

SHABBAT SHALOM FROM CYBERSPACE

SUCCOT

OCTOBER 8-17, 2014 15-23 TISHRI 5775

Happy Birthday Jonah

DEDICATIONS: In memory of Phil Deutsch

We are looking for Sukkah sponsors for ... please email back or call Rebetzin Ida or speak with Dr. Hal,

There is a huge Misvah to invite people for Sukkot ... by sponsoring a meal you help fulfil this Misvah so even those and especially those who are away or will be away should take this opportunity and sponsor a meal in the Sukkah

Kiddush for first day succot lunch in memory of their great grandfather Raphael Ben Devorah z'l

2nd Day Sukkot sponsored by the Farbiarz Family

Shabbat Sukkot \$300 – We need a sponsor ASAP

Seudah Shelishi \$ 200

Sunday Breakfast Hiltzik Family

Monday Breakfast Hiltzik Family

Tuesday Breakfast Hiltzik Family

Wednesday Breakfast Hoshana Rabba Hiltzik Family And Kathy Amiel & Family in memory of her father Leon Amiel z'l

Thursday Shemini Aseret \$300

Thursday night Simcha Torah Celebration \$900 - Can we get three sponsors at \$300 each

In memory of Avi Limor (Avraham ben Mordecai) by Rena Limor

Friday Simcha Torah Lunch by the Chatanim - Rabbi Asher Abittan, Sam Yusupov and Mathew Mizrahi

Packages for the Kids and toys to be raffled off - \$ 500 for Simcha Torah

Shabbat Bereshit \$400

Shabbat Bereshit Seudah Shelishi \$200

If we have multiple sponsors for any day, we will use the funds for days with no sponsors

Thanks and Tizkeh LeMivot

AND PLEASE FORWARD THE FOLLOWING TO ALL OF YOUR FRIENDS AND INVITE THEM TO JOIN

Simchat Beit HaShoava - Sunday Oct 12th at 7:30PM - Chol HaMoed. Together with our friends from JCAB at The Jewish Center of Atlantic Beach. The program will be led by Rabbi Sammy Intrator - formerly the Rabbi of the Carlebach Shul in NYC - who will most probably be assisted by our own Dr. Baruch Kahn.... Lots of singing, dancing and Divrei Torah.

Sephardic Congregation of Long Beach

SUKKOT-SIMHAT TORAH

SCHEDULE 5775-2014

SUKKOT-SIMHAT TORAH SCHEDULE 5775-2014

Wednesday, October 8, 2014 – Ereb Sukkot

Shahrit – 7:00AM

Erub Tabshilin – To be done at home prior to Candle Lighting

Candle Lighting 6:08 PM

Minha 6:00 PM followed by Arbit 6:20 PM

It is a Missva to eat in the Sukkah both days and to recite the appropriate blessings

Thursday, October 9, 2014 – First Day Sukkot

Please do not forget to bring your Lulab and Etrog both days to the synagogue to make the appropriate blessings

Shahrit - 9:00 AM

Minha 6:00 PM followed by Arbit 6:20 PM

Candle Lighting After 7:00 PM

Friday, October 10, 2014 – Second Day Sukkot

Shahrit - 9:00 AM

Candle Lighting for Shabbat 6:04 PM

Minha 6:00 PM

Kabbalat Shabbat & Arbit 6:20 PM

Saturday, October 11, 2014 – Sukkot 3 – Shabbat Hol Hamoed

Do not bring your Lulab and Etrog as they are not used on Shabbat.

Shahrit - 9:00 AM

Class 5:00 PM

Minha 5:30 PM

Seuda Shelishit in the sukkah 6:00 PM

Arbit 6:50 PM

Habdalah – Shabbat Ends 7:03 PM

Sunday, October 12, 2014 – Sukkot 4 – Hol Hamoed

Shahrit 8:00 AM Breakfast and Class 9:00 AM

Monday, October 13, 2014 – Sukkot 5 – Hol Hamoed

Shahrit - 7:00AM

Tuesday, October 14, 2014 – Sukkot 6 – Hol Hamoed

Shahrit - 7:00AM

Tikkun Lel Hoshana Rabba - Night Study 11:00 PM to be confirmed

Wednesday, October 15, 2014 – Sukkot 7 – Hoshana Rabba

Shahrit - 6:30AM to be confirmed

Erub Tabshilin – To be done at home prior to Candle Lighting

Candle Lighting 5:57 PM

Minha 6:00 PM followed by Arbit 6:20 PM

Thursday, October 16, 2014 – Shemini Asseret

Shahrit - 9:00AM

Minha 6:00 PM

Arbit 6:30 PM followed by hakafot with Sephardic

Candle Lighting After 6:50 PM

Friday, October 17, 2014 – Simhat Torah

Shahrit - 9:00 AM

Followed by Hakafot 12:00 PM

Followed by gala lunch by chatanim.

Candle Lighting for Shabbat 5:54 PM

Minha 6:00 PM

Kabbalat Shabbat and Arbit 6:20 PM

Saturday, October 18, 2014 – Shabbat Bereshit

Shahrit - 9:00 AM

Class 4:45 PM

Minha 5:25PM

Seuda Shelishit 5:55 PM

Arbit 6:40 PM

Habdalah – Shabbat Ends 6:53 PM

SELECTED CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONS FOR
SUKKOT 5775 - 2014

ERUB TABSHILIN

Our sages instituted Erub Tabshilin as a means to enable us to pre- pare food on the Friday of the Holiday for Shabbat. This year, the hol- idays are followed immediately by Shabbat and Erub Tabshilin is applicable. On both Wednesdays afternoon, set aside a piece of bread and cooked food intended for Shabbat (i.e. a hard-boiled egg). Raise it and recite the following:

"Barukh Ata Ado-nay Elo-henu Melekh Ha'olam Asher Kideshanu Bemissvotav Vessivanu Al Missvat Erub."

"In accordance with the Law of Erub, it shall be permissible for us to bake, cook, prepare and do all necessary things for Shabbat during Yom Tob (the holiday)."

Be sure to eat the bread and food by "Seuda Shelishit" on Shabbat.

Candle Blessings

The blessing on the candles for Sukkot, Shemini Asseret, and Simhat Torah is:

"Barukh Ata Ado-nay Elo-henu Melekh Ha'olam Asher Kideshanu Bemissvotav Vessivanu L'Hadlik Ner Shel Yom Tob".

The blessing on the candles for Shabbat is:

"Barukh Ata Ado-nay Elo-henu Melekh Ha'olam Asher Kideshanu Bemissvotav Vessivanu L'Hadlik Ner Shel Shabbat".

Kiddush - Sukkot

Both nights of Sukkot coincide with a weekday; therefore the Kiddush does not include the mention of Shabbat. You may find the Kiddush in any Sukkot Mahzor under the section "Kiddush for Sukkot for a weeknight"

Make sure that all kiddushim are recited after dark.

On the first night recite the blessing at the end of the Kiddush: *"Barukh Ata Ado-nay Elo-henu Melekh Ha'olam Asher Kideshanu*

Bemissvotav Vessivanu Lesheb BaSukkah"

Then recite the blessing:

"Barukh Ata Ado-nay Elo-henu Melekh Ha'olam Shehehiyanu Vekiyemanu Vehigianu Lazeman Hazeh".

On the second night recite the blessing "Shehehiyanu" first and then recite the blessing of "Lesheb BaSukkah".

Kiddush on Shabbat Hol Hamoed during Sukkot is a regular Shabbat Kiddush; however one must recite the blessing of "Lesheb BaSukkah" when one is eating at least one ounce of bread in the Sukkah through- out the entire Holiday of Sukkot. The "Shehehiyanu" blessing is not recited.

Shemini Asseret and Simhat Torah

The holiday of Shemini Asseret also coincides with a weekday, there- fore the Kiddush is a regular holiday "Kiddush for a weeknight". While we do **sit** in the Sukkah, the blessing of "Lesheb BaSukkah" is **not** recited but the blessing of "Shehehiyanu" is recited.

The Kiddush on Simhat Torah is also a weekday Kiddush. We recite the blessing of "Shehehiyanu". We do **not** sit in the Sukkah, and we do not recite the blessing of "Lesheb BaSukkah".

PRAYERS

It is customary **not** to wear Tefillin during the Hol Hamoed period. We recite the paragraph "Yaleh Veyabo" mentioning the respective holiday in every Amida, and in Birkat Hamazon. We chant the com- plete Hallel with the blessing "Ligmor Et Hahallel" following Shahrit during the entire nine days of the holiday. Following the Hallel we say the Hosh'anut of that day. We add the Musaf prayer every day of the holiday.

OBSERVANCE OF SUKKOT

On Sukkot, one of the three holidays known as the Shalosh Regalim, we celebrate and commemorate the protection that the Israelites received from G-d in the desert throughout their journey to the Holy Land. Our Hakhamim learned from the verse "...you shall live in Sukkot for seven days..." that these were the clouds of glory in which G-d encircled the Israelites in order that they be protected from the sun and the burning heat. The Missva of Sukkah is to dwell, eat, drink, and if possible to sleep in it. The first two nights one must eat in the Sukkah, as well as throughout the holiday anytime when one desires to consume one ounce or more of bread. The blessing of "Lesheb BaSukkah" is recited standing and only when one is planning to eat one ounce or more of bread. Women are exempt from the Missva of Sukkah; however it is praiseworthy if they choose to sit in the Sukkah. They should not, in any case recite the blessing of "Lesheb BaSukkah".

The observance of Sukkot is similar to Shabbat and any other holiday, in that one may not work, ride in a car, buy or sell. However, cooking (transferring fire, putting food on the

fire, etc.), and carrying (house keys, talit, siddur, etc.) even without an Erub is permitted. One may **not** strike a match even for the purpose of cooking, however fire may be transferred from an existing flame. We suggest that you leave a candle burning from before the Holiday, or you may use the candles lit in honor of the holiday.

The Missva of Lulab and Etrog

Beginning on the first day of Sukkot one is obligated to fulfill the Missva of the Lulab, Etrog, three Hadasim, and the two Arabot. This Missva must be fulfilled for all the days of Sukkot with the exception of Shabbat. Before fulfilling the Missva for the first time, one should recite the following blessings:

"Barukh Ata Adonay Elo-henu Melekh Ha'olam Asher Kideshanu Bemissvotav Vessivanu Al Netilat Lulab".

Following this, **only on the first time** one should recite the blessing of "Shehehyanu".

"Barukh Ata Adonay Elo-henu Melekh Ha'olam Shehehyanu Vekiyemanu Vehigianu Lazeman Hazeh".

After reciting the blessings, one should hold the Lulab with the Hadasim and the Arabot in the right hand and the Etrog in the left hand with the Pitom facing upwards.

Women are exempt from the Missva of the Lulab, but should they wish, they may perform it **without** reciting the blessing.

Shabbat Hol-Hamoed

Shabbat Hol-Hamoed is observed like any other Shabbat. However, we do not take or handle the Lulab and Etrog on Shabbat and they are considered Mukseh. Like any other Shabbat, there is the Missva of eating three meals (with bread), and these meals must be eaten in the Sukkah.

HOSHA'ANA RABBA

Hosha'ana Rabba is known as a mini Yom Kippur. Although we do not fast, we conduct prayers with Selihot similar to Yom Kippur. It is the last day of the period of judgment that began with Rosh HaShanah. It is the day in which the Heavenly Books of Judgment are sealed, especially regarding one's sustenance for the coming year. G-d provided Hosha'ana Rabba as the last opportunity for prayer and supplication to the Almighty for a happy and healthy New Year. Therefore our sages have instituted the entire night of Hosha'ana Rabba to be a time for prayer and supplication, Selihot, and learning. Hosha'ana Rabba is the last day of Sukkot and the Missva of Lulab is in rigor and

special prayers are conducted as well. It is customary to hold a bundle of five Arabot while reciting special prayers at the conclusion of the service.

SHEMINI ASSERET

The observance of Shemini Asseret is similar to that of Sukkot, namely one is obligated to sit in the Sukkah, however **without** reciting the blessing of "Lesheb BaSukkah". The Missva of Lulab is **not** observed on Shemini Asseret as well.

SIMHAT TORAH

Simhat Torah is observed in a similar fashion to Shemini Asseret. However one should **not** sit in the Sukkah for the meals. It is customary to sing and dance with the Torah. Hakafoth are conducted and the celebration of the Hatanim takes place. Please come to synagogue and partake in this happy occasion, in which we thank G-d for having given us such a precious gift, the Torah.

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This weeks newsletter comes to you directly from downtown Salt Lake City remotely Maybe ???

Editors Notes

Having come through Rosh Hashana, the ten days of repentance and Yom Kippur, we busy ourselves with preparations for Sukkot. If we recall that the first Yom Kippur following the Exodus was the day we received the second set of tablets, and was the day we received complete forgiveness and the day we sort of remarried G-d after we messed up with the golden calf, then in many ways Sukkot celebrates our honeymoon with the Creator. This is the holiday of faith and the holiday of joy. It's us and G-d. We step out of the daily routine and move into the Sukkah which is likened to dwelling within the Shechina.

The rabbis teach us that each of the seven days of Sukkot has the potential to repair what was damaged on the corresponding day of the week during the whole of the year. Each day is a powerful gift for us to take advantage of. For Jews, the honeymoon is really an extension of the wedding. Seven days of festivities. We celebrate seven days of seven blessings – sheva berachot - from friends, family and even strangers, infusing the bride and groom with a spiritual energy to take them through their lives.

In the same way the spiritual energy of our Sukkot honeymoon infuses us with strength for the entire year helping us to reach our potential. And whats a Sheva Berachot celebration without guests? Sukkot is a holiday of guests. We open our Succah and its incumbent upon us to share with others. We have physical guests and then we have the Ushpizin, the spiritual guests who come each night and reside with us. There are seven; Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Aaron, Joseph and David. Each brings a unique blessing and an opportunity to focus on that midah or attribute which that forefather represents.

For example, Abraham represents the aspect of Chesed which we typically translate as loving kindness in English. But Chesed is so much more. The Gemarah teaches us that the Torah begins with chesed and ends with chesed. We see where G-d

creates man in an act of chesed and as the Torah concludes buries Moses, an ultimate act of chesed. Some understand that the entire Torah is characterized by G-d's chesed and it is our Job to emulate that Chesed. In Tomer Devorah, Rabbi Moshe Cordovero suggests we can do this always through our actions by loving God so completely that one will never forsake His service for any reason. As parents, we do this by providing a child with all the necessities of his sustenance, loving the child and bringing the child into the Covenant with Hashem. Each day we have the opportunity to do chesed when visiting and healing the sick, giving charity to the poor, offering hospitality to strangers, attending to the dead, bringing a bride to the chuppah marriage ceremony and making peace between a man and his fellow.

Our forefather Isaac represents the aspect of Gevurah or Self Control. Isaac's gevurah was expressed in his great awe of G-d and his exacting self-discipline. Chesed run amok is dangerous. The self-control or restriction represented by Gevurah allows us to receive the spiritual light, to gather the light and properly use the light. Its possible that all the laws of the Torah serve to teach us personal self control, because only when one is in complete control is one truly free and not a slave to his habits or faults.

And so through each of the seven days, we have a guest bearing gifts; gifts of introspection and self-improvement. We should endeavor each day to discuss the life of that guest, discuss their attributes, discuss their actions and reactions and consider how we might emulate them.

Late Shabbat afternoon as we were about to say Neilah, the final prayer of Yom Kippur, I looked into the hechal, the ark and a thought struck me from the book Tana D'Bei Eliyahu. I looked across the top shelf of the ark which holds many Torah scrolls and my eye rested on one dating to Baghdad circa 1850 another dating back to 1900; both with magnificent silver work. Then to the last one my father designed and made which is truly a work of art. And finally to one dating to the depression that was damaged last year in a flood in a safe in Brooklyn and which we are contemplating repairing. That last one is not made from silver and seems to be metals brought together with the supports for the rimonim from what appears to be antenna, but the hand chasing on that case with the entire Berich Sheme written into the opposing panels at the front is worthy of a museum. The depression era Torah was probably the work of my grandfather Reuben Bibi, the one from 1900 could have been the work of his father Joseph A Bibi and the one from 1850 could have been the work of my

great, great grandfather Ovadia Bibi. This was their trade and they were renowned for it, literally around the world.

And as I looked at the cases representing the four generations preceding me I thought, Matai YaGia Ma'Asay LeMaaseh Avotai? "When will my actions reach the level of those of my forefathers?"

I wasn't complaining that they were all artists and I can't draw two lines. I wasn't complaining that they had magical hands capable of creating and fixing nearly anything and I can barely change a light bulb. I wasn't even thinking that I could ever come close to accomplishing what they accomplished,

I thought that each of them, father, grandfather, great grandfather and great-great grandfather came to this world with a set of challenges and demands. Each had a potential to reach based on the raw materials they were given, a potential spiritually, communally, family and personally to achieve. And I pondered their greatness and their achievements.

And then I thought to myself, what about me? Look at the gifts I was given? Look at the effort my parents placed within me, the time they invested in me and everything they gave me. Look at my own potential and how far I am from being everything I can be. It was an eye opening moment. It was a moment each of us needs to take and examine and ask ourselves, who am I? Who can I be? How will I get there?

I often think of the angel calling to Abraham at the Akeydah, the binding of Isaac. The angel calls Abraham, (pause) Abraham. Why twice? Why the pause?

There is the potential in us which we are born to be. The image of the potential me is standing in heaven and looking down. The image is rooting me on. The image above wants the image below to achieve that potential.

At that moment of the Akeydah, after ten grueling tests, I believe that the angel announced to Abraham that the Abraham below had achieved the potential and was now one with the Abraham above. This is our challenge to raise our presence below to our presence above.

Sukkot is the holiday where we get extra help doing this. It's a special week where if we can feel the energy and feel the power of the blessings of our guests from above we can be infused by them and we can rise from below to above; to heights unimagined.

May we all be worthy to rise to the levels of our fathers. Tizku LeShanim Rabot.

David Bibi

Wheelchair Convoy At The Metropolitan Opera - Another Rally on October 20 – We Are All Klinghoffer!!

We are writing to inform you about an ongoing issue of concern with which we need your help.

As you are aware, this summer Jews around the world have experienced an upsurge in anti-Semitic rhetoric and action that has left many of us reeling and questioning how such events could be happening in 2014. As American Jews, many of us have come to think of anti-Semitism largely as an issue of another time or place.

However, our complacency has been shattered, not only by events abroad, but by a particularly heinous example of anti-Semitic rhetoric and the blurring of moral lines in one of America's most prestigious bastions of high culture -- the New York Metropolitan Opera. Many in our community have not heard about this issue, and have asked "Why weren't we told?" We feel it is our responsibility to let you know what is happening and the steps the community has taken to counter it.

The Metropolitan Opera has chosen to mount a production of "The Death of Klinghoffer," an opera that seeks to validate and excuse the murder of Leon Klinghoffer, and to humanize his murderers. As you may recall, in 1985 the Palestine Liberation Front, under the direction of Yasser Arafat, hijacked the cruise ship, Achille Lauro. Leon Klinghoffer, 69 years old and wheelchair-bound, was shot in the forehead and chest and thrown overboard in his wheelchair, simply because he was a Jew.

This month, the Metropolitan Opera is airing a production of an operatic account of the murder that paints the terrorists as freedom fighters and as "men of ideals."

In the libretto (text of an opera) one of the terrorists sings:

"Wherever poor men are gathered they can find Jews getting fat--You know how to cheat the simple, exploit the virgin, pollute where you have exploited--Defame those you cheated--And break your own law with idolatry."

He tells Klinghoffer: "America is one big Jew."

This is not portrayed as the ranting of someone who is evil. If that were the context of this hate speech, it would be justified. Rather, this is the language of someone depicted as an idealistic victim of Jews, justified in fighting back against his Jewish oppressors. He is a terrorist, yet the terrorists in the opera are portrayed as freedom fighters. In the language of the Palestinian terrorists:

"We are soldiers fighting a war. We are not criminals and we are not vandals but men of ideals."

Despite many months of campaigning by Jewish and non-Jewish organizations alike, the Met has refused to cancel the Opera at Lincoln Center, agreeing only to cancel HD simulcasts. They are backed in their production of propaganda masquerading as art by the New York Times and the New Yorker magazine. Under the pretense of defending artistic freedom, these institutions have blurred the line between good and evil, reducing a horrendous terrorist atrocity to what they have labeled a mere "tragedy" and equalizing the moral claims of perpetrator and victim.

A series of letter writing efforts and phone calls to the Met Board and important donors was launched along with a campaign of emails and phone calls to Met director Peter Gelb. These efforts culminated in a mass demonstration on September 22, 2014 at Lincoln Center. Despite the presence of important Jewish and non-Jewish leaders, local politicians and what many of the news accounts have estimated at between 1,000 - 2,000 demonstrators, the Met has not backed down. They insist on presenting an opera that the New York Times has called "moving and nuanced in imagining a tragedy that gives voice to all sides," despite its offensive, distorted and inflammatory content.

Friends, this is the same distorted moral prism that gives rise to attacks like 9/11, the blatant use of human shields, and the beheading of innocent journalists. We cannot let this distortion go unchallenged.

We will rally again, in force, on October 20, 2014 at 6:00 PM with a "100 Wheelchair Caravan" in front of the Metropolitan Opera, Lincoln Center, Broadway & West 65th Street, New York, New York, with wheelchair riders bearing signs proclaiming "We are all Klinghoffer!" This is the opening night of the Klinghoffer opera. We'll take care of the 100. If more than 100 wheelchair participants show up, all the better. We need your participation to either ride in a

wheelchair or accompany the wheelchair riders. Let our numbers speak. Please consider attending the rally. Please forward this alert to your friends, neighbors and political representatives so they will know what is happening. Please urge your Rabbis and organizational leaders to support the rally vigorously.

FROM THE JERSEY SHORE TORAH BULLETIN

As we finish Yom Kippur and experience a beautiful closeness with Hashem, we now sit in the succah, which is like sitting in Hashem's clouds of glory. The message of the succah can be both sobering and encouraging. To the powerful and wealthy, the succah says, "Do not rely on your fortune; it is transitory. Even your castle is no more secure than a succah. If you are safe, it is because G-d shelters you as He did your ancestors when all they had was a booth over their heads. Let the starry sky you see through your s'chach teach you to build your castle on a foundation of faith under the benevolent gaze of Hashem."

To the poor and downtrodden, the succah says, "Are you more helpless than millions of your ancestors in the wilderness, without food, water or shelter? What sustained them? Who provided for them? Look around at your succah's frail walls and at the stars through its roof. Let it remind you that Israel became a nation living in such 'mansions' and that's where they became a great and G-dly nation."

Let us enjoy the holiday of Succot with the message that we are in Hashem's Hands at all times. By putting our complete faith in Him we will feel secure and tranquil and appreciate everything we have. Especially during these turbulent and trying times, we need to strengthen our faith that Hashem is the One Who can and will protect us, and the succah is the symbol of being in Hashem's Hands. May we merit to dwell in the succah which will be built for the righteous very soon in our days, Amen. Tizku Leshanim Rabot! Rabbi Shmuel Choueka

DAY BY DAY

On the first and second nights of Succot, we recite the berachah of shehehiyanu in the kiddush. However, when it comes to taking the lulab and etrog, shehehiyanu is not recited on the second day unless the first day was Shabbat. Why is shehehiyanu recited both nights in kiddush and only the first day of taking the lulab and etrog?

Yom Tob is a joyous occasion which comes from time to time, and thus a shehehiyanu must be recited. Since there is a doubt which day is actually

Yom Tob (the 15th of Tishrei), shehehiyanu is recited both nights together with kiddush.

Halachically, however, the shehehiyanu over the lulab may be made even before Yom Tob, when one prepares (binds together the lulab with the species), but it has become traditional to make the berachah when the lulab is taken to fulfill the misvah (see Succah 46a, Shulhan Aruch 644, Magen Abraham). Thus, there is no need to make this berachah twice, since either way (even if the first day is a weekday and not Yom Tob) one fulfilled the obligation of recited the shehehiyanu for the lulab. (Vedibarta Bam)

Rabbi Wein

After the tension filled solemnity of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, the holiday of Sukkoth arrives with its many inspiring rituals and its message of joy and rejoicing in the service of God. It is regarding Sukkoth that the Torah instructs us "to be joyful on your holiday."

Now, joy, like almost all other emotions is not something that can be turned on and off like a faucet. A person either feels joyful or not. You cannot tell a person who is sad and depressed to just feel joyful and expect that that should somehow happen. The traditional commentators have already remarked that since we have just passed through the cleansing processes of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur and feel relieved, forgiven and confident in our faith and in our relationship to our Creator, it is only natural to expect that we will feel joyful at this time of the year.

But, to a certain extent, this type of answer really only begs the question. It is quite difficult for anyone to feel completely satisfied with one's self and one's actions after undergoing a thorough, honest and often painful self-examination. We are now privy to our faults and failings and even though we are confident that Heaven's goodness has forgiven us, we are still well aware of the problems that remain within us and limit, if not even prevent, any feelings of overwhelming joy to take hold. And yet the Torah insists that we be joyful and of good cheer on this holiday of Sukkoth.

The rabbis have given a markedly different perspective to the emotion of joy and it is this perspective that I feel the Torah is speaking of when commanding us regarding the holiday of Sukkoth. The rabbis in the Talmud stated that there is no joy comparable to the joy one feels when doubts have been resolved and clarity and reality reign.

Much of the sadness that exist in life is based on its uncertainty, in the plethora of options and choices, the consequences of which are never clear to us and in the difficulty we face in placing our lives and their events into proper perspective. A flash of clarity, an insight of perspective, a moment of confident decision can truly bring about a feeling of joy.

Sukkoth can provide us with that clarity and perspective. It teaches us that our physical home and house is not quite as important as we may think it is. It instructs us in the beauty of nature, the necessity for Heaven's blessing of rain and productivity and in the realization that even though our lives and existence are indeed fragile, we should treasure every breathing moment and see it in the perspective of our immortality and eternity.

Sukkoth engenders within us the appreciation of correct priorities in our lives and the achievement of a proper balance between the illusory and reality. It provides us with a most necessary dose of humility – one that can allow a person to see things in proper perspective.

The Jewish people throughout our long and many times difficult years and experiences have always realized that we are living in a sukkah. That realization alone was sufficient to allow individual Jews and Jewish society generally to function, survive and even prosper. By absorbing this lesson of the sukkah – its beauty, its fragility, its temporary nature, its serenity and its relationship to nature and the world we live in, we immerse ourselves in God's perspective, so to speak, of the world and our place in it.

That alone should awaken within us an emotion of joy and satisfaction. In Temple times, the libation of water on the holy altar of the Temple in Jerusalem on the holiday of Sukkoth created a national emotion of joy and rejoicing. It is interesting to note that water, which most of us take for granted, is not nearly as expensive a commodity as an animal sacrifice or an offering of gold or silver would have been. Nevertheless, it was the offering of water that occasioned the the great celebrations of joy in ancient Jerusalem.

Simply because it was almost a relatively mundane offering, it emphasized the perspective of life that Sukkoth was meant to convey. One can be joyful even with plain water if one realizes the blessings of nature and of the benevolence of God. In a world of excess and the pursuit of luxuries, Sukkoth comes to remind us of our true priorities and of the necessity of a healthy balance in our lives and behavior.

Chief Rabbi Sir Jonathan Sacks
The Festival of Insecurity – A message for Sukkot
16 September 2013

What exactly is a sukkah? What is it supposed to represent?

The question is essential to the mitzvah itself. The Torah says: "Live in sukkot for seven days: All native-born Israelites are to live in sukkot so that your descendants will know that I had the Israelites live in sukkot when I brought them out of Egypt: I am the LORD your God" (Lev. 23: 42-43). In other words, knowing – reflecting, understanding, being aware – is an integral part of the mitzvah. For that reason, says Rabbah in the Talmud (Sukkah 2a), a sukkah that is taller than twenty cubits (about thirty feet or nine metres high) is invalid because when the sechach, the "roof," is that far above your head, you are unaware of it. So what is a sukkah?

On this, two Mishnaic sages disagreed. Rabbi Eliezer held that the sukkah represents the clouds of glory that surrounded the Israelites during the wilderness years, protecting them from heat during the day, cold during the night, and bathing them with the radiance of the Divine presence. This view is reflected in a number of the Targumim. Rashi in his commentary takes it as the "plain sense" of the verse.

Rabbi Akiva on the other hand says sukkot mammash, meaning a sukkah is a sukkah, no more and no less: a hut, a booth, a temporary dwelling. It has no symbolism. It is what it is (Sukkah 11b).

If we follow Rabbi Eliezer then it is obvious why we celebrate by making a sukkah. It is there to remind us of a miracle. All three pilgrimage festivals are about miracles. Pesach is about the miracle of the exodus when God brought us out of Egypt with signs and wonders. Shavuot is, according to the oral Torah, about the miracle of the revelation at Mount Sinai when, for the only time in history, God appeared to an entire nation. Sukkot is about God's tender care of his people, mitigating the hardships of the journey across the desert by surrounding them with His protective cloud as a parent wraps a young child in a blanket. Long afterward, the sight of the blanket evokes memories of the warmth of parental love.

Rabbi Akiva's view, though, is deeply problematic. If a sukkah is merely a hut, what was the miracle? There is nothing unusual about living in a hut if you are living a nomadic existence in the desert. It's what the Bedouin did until recently. Some still do. Why should there be a festival dedicated to something

ordinary, commonplace and non-miraculous?

Rashbam (Rashi's grandson) says the sukkah was there to remind the Israelites of their past so that, at the very moment they were feeling the greatest satisfaction at living in Israel – at the time of the ingathering of the produce of the land – they should remember their lowly origins. They were once a group of refugees without a home, living in a favela or a shanty town, never knowing when they would have to move on. Sukkot, says Rashbam, is integrally connected to the warning Moses gave the Israelites at the end of his life about the danger of security and affluence:

Be careful that you do not forget the LORD your God ... Otherwise, when you eat and are satisfied, when you build fine houses and settle down, and when your herds and flocks grow large and your silver and gold increase and all you have is multiplied, then your heart will become proud and you will forget the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery ... You may say to yourself, "My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me." (Deut. 8: 11-17)

Sukkot, according to Rashbam, exists to remind us of our humble origins so that we never fall into the complacency of taking freedom, the land of Israel and the blessings it yields, for granted, thinking that it happened in the normal course of history.

However there is another way of understanding Rabbi Akiva, and it lies in one of the most important lines in the prophetic literature. Jeremiah says, in words we recited on Rosh Hashanah, "I remember the loving-kindness of your youth, how as a bride you loved me and followed me through the wilderness, through a land not sown" (Jer. 2:2). This is one of the very rare lines in Tanakh that speaks in praise not of God but of the people Israel.

"How odd of God / to choose the Jews," goes the famous rhyme, to which the answer is: "Not quite so odd: the Jews chose God." They may have been, at times, fractious, rebellious, ungrateful and wayward. But they had the courage to travel, to move, to leave security behind, and follow God's call, as did Abraham and Sarah at the dawn of our history. If the sukkah represents God's clouds of glory, where was "the loving-kindness of your youth"? There is no sacrifice involved if God is visibly protecting you in every way and at all times. But if we follow Rabbi Akiva and see the sukkah as what it is, the temporary home of a temporarily homeless people, then it makes sense to say that Israel showed the courage of a bride willing to follow her husband on a risk-

laden journey to a place she has never seen before – a love that shows itself in the fact that she is willing to live in a hut trusting her husband's promise that one day they will have a permanent home.

If so, then a wonderful symmetry discloses itself in the three pilgrimage festivals. Pesach represents the love of God for His people. Sukkot represents the love of the people for God. Shavuot represents the mutuality of love expressed in the covenant at Sinai in which God pledged Himself to the people, and the people to God. (For a similar conclusion, reached by a slightly different route, see R. Meir Simcha of Dvinsk, Meshekh Chokhmah to Deut. 5: 15. I am grateful to David Frei of the London Beth Din for this reference.)

Sukkot, on this reading, becomes a metaphor for the Jewish condition not only during the forty years in the desert but also the almost 2,000 years spent in exile and dispersion. For centuries Jews lived, not knowing whether the place in which they lived would prove to be a mere temporary dwelling. To take just one period as an example: Jews were expelled from England in 1290, and during the next two centuries from almost every country in Europe, culminating in the Spanish Expulsion in 1492, and the Portuguese in 1497. They lived in a state of permanent insecurity. Sukkot is the festival of insecurity.

What is truly remarkable is that it is called, by tradition, zeman simchatenu, "our time of joy." That to me is the wonder at the heart of the Jewish experience: that Jews throughout the ages were able to experience risk and uncertainty at every level of their existence and yet – while they sat betzila demehemnuta, "under the shadow of faith" (this is the Zohar's description of the sukkah: Zohar, Emor, 103a) – they were able to rejoice. That is spiritual courage of a high order. I have often argued that faith is not certainty: faith is the courage to live with uncertainty. That is what Sukkot represents if what we celebrate is sukkot mammash, not the clouds of glory but the vulnerability of actual huts, open to the wind, the rain and the cold.

I find that faith today in the people and the State of Israel. It is astonishing to me how Israelis have been able to live with an almost constant threat of war and terror since the State was born, and not give way to fear. I sense even in the most secular Israelis a profound faith, not perhaps "religious" in the conventional sense, but faith nonetheless: in life, and the future, and hope. Israelis seem to me perfectly to exemplify what tradition says was God's reply to Moses when he doubted the people's capacity to believe: "They are believers, the children of believers"

(Shabbat 97a). Today's Israel is a living embodiment of what it is to exist in a state of insecurity and still rejoice.

And that is Sukkot's message to the world. Sukkot is the only festival about which Tanakh says that it will one day be celebrated by the whole world (Zechariah 14: 16-19). The twenty-first century is teaching us what this might mean. For most of history, most people have experienced a universe that did not change fundamentally in their lifetimes. But there have been rare great ages of transition: the birth of agriculture, the first cities, the dawn of civilization, the invention of printing, and the industrial revolution. These were destabilizing times, and they brought disruption in their wake. The age of transition we have experienced in our lifetime, born primarily out of the invention of the computer and instantaneous global communication, will one day be seen as the greatest and most rapid era of change since Homo sapiens first set foot on earth.

Since 9/11 2001, we have experienced the convulsions. As I write these words, some nations are tearing themselves apart, and no nation is free of the threat of terror. There are parts of the Middle East and beyond that recall Hobbes' famous description of the "state of nature," a "war of every man against every man" in which there is "continual fear and danger of violent death; and the life of man solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short" (Hobbes, The Leviathan, chapter XI). Insecurity begets fear, fear begets hate, hate begets violence, and violence eventually turns against its perpetrators.

The twenty-first century will one day be seen by historians as the Age of Insecurity. We, as Jews, are the world's experts in insecurity, having lived with it for millennia. And the supreme response to insecurity is Sukkot, when we leave behind the safety of our houses and sit in sukkot mammash, in huts exposed to the elements. To be able to do so and still say, this is zeman simchatenu, our festival of joy, is the supreme achievement of faith, the ultimate antidote to fear.

Faith is the ability to rejoice in the midst of instability and change, travelling through the wilderness of time toward an unknown destination. Faith is not fear. Faith is not hate. Faith is not violence. These are vital truths, never more needed than now.

Somebody's a Nobody **Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky**

One of the most joyous customs associated with the holiday of Sukkos is the celebration of Simchas Bais

Hashoaevah. In the times of the Bais HaMikdash, a water libation accompanied the customary offerings. Simchas Bais Hashoaevah, literally, the Joy of the Water Drawing, was observed with a most ebullient celebration. It included a marvelously varied array of harps, lyres, cymbals, and trumpets, among other instruments. The greatest sages and most pious of rabbis performed acrobatics and antics that would have normally been below their dignity. In fact, the sages in Tractate Sukkah 51, note that, "one who has not seen the celebration of the Bais Hashoaevo has never seen true joy."

Rambam (Maimonides) discusses this aspect of exuberance and adds that "one who in his insolence restrains himself from serving Hashem in a joyous manner is a sinner and fool." Yet the Rambam adds a caveat. "But this joy was not performed by the ignorant ones and by anyone who wanted (to dance). Only the great sages of Israel, the heads of Yeshivos and the Sanhedrin, the pious, the elders and men of righteous action would dance, clap, and sing in the Bais haMikdash on Sukkos. Everyone else, men and women would come to watch and listen" (Rambam Hilchos Lulav 8:14).

This passage begs explanation. Why shouldn't everyone, even the most profane of men, sing and dance and make merry in celebration of the L-rd? Further what does the Rambam mean by not including "those who want to dance"?

Ultimately, anyone who ended up dancing, even the most pious of sages, obviously wanted to dance. What, then, does he Rambam mean when he said that this joy was not performed by anyone who wanted to dance? A classic story circulates in all Jewish humor anthologies.

Before the start of the Ne'eilah service, the holiest and final supplication of Yom Kippur, the rabbi rose from his seat and bolted toward the Holy Ark. He spread his hands toward heaven and cried out, "Ribbono Shel Olam, Master of the Universe, I am a total nothing before you! Please inscribe me in the book of life!"

All of a sudden the chazzan (cantor) ran toward the Aron and joined the rabbi! "G-d Almighty," he shouted, "please forgive me, too, for I am truly a nothing before you!" There is an awed silence amongst the congregants. The shammas (sexton) then followed suit. He, too, ran up toward the ark and in tearful supplication pronounced, "I too am a nothing!"

Mouths around the congregation dropped open. The President of the synagogue's men's club, Ed

Goldstein, a large man, was also caught up in the fervor of the moment. Suddenly, he, too, bolted from his seat in the back, and lumbered toward the front of the shul. With great eagerness he prostrated himself in front of the Ark and cried out at the top of his lungs. "Forgive me Oh L-rd he shouts, for I too am a nothing! Suddenly a shout from the back of the synagogue was directed toward Goldstein's hulk of a figure. It shouted with incredulity. "Harrumph! Look who thinks he's a nothing!"

Rambam teaches us that whoever runs to dance and sing and make himself crazy is not truly lowering himself before the Almighty. If someone inherently likes to cavort wildly, then he is not dancing for the sake of lowering himself before the Almighty, rather he is having a wonderful time. When King David liberated the Aron (Ark of the Covenant) from the Phillistines, he danced in front of it as if he were a lowly slave. When confronted by his wife, Michal, for dancing like a servant, he retorted. "I would make myself even lower before Hashem."

When rejoicing during the festivities we must bear in mind our true reasons for enthusiasm -- who we are, and why we dance. Because in order to be a nobody, you gotta be a somebody.

AS HEARD FROM RABBI AVIGDOR MILLER Z'TL

A Succah, if properly utilized, can be a place of very great achievement. Here are a few ideas as heard from Rabbi Miller ZT"L on how to maximize this opportunity.

1. Keep in mind that every minute you spend in the Succah, you are performing a positive commandment from the Torah. The longer you sit there and contend "I am doing the will of Hashem", you are getting more Mitzvot. The more kavanah/intent the greater the reward.
2. The Succah is a temporary dwelling which serves to remind us that this world is only temporary. It is the place we prepare, through improvement, in order to gain entry to Olam Haba.
3. The Succah is a symbol of being "in Hashem" all of our lives. "Hashem, m'aon atah h'ayitah lanu." "You are our dwelling, You are our complete protection, You are all around us always." "Hashem Echod", there is nothing but Hashem in the world. "Yifros alenu succat shelomecha", we are in Hashem's Succah which is all around us. This is why He is called 'Hamakom', The Place.
4. The humility of the Succah is in order to humble us. Reminding us to act with kindness and patience toward people in emulation of Hashem's patience and kindness to us.

The Abot lived in tents in order that they never forget that they are just visitors in this world.

5. The Succah means isolation from the nations of the world. "V'avdil etchem mikol ha'amim", "And I have separated you from all the nations"

6. The 'Peshat', reason for the Mitzvah of Succah, is in order that we should know that Hashem caused Israel to dwell in Succot and took them out of Egypt. We should look at the sechach/roof and remember, "L'maan yedeu derotechem", that we were once in the wilderness unprotected and yet more secure than any other time in our history.

The only true security is Hashem; that is the lesson of Succot. We enter the Succah and endeavor to gain more True Knowledge with sensory perception, that Hashem alone is our Succah and our sole Protection in all matters, forever and in both worlds.

The Preferred Time for Taking the Lulab and Etrog ..Rabbi Eli Mansour

The Misva of Lulab applies specifically during the day; one does not fulfill the obligation if he takes the Lulab at night. The Torah speaks of taking the four species "on the first day" ("Ba'yom Ha'rishon" – Vayikra 23:40), indicating that the Misva must be fulfilled specifically during the daytime hours.

The earliest time for taking the Lulab and Etrog in the morning is Netz Ha'hama, or sunrise. Nevertheless, one who took the Lulab and Etrog before sunrise has fulfilled his obligation, provided that he did so after the point of Amud Ha'shahar (daybreak, when the sun's rays first appear on the eastern horizon).

While this is the commonly accepted Halacha, the Sha'ar Ha'kavanot records the practice of the Arizal (Rav Yishak Luria of Safed, 1534-1572) to take the four species specifically before sunrise (though after Amud Ha'shahar), and in the Sukka. The Arizal's practice is novel not only in that he performed the Misva before sunrise, but also in that he performed the Misva before the morning prayer service.

Seemingly, as Hacham Ovadia Yosef notes, the principle of "Tadir Ve'she'eno Tadir, Tadir Kodem," which means that a more frequent Misva should be performed before a less frequent Misva, should require praying before taking the Lulab. Presumably, the Arizal had valid reasons for taking the Lulab and Etrog before sunrise.

Those who follow the Arizal's customs should take the four species in the Sukka before sunrise, but for everyone else, the Misva should not be performed until after sunrise. It is proper, however, to follow the Arizal's custom of taking the Lulab and Etrog in the Sukka before the morning prayer service – either in

one's own Sukka, before he comes to the synagogue, or in the synagogue's Sukka, before praying.

Must one recite the Birkot Ha'shahar (morning blessings) before taking the Lulab and Etrog in the morning?

It is clear that one must wash his hands before performing the Misva of Lulab, in order to remove the Tum'a (impurity) from his hands. Thus, one must certainly wash and recite the Beracha of "Al Netilat Yadayim" before taking the Lulab and Etrog. A slightly more complicated question arises concerning the recitation of Birkat Ha'Torah before taking the four species. Halacha forbids studying Torah before reciting Birkat Ha'Torah in the morning. But is it permissible to perform a Misva, such as the four species, before reciting Birkat Ha'Torah?

The Mishna Berura (commentary by Rav Yisrael Meir Kagan of Radin, 1839-1933), in Siman 47 (Se'if Katan 7), rules that it is permissible to perform a Misva before reciting Birkat Ha'Torah. Even though a person thinks in his mind the Halachot relevant to the performance of the Misva, this is permissible before Birkat Ha'Torah because one does not engage in these thoughts for the purpose of Torah learning. In principle, then, it would be permissible to take the Lulab and Etrog before reciting Birkat Ha'Torah in the morning during Sukkot.

Practically, however, as Hacham Ovadia Yosef writes in his work Hazon Ovadia – Sukkot (footnote, p. 372), one must recite Birkat Ha'Torah before taking the four species. It is customary to recite before performing this Misva the "Le'shem Yihud" prayer, which contains several verses from Tanach. It is forbidden to recite verses from Tanach before reciting Birkat Ha'Torah, and therefore one should ensure to recite Birkat Ha'Torah before taking the four species in the morning during Sukkot.

Thus, while most of the morning Berachot do not need to be recited before one takes the Lulab and Etrog, one should recite "Al Netilat Yadayim" and "Birkat Ha'Torah" before performing this Misva.

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