can touch the portion that has been pre-ordained for another.

An interesting Hasidic custom exists whereby the Rebbe lobs a number of apples towards his congregation at the conclusion of Simchat Torah. The first Klausenburger rebbe, Harav Yekusiel Yehudah Halberstam z"tsl (Shefa Chaim) explains this custom as being based on the above-mentioned idea. The apple that you catch – if you indeed catch one – is the one that has been destined for you.

The Rebbe relates how the son in law of the Shinover rebbe was once extremely unwell over Simchat Torah. Not wishing to miss out he requested that his bed be carried into the adjoining room of the bet hamedresh so that he could at least follow the proceedings by ear. As the festivities progressed he noticed that the noise level had increased considerably. It occurred to him that the Rebbe was about to dispense the apples, the climax of the chag. This heightened his disappointment at not being able to be present and tears began to seep from his eyes. Suddenly as his despair was mounting an apple arched its way over the crowd, smashed the window of the room in which he was sitting, and arrowed on to his bed. This episode served to emphasize the lesson of the apple throwing ceremony itself; that a person will receive what has been set aside for them no matter what.



HALACHOT BY RABBI ELI MANSOUR

Succot – The Significance of the Ushpizin

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

we sit ourselves. The word "Teshbu" refers to our inviting the guests to sit, and then the second term – "Yeshbu" – refers to our own sitting in the Succa.

The Zohar then proceeds to describe the practice of Rav Hamnuna Saba, who would joyously enter the Succa and proceed to the inner section of the Succa, as the Ushpizin should not be invited near the door. He would announce, "Let us invite the Ushpizin," and then set the table, stand up, recite the Beracha over the Succa, and then say, "Ba'Succot Teshbu Shiba Yamim – sit, holy Ushpizin, sit, the Ushpizin who bring Emuna!" He would then lift his head and jubilantly exclaim, "How fortunate

are we!" citing the verse, "Ki Helek Hashem Amo" – "For G-d's portion is His nation."

The Zohar adds, however, that a crucial part of the Ushpizin concept is bringing joy to the poor, either by inviting them to one's Succa together with the Ushpizin, or by giving them charity in the Ushpizin's honor. The Ushpizin derive enjoyment not from the food served in the Succa, but rather from the assistance lent to the poor, and thus besides inviting the Ushpizin into our Succa, we must also ensure to care for the needy as part of our hosting these special guests.

Q

1. According to the Torah, what three basic requirements define a material as valid for use as a succa roof?
2. If the succa causes discomfort (e.g., it's too cold) to the extent that under similar conditions you would leave your very own house, you are exempt from the mitzvah. Why?
3. What two things are forbidden to do outside of the succa all seven days of the festival?
4. What is the absolute minimum number of meals a person is required to eat in the succa during the seven day holiday?
5. Besides referring to the tree and its fruit, what does the word "esrog" mean literally?

A

1. It must grow from the ground, no longer be connected to the ground, and not be receptive to tumah (ritual defilement).
2. Because the commandment of living in a succa is to dwell in the succa for seven days the same way you dwell in your house the rest of the year. (Mishna Berura 640:13)
3. Eat (an 'established' meal) or sleep. (Orach Chaim 639:2)
4. One Eating a meal in the succa the first night of Succos is a requirement. The rest of the festival, a person can eat 'snacks' which are not required to be eaten in a succa. (Outside Israel, one must eat a meal the second night of Succos as well. However, there is no requirement to live outside Israel.) (Orach Chaim 639:3)
5. Beauty. (Ramban Vayikra 23:40)

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