SUKKOS MAGAZINE

TYH FOR OUR 100TH ISSUE!

THANK YOU HASHEM!

THE NEKUDA TOVA

ISSUE #100 | SUKKOS 2026 | סוכות תשפ"ז

לזכות עלקא דבורה בת מרים רבקה חנה



AHHHHHHH SUKKOS!

In this year's Nekuda Tova Sukkos magazine, we're going to uncover the ahhhhhhh of Sukkos.

We'll dive into the deep simcha of Sukkos and the multifaceted avodah of Hoshana Rabbah. We'll soak in our "one last day together" of Shemini Atzeres, and when it's all done, become "Masters of Returning" to our "normal" lives in a whole new light. We'll learn how to turn mistakes into merits, we'll get a taste of Sukkos in *Yerushalayim Habenuya* even if we are still in *galus*, and connect to two of our tzadikim whose yahrtzeits fall on Sukkos, Rebbe Nachman of Breslov and the Vilna Gaon.

Through it all, one theme that emerged, beginning with the beautiful cover artwork and weaving its way throughout the magazine, is the Divine embrace that is the mitzvah of Sukkah.

Building on the ideas of the Arizal and the Zohar, the Alter Rebbe *(Likkutei Torah, Nitzavim)* connects Tishrei with the pasuk of **שמאלו תחת לראשי וימינו תחבקני** — *His left hand is beneath my head, and His right hand embraces me.* He writes that Aseres Yemai Teshuva is a mix of trembling and awe together with rejoicing, and that was a time of *'His left hand is beneath my head.'* But now that we've moved on to Sukkos we have entered a state of pure rejoicing, a time of *"His right hand embraces me."*

In the Alter Rebbe's words: "Just as a person would give his friend a warm embrace, holding him close, so to on Sukkos, the *s'chach* and the three walls are an expression of Hashem's embrace and closeness (**בחי' חיבוק וקרבת ד' ממש**), surrounding and encompassing a person from every side, not allowing him to be in a state of separation, *chas v'shalom*."

To be inside the sukkah is to be inside a hug from Hashem. The most authentic joy we can taste in this world is the pure spiritual bliss of our neshamos experiencing closeness with Hashem. If we can open our hearts to feel that embrace, Sukkos can become seven (or eight!) days of pure joy, feeling Hashem's loving embrace and embracing Him right back.

And that, indeed, is the ahhhhhhhhhh of Sukkos.

Ah freilichin Yom Tov!
The TYH Family

בסייעתא דשמיא

Published and distributed by TYH Nation
TYH.org



Thank You Hashem!

Thank you to the 350+ volunteers bringing the weekly Nekuda Tova to over 500 Shuls around the world!

Thank you to our Rebbe, Harav Yussie Zakutinsky Shlita

Thank you to the A-Team at TYH Nation!

Rabbi Menashe Uhr, Director of TYH Torah
Emily Camras, Art Director
Edited by Danny Louis
Yakov Wohlgelernter
Yakov Josephy
Chana Ogun

Art by Penina Schleider
Art from the Heart
Cover, pages 20 & 32
Artbypenina.com
penina@artbypenina.com

We want to hear from you!

GOT AN AWESOME IDEA TO SHARE?

Send feedback and content submissions to Torah@TYHnation.com

לזכות רפואה שלימה
יוסף אלי-ה בן רות נעמי



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Renovated Assets
Momo Bauman 4

Where Heaven and Earth Kiss
Rav Moshe Chaim Eade 8

Don't Wait for the Oven Timer
R' Ori Strum 10

Rebbe Nachman of Breslov 12

Masters of Returning
Nechemia Bochner 17

One More Day Together
R' Chaim Davies 20

Q&A with the B'yam Darkecha 22

Kavanos When Shaking the Lulav
Harav Yussie Zakutinsky Shlita 26

Simcha Through Giving
Rav Reuven Sasson 28

Don't Touch the Ground
Danny Louis 30

TYH WOMEN

Eight Day Hug
Shana Cohen 32

Behind the Artwork
Penina Schleider 37

TYH JUNIOR

The Vilna Gaon 36

TorahToons
Rabbi Shalom Lebowitz & Amir Cohen 38

Sukkos Torah
R' Pinchos Birnbaum 46

Find Fivel
Tani Guterman 50



Do you get the Nekuda Tova in your shul every week?

Sign up to have it delivered at no cost at TYHnation.com/Torah

RENOVATED ASSETS



Turning last year's mistakes into this year's merits

A savvy investor knows how to spot a fixer-upper property, put some work into it, and transform what looked like a liability into a valuable asset.

On Sukkos, we have the opportunity to do the same thing — taking our mistakes and failures, renovating them, and turning them into valuable assets. So how do we begin the renovation?

The Torah gives us a clue. It writes, **"ולקחתם לכם ביום הראשון,"** referring to the *daled minim* and instructing us to hold them near and dear to our open hearts on the "first day."

The first day of what, though? It's certainly not the first day of Tishrei. Chazal reveal the deep secret that Sukkos is "*rishon l'cheshbon ha'avonos* — the first day in accounting for our sins." Understood simply, after establishing a clean slate on Yom Kippur, now is the start of the new year for the purposes of calculating sin.

But let's look a little deeper.



Momo Bauman

But is Sukkos really the first day after Yom Kippur? There are a number of days between Yom Kippur and Sukkos! The presumption, it seems, is that everyone is so preoccupied with preparing for the *heilgicity* of Sukkos, that no one even has a *hava amina* to do an *aveirah*!

And this of course is *emes l'amitoi*. But perhaps in addition to the lack of time, there is a deeper meaning and significance to Sukkos being *rishon l'cheshbon ha'avonos*?

To gain some clarity, let's take a look at the various rungs on the *teshuva* ladder we've been climbing throughout this lofty time of year. We begin with what we call *teshuva m'yirah*, loosely translated as returning from a sense of fear and trepidation. The tzadikim uncover multiple layers within *teshuva m'yirah*; there is *yiras ha'oinesh* — which is apprehension of the grave consequences that our actions and thoughts bear. Consequences alone warrant repentance. Then we progress into *yiras ha'roimimus*; a sublime awareness of Hashem's omnipresence and we return to Him out of awe, which is quite literally awe-some.

Then we ascend to the highest stage of *yirah* with *yiras ha'chet* which the *seforim* explain to be an utter reverence and uncompromising unwillingness to frustrate our relationship with our Creator. And from the perspective of *teshuva*, it is our staunch commitment to restore and repair our standing with the *Ribono Shel Olam*.

All of this is critical and imperative to being a true *Oived Hashem*. However, it's all under the boundary-oriented rubric of *yirah*. It's all driven by what we don't want. We get back into shape and stay in-line to avoid consequences, refrain from disrespect and refuse a compromised relationship.

And then there's *teshuva m'ahava*, which transcends all of the prior phases of *teshuva m'yirah*. This is driven by our deep and inherent love for Hashem, the Source of our life and of all existence. It's not about restoring violated boundaries. It's about engaging in an intimate closeness out of profound love. As Yidden, we are uniquely positioned to attach ourselves to our Creator by aligning with His will, performing His mitzvos and becoming one with His Torah. All of this *yichud* and intimacy is experienced by our neshama's capacity for *ahava*.

This reality is captured and expressed by the word *ahava* and *echad* sharing the numerical value of 13, which reflect the 13 attributes of *rachamim* that reveal Hashem's infinite love (אהבה) for, and oneness (אחד) with the Jewish people.

The Baal Hatanya taught extensively that a prerequisite to all *ahava* is a foundation of *yirah*. But the goal is to utilize the foundation of *yirah* to build upon it a massive, beloved edifice of *ahava*.

To expound upon this, we can focus on the difference between *iss'kafya* and *iss'hapcha*. *Iss'kafya* is a mode of subduing the *yetzer har*a and batting him away, disregarding what he has to offer, and recognizing it as the emptiness it is. In that sense, we have no use for what is being presented to us. We knock it down, neutralize it and keep it at bay until the next time it

THE BAAL HATANYA TAUGHT THAT A PREREQUISITE TO ALL AHAVA IS A FOUNDATION OF YIRAH.

continued on next page

IT DOESN'T SAY YOU SHOULD KNOCK OUT THE YETZER HARA. IT SAYS TO SHLEP INTO THE BEIS MEDRASH!

inevitably strikes back, and then we fight back again.

Iss'hapcha, however, is the process of taking that which is offered to us by the *yetzer hara* and transforming that energy into *avodas Hashem*. If we are overcome by a surge of energy and a passion for something illicit is ignited, we redirect and channel that very energy and passion towards Hashem. As the Gemara teaches *(Succah 52b)*, **אם פגע בך מנוול זה משכהו לבית המדרש**, if this *menuval* (the *yetzer hara*) approaches you, drag him to the *Beis Medrash*!" (Chi-chi-wah-wah . . .)

It doesn't say knock him out. It says to *shlep* him into the *Beis Medrash*! We are invited to engage in the *avodah* of *iss'hapcha* and transform the very energy offered to us by the *yetzer hara* and let it catapult us into shul for a fire learning seder!

To go even deeper, the seforim reveal that the lure to all indulgence in illicit pleasures — what we call *taiva* — is the *ohr* of *chessed* / *ahava* that falls to and is trapped by *klippah*. We get to experience that *ohr* by refraining from indulgence — and that's why an erroneous attempt to experience the *ohr* by indulging is met immediately with a grave disappointment and emptiness. The *ohr* that was trapped dissipates and flees once the sin is committed.

This is the intent of Chazal's *drasha*: **ואהבת את ד' אלקיך בכל לבבך, בשני יצריך ביצר טוב, וביצר הרע** in the edict to love and serve Hashem with all of our hearts; the plural form captures both "chambers" of our heart, the *yetzer hatov* and the *yetzer hara*. But how can we love and serve Hashem with our *yetzer hara*!? It can't mean to merely disregard and marginalize the influence of the *yetzer hara*. That would not qualify as serving Hashem with both *yetzers*. But based on the above, it becomes clear. We incorporate the *yetzer hara* into our *avodas Hashem*. We pay close attention to the *techunas hanefesh* that our *yetzer hara* embodies in its distorted form of *ohr*.

Are we predisposed to getting angry? That is the *ohr* of *gevurah* that is falling to *klippah*. We redirect that energy towards *avodas Hashem* and activate the *middah* of *gevurah* in the form of *yiras shomayim*. Are we inclined to be lured to *taivah*? That is the *ohr* of *chessed* and *ahava* that is falling to *klippah*. We transform that energy and channel it to its proper use of *ahavas Hashem* and *ahavas Yisroel* (which is, at its core, another form of *ahavas Hashem*, by which we love every Yid for the **חלק אלוק ממעל** that he or she is, uniquely revealing a particular ray of divine light).

This is a very practical strategy. When *taiva* comes our way, we can try to redirect our attention to kind-heartedness for our loved ones. If we can maintain the presence of mind (and not "fall for the *shtus*!") we will find it particularly conducive in conjuring up empathy and a compassionate heart, because the *yetzer hara* already infused us with the energy of *ahava*. You're just using the jujitsu move of harnessing the very force and energy he gave you toward your own holy goals. *G'vaaalt!*

There is an incredibly powerful and succinct quote from Rav Tzodok HaKohen *(Tzidkas Hatzaddik, 44)* that captures this idea:

> **מי שיש לו תשוקה גדולה לתאות הגוף אל יתעצב בזה לחשוב כמה פגום הוא שיש לו תשוקה כל כך. כי אדרבא הוא כלי מוכן לתוקף אהבת ותשוקת דרישת האמת.**
>
> "Someone who has a particularly strong drive towards physical temptations shouldn't be saddened by this, thinking that he must be defective if he has such desires. On the contrary, **this desire is a tool, already prepared for the greatest levels of love and passionate pursuit of the truth.**"

We can utilize the holy *avodah* of *iss'hapcha* to transform the very passion and energy of *ahava* that

is being offered, encased in *klippah*, perform a *tikun* on it, and unleash its flow in its perfected state. We will then experience the true vitality of *chessed* in the form of holy *ahava*. *Ah Moiridigeh Zach!*

And herein lies the secret of *teshuva m'ahava* and its capacity to transform our transgressions into merits. The Gemara (**יומא פו:**) quotes one of the greatest *ba'alei teshuva* of all time, the holy *amorah*, Reish Lakish, as saying, **"גדולה תשובה שזדונות נעשות לו כזכיות**, *teshuva* is so tremendous that it transforms willful sins into merits." The Gemara then goes on to clarify — in line with the distinction we drew earlier — that this is only true about *teshuva m'ahava*. *Teshuva m'yirah*, by contrast, only transforms willful sins into inadvertent ones (**זדונות נעשות לו כשגגות**).

After we've done the important step of *iss'kafya*, of acting from here, we can then move on to performing *teshuva m'ahava*. And when we do that, we will reengineer everything the *yetzer hara* gave us — even that which he successfully tripped us up with — and transform it into valuable assets. *Zechuyois mamish!*

> THE FIRST DAY OF SUKKOS IS CALLED THE "FIRST DAY OF SINS," BECAUSE THEY BRING ABOUT AN ACCOUNTING OF ALL OF OUR SINS, IN ORDER TO TRANSFORM THEM TO MERITS.
>
> BARDITCHEVER REBBE

Back to our original question of why Sukkos is called Yom Rishon. In his seminal piece (made famous by the *moshol* of **המלך בשדה**), the Baal HaTanya quotes a *pasuk (Shir HaShirim 2:6)*: **שמאלו תחת לראשי וימינו תחבקיני**, *His left hand is under my head and His right hand embraces me."* He explains that Hashem's left hand refers to the *yomim nora'im*, which relate to the *gevurah* and *din*, and His right hand refers to Sukkos, which is rooted in *chessed* and *ahava*.

Now it all becomes clear. The *aseres y'mei teshuva* are days of awe-inducing reverence, where our neshama's capacity for *yiras shomayim* is particularly unlocked. During this auspicious time, we have the uniquely human opportunity to draw down the revelation of Hashem's kingdom from its revelation on high, all the way down to this physical and material world. The modality of the time is *gevurah*, the governing divine attribute is *din*, and our *avodah* is one of *teshuva m'yirah*.

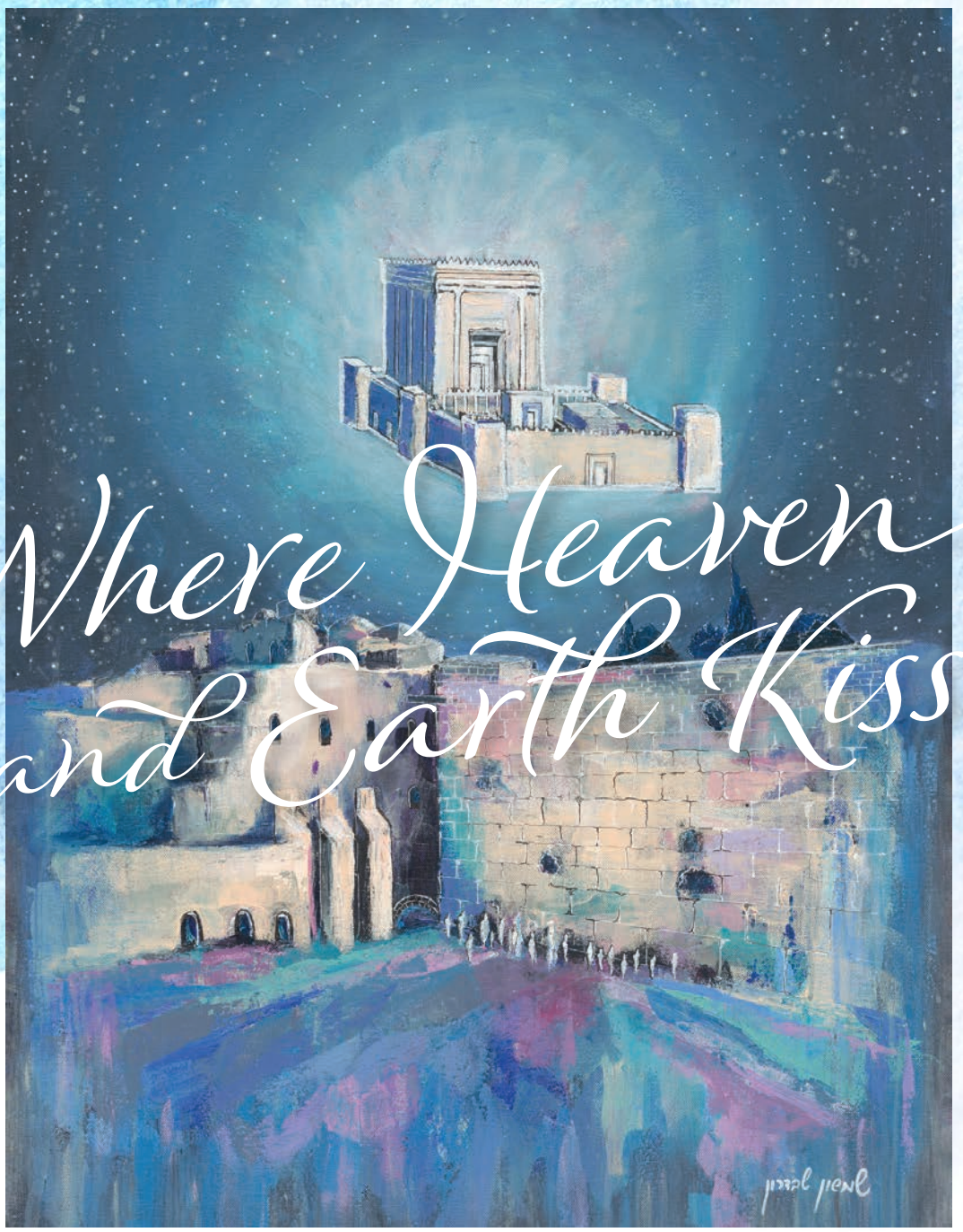
Sukkos, however, begins the *yemino techavkini*. We are in the loving embrace of the Sukkah. We are surrounded by Hashem's infinite love and kindness. *Chessed* is the modality and our *avodah* is *ahava*. And this is where and when we achieve the lofty levels of *teshuva m'ahava*.

The *heilige* B'nei Yissaschar (**אגרא דכלה אחרי מות אות יט'**) quotes the holy Berditchever **זי"ע** :

> **"ואם כן יום א' דחג מיקרי ראשון לחשבון עונות, שמביאים לחשבון כל העונות ומחפשין אחריהם, כדי שיתוספו זכיותיהם כי מהם נעשה זכיות."**
>
> " . . . Therefore, the first day of Sukkos is called the "first day of calculating sins," because they bring about an accounting of all of our sins, in order to transform them to merits."

Now that we can successfully utilize the transformative power of *teshuva m'ahava* to reconstruct all of our failings into our greatest assets, we can now start to count them all! *Rishon l'cheshbon ha'avonos* because now specifically with the other-worldly capacity of *teshuva m'ahava* we can remodel our past, and revamp our entire journey as pure merits. **זכויות ממש**!

May we all be *zoche* to cling to the awe and reverence of the *yomim nora'im* while ascending into the embrace of Hashem's infinite love as unleashed on Sukkos. Let's undertake our *avodas Hashem* with renewed vigor, armed with all of our transformed assets thanks to the power of *teshuva m'ahava*. *Ah gittin yumtiv!*



Art by Schwadron Art | www.schwadronart.com

Where Heaven and Earth Kiss



Rav Moshe Chaim Eade

You have arrived. Already from afar you see it. Even though it's nighttime, the sky is shining with light. Not a regular light, but something much brighter. Then it hits you: I am really here. I am about to enter the Beis Hamikdash in *Yerushalayim Ir Hakodesh*.

Coming to Yerushalayim for Sukkos is entrenched in the fabric of Jewish law and the Jewish soul itself. It is the culmination of the three holy pilgrimages and the time we download *simcha*, deep happiness, for the entire year. It is a heightened experience of coming to "see Hashem," as it were. And very deeply, to "be seen" by Him as well.

So let's talk about the idea of seeing and being seen.

The Beis Hamikdash was a lost and found where you went to find yourself.

We are all striving to be simple Yidden, so without getting too kabbalistic, let's just start with the basics and then go a little deeper. Before there was a world, there was only Hashem. That's right, nothing but The Infinite One. What is described by the tzadikim as a pure light, so good and so sublime. Hashem wanted, however, to have a special relationship with *am yisroel. B'shvil Yisroel shenikra reishis.* So Hashem decided to create a world, to have a people that could enjoy this relationship with Him.

However, this creation could not exist in the presence of Hashem's pure, powerful light. It would be like trying to charge your phone by plugging it into a nuclear reactor. The phone would simply cease to exist. So Hashem created a "space." A space that seems dark and devoid of this pure light. This "space" would ultimately allow creation to exist. And allow us to build this relationship.

But how would we, in the hustle and bustle of this world, remember our Creator? When I am so occupied with the rat race of life, caught up in my struggles, my anxieties, my bills, my schedules, my meetings, how would I remember my Source?

So Hashem said: I have placed inside every one of you a power so atomic, a light so good, a jewel so precious, that all of these can't compare even a drop in the ocean to the pureness of our soul. Yes, our soul. *Elokai, neshamah shenasata bi tehorah hi.* Our soul is so pure, so good. Hashem said: I put into you a soul, a point, a *pintele*, that is made of something that can never be touched by the challenge and darkness of this world. It simply is who you are. And from this place you will find Me.

When do you touch this place inside you so powerfully? When you come to the Beis Hamikdash. Coming to Yerushalayim is like coming to your soul in location. It is the place where heaven and earth are kissing. Where Hashem says: Even though I made this world that is dark, there exists a place where you will find Me (and where you will find you).

Everything that became lost is returned here. That's why, famously, the Beis Hamikdash had a "lost and found" section. This wasn't only for your favorite TYH sweatshirt you want to get back, but for finding yourself again. In Yerushalayim, we get ourselves back again.

So what does it mean to come to the Beis Hamikdash and see and be seen by Hashem? Every Jew all of a sudden feels seen by Hashem. He recognizes and proclaims, "I am the soul. I didn't focus on this until now, but now I do. And also, I see You, Hashem. You are more real than anything else in this world. I see You now. And You see me."

And when we feel seen by Hashem, we want to dance and sing! We barely slept on Sukkos because we were drawing down so much *ruach hakodesh* and singing through the night.

We shake the four species and feel our whole being vibrating with love and devotion to You! We have arrived. We are home.

And what if we are currently in a sukkah outside of Yerushalayim? We can always remember the words of our holy teacher, the Baal Shem Tov: **A Jew is where his thoughts are.** So wherever you are, you can be here in Yerushalayim.

May we all be here together soon!

A freilichen Sukkos!

Rav Moshe Chaim Eade is a Rebbe and Mashgiach in Yeshivas Aish HaTorah Jerusalem and Certified Mohel performing brissim throughout the Jewish world. Moshe Chaim Eade lives with his wife and children in Jerusalem, and enjoys packing guests into his home and singing late into the night in honor of the Holy day of Shabbos.

DON'T WAIT FOR THE OVEN TIMER



R' Ori Strum

If you've ever looked at the instructions on the back of a frozen meal, you may have noticed something fascinating. The heating instructions usually offer two options: OVEN and MICROWAVE. Whereas the OVEN option generally requires you to pre-heat the oven and cook for quite some time, the MICROWAVE option tends to be much quicker.

Take, for example, the classic "Smackin' Good" brand potato knishes, a delicious frozen food that I happen to be looking at as I'm currently writing this Dvar Torah. It says on the back of the box:

HEATING INSTRUCTIONS:
OVEN: Pre-heat oven to 400 F. Place frozen potato knish in pan. Heat 25 to 30 minutes.
MICROWAVE: Place one frozen knish in the oven for 1:45 minutes.



Same food. Same destination (your belly!). But the journey to get there is completely different. A conventional oven works by heating the air (and the walls of the oven), and the heat transfers slowly to the food. It is a lengthy process of warming the outside of the food (the environment), and then slowly traveling inwards via conduction. That's why it may take a long time, compared to the microwave option. In a microwave, electromagnetic waves (called microwaves) are sent directly into the food. These waves cause molecules in the food to move very quickly, and that molecular motion creates heat inside the food. So, because the heat travels directly into the food without waiting for heat to travel from the outside in, the heating process of a microwave is significantly quicker.

I was thinking, perhaps this is a beautiful illustration about the two settings for *Geulah*, redemption, as the Navi (*Isaiah* 60:22) says: **בעתה אחישנה** — *[I, Hashem, will] speed it up in due time.* Well, which one is it? Will redemption occur in its set time or will it be sped up? Our Sages explain (*Sanhedrin* 98a) that if we merit it, **אחישנה**, the *Geulah* will be hastened. If not, **בעתה**, *Geulah* will come in its pre-set time.

We are given two heating instructions for *Geulah*. Either we can use the OVEN method, **בעתה**, and just wait for history to unfold, to gradually heat up, until eventually the timer goes off. Or we can use the other — quicker — method, the MICROWAVE. We can tap into **אחישנה**. Instead of waiting and waiting for the oven timer to go off, we can hasten the redemption by applying a specific and directed heat source to where it matters most — we can fulfill our unique Divine service, our personal avodah.

I know what you are thinking. *Me? Bring the redemption? Who am I?* These thoughts are normal. How can I, little me, hasten the *Geulah*?

The beginning part of the *pasuk*, which tells us **בעתה אחישנה**, perhaps gives us a clue: **הקטן יהיה לאלף והצעיר לגוי עצום** — *The smallest shall become a thousand, the least shall become a mighty nation.* Greatness and power have nothing to do with size. It's true, we may be small in size, but Hashem gave us the ability to be so incredibly great and influential. Deep down, we are great. Indeed, the *pasuk* right before famously teaches us: **ועמך כלם צדיקים** — we are all righteous.

There is a part of us that is purely good and righteous. The Rambam writes that every person should view the entire world as perfectly balanced between merit and guilt, and your one mitzvah can tip the scale for the entire world. Do we think about this? Do we have this awareness? The Rambam did not write a joke book. He wrote the truth! He is highlighting our ability to influence the entire world. Yes, we may be small in size, but in ability and influence we are absolutely huge.

Chazal teach us that if the *Bais HaMikdash* is not rebuilt in our days, it is considered as having been destroyed in our days. At first glance, that sounds scary. But perhaps there is really a much more encouraging message inside. Chazal are revealing how much we are surely capable of. If I can be held accountable for its destruction, then I must also possess the ability to help build it.

Every positive deed adds another brick. Every good word brings us a step closer.

I recently did a little thought experiment with a GPS by putting in my home address as the "FROM" and the "TO" address. You know how the GPS responded? With a message: "Sorry, we could not calculate driving directions." Perhaps, because often finding ourselves is the single hardest journey of all. We so often look outward and try to fix everyone else. We blame others for problems that arise. But we neglect to look inward, at ourselves. We neglect to see ourselves for who we are and what we are capable of accomplishing.

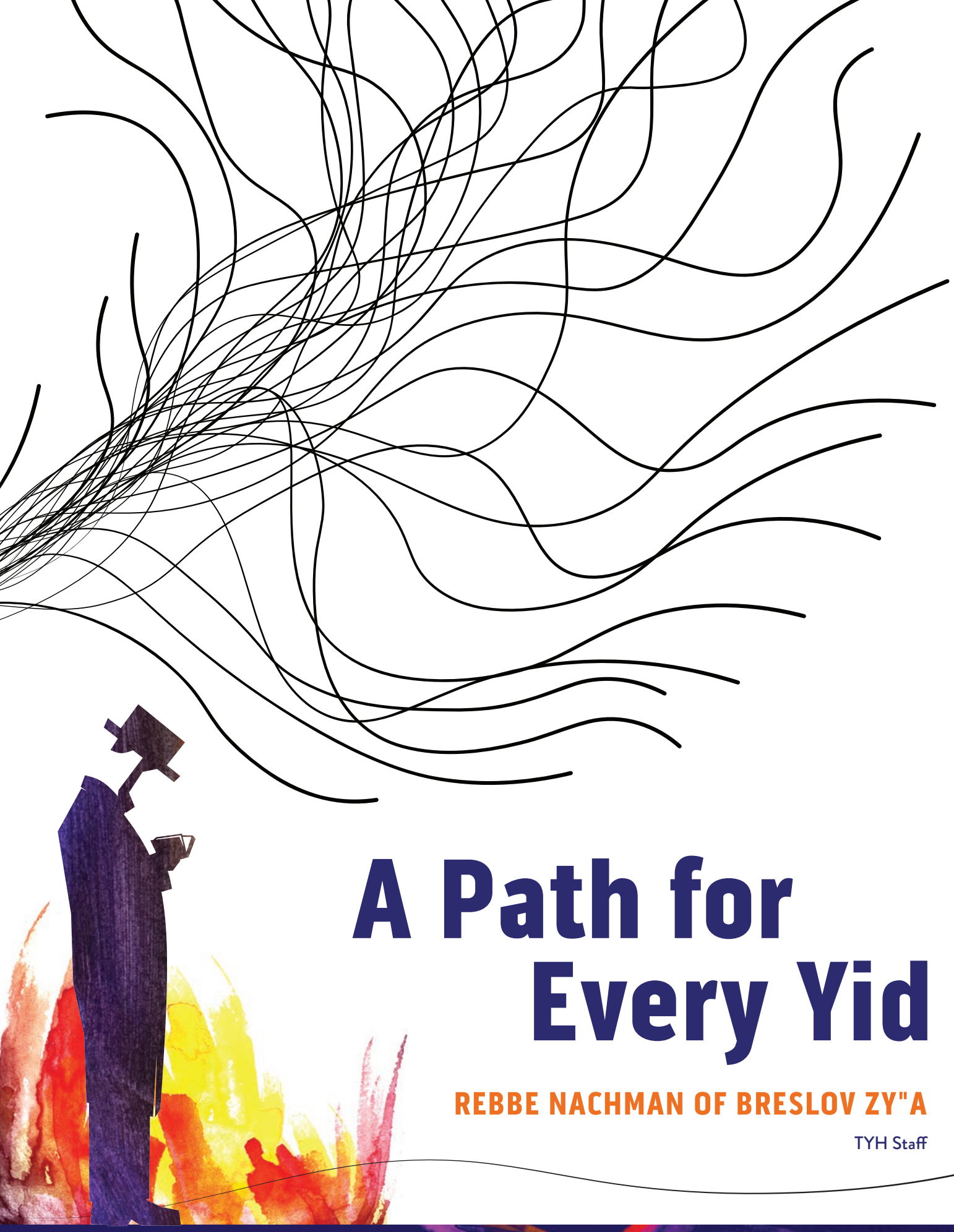
> INSTEAD OF WAITING FOR THE OVEN TIMER TO GO OFF, LOOK INWARD AND TURN ON THE MICROWAVE SETTING IN YOUR PERSONAL LIFE.

Remember, Hashem has placed extraordinary power in your hands. A quiet deed, a compliment to someone, or a simple thought of Teshuva, all yield tremendous power. You, with your personal avodah, can change the world. You, with your personal avodah, can hasten the *Geulah*. You, with your personal avodah, can cause us all to wait a little less for the timer to go off.

So, instead of waiting for the **בעתה** — OVEN timer to go off, look inward and turn on the MICROWAVE setting in your personal life, focusing your unique energy, doing your very best at each moment of your life. Who knows, but maybe, it will be your small deed/word/thought that tips the scale for the entire world, and we will be *zoche* to experience the ultimate redemption speedily (like microwave speedy) in our days!

Let's do it!

R' Ori Strum is a passionate yid, author and speaker. His books — Ready. Set. Grow. (Mosaica Press), Dove Tales, and Karpas: The Big Dipper — reflect his down-to-earth style and belief that inspiration can be found everywhere. You can find his shiurim on TorahAnytime. He can be reached at rabbistrumo@gmail.com



A Path for Every Yid

REBBE NACHMAN OF BRESLOV ZY"A

TYH Staff

Rebbe Nachman of Breslov was one of the most unique and impactful tzadikim of the last 250 years. He was a special type of leader, uplifting so many Yidden and infusing them with a fiery passion for Avodas Hashem. Remarkably, Rebbe Nachman of Breslov's influence has only continued to grow since his passing, becoming stronger and more widespread with each generation.

Rebbe Nachman had greatness in his blood. His mother, Feige, was the granddaughter of the Baal Shem Tov, the founder of *chassidus*, making Rebbe Nachman a great-grandson of a true revolutionary.

Rebbe Nachman's Torah is very unique. He was famous for always being *m'chazek* people and encouraging every Yid in every type of situation. But although "*ein shum yi'ush ba'olam klal!* — There is no despair in the world at all!" might be one of his most famous teachings, there is a lot more to Breslov Torah than meets the eye.

Rebbe Nachman provided a very real and practical pathway to serving Hashem, giving his students a variety of tools of *chassidus* and continuing the mission of the Baal Shem Tov to help us find Hashem in every aspect of our lives.

In honor of his 216th yahrtzeit on 18 Tishrei, Chol Hamoed, let's be *mekasher* to the tzadik by taking a look at some of the foundational teachings of Rebbe Nachman. And even if you don't see yourself as a "Breslover Chassid," maybe there is a tool you can pick up along the way that will enhance your *Avodas Hashem*.

The Greatness of Every Yid

Rebbe Nachman taught that there is no avodah or mitzvah in the world that is "off limits" to a Yid. Any Yid can grow and accomplish great things! One should see himself as being a "big tzadik" already, with the ability to accomplish great things according to his level.

Tikkun Chatzos

This is why Rebbe Nachman stressed to his talmidim the greatness of saying *tikkun chatzos*, a special tefillah said at midnight that focuses on mourning over the *churban Beis Hamikdash* (*Likutei Moharan Tinyana 67*). Although some might see this avodah as being only for great tzadikim, Rebbe Nachman taught otherwise, and many Breslover chassidim today say *tikkun chatzos*. He also revealed that although on the simplest level, *tikkun chatzos* is all about the *churban*, on a deeper level, a Yid should cry out to Hashem about whatever is going on with him personally *(ibid., 101)*.

Davening with Fire

Rebbe Nachman also taught that even saying *tikkun chatzos* in the middle of the night shouldn't take away from *tefillas Shacharis*. He taught his students to put all of their strength into the words of davening *(Sichos Haran 66)*. Even if someone doesn't feel connected while saying the words, he should try to say them with excitement and fire, and eventually the inner feelings will come *(ibid., 75)*.

This is not "fake it till you make it," but rather a true power that we have to influence our heart through the motions of the body. He taught that we should be happy with whatever davening we can have, even if we can just read the words like a schoolchild, and not be discouraged if we struggle with having the right intentions all the time.

הַכְּלָל: שֶׁהָאָדָם צָרִיךְ לְהַכְרִיחַ עַצְמוֹ בְּכָל הַכֹּחוֹת לְכָל הַדְּבָרִים שֶׁבִּקְדֻשָּׁה, מְאֹד, בִּפְרָט לְתִפְלָה. וְאִם אַף־עַל־פִּי־כֵן אֵינוֹ זוֹכֶה, אָסוּר לוֹ לִפֹּל בְּדַעְתּוֹ כְּלָל. וִיחַזֵּק אֶת עַצְמוֹ וִיחַיֶּה אֶת עַצְמוֹ בְּכָל מַה דְּאֶפְשָׁר.

As a rule, one must push himself to do every holy task with all his strength, and specifically to daven properly. But if nevertheless one does not merit to achieve this, it is forbidden for him to become discouraged at all! Strengthen and cheer yourself as much as you can.

continued on next page

Learn the Whole Torah

Rebbe Nachman held that every Yid should set out to learn the whole Torah and try to feel Hashem's presence in every word he learns. He should make time to learn whenever possible, start a sefer, finish it, and then start it again *(Sichos Haran 76)*. Breslover *chassidim* are known to always have pocket-size *seforim* with them, utilizing any extra time to *chap arein*!

He encouraged his *chassidim* to finish all four sections of Shulchan Aruch every year. If one is learning and doesn't fully understand something, don't "get stuck" and risk losing your learning routine. Move along to the next part, and you will see that the next time you review your learning, Hashem will help you understand it better.

Turning Torah into Tefillah

Rebbe Nachman taught that when someone learns something, it starts as something intellectual, as thoughts in our mind. But a Yid should then take that idea and ask Hashem to help him internalize it and acquire whatever good traits are related to it. In this way, we "turn our Torah into tefillah."

Hisbodedus

A classic Breslov practice is *hisbodedus*, or isolated, private prayer. A Yid has to live his whole life with Hashem by his side and find Him in everything he does. This doesn't only mean asking Hashem for the things he needs in his own words, but rather discussing every aspect of life with Him.

The main thing is to become comfortable talking to Hashem in your own words and realizing that He loves you, He is close to you, and He wants to hear from you!

For some people, *hisbodedus* starts with simply speaking to Hashem and telling Him everything that happened that day, and then just letting the conversation flow — sharing what happened, how he felt, what he wishes he could do better, what he is grateful for, and so on.

There is no right or wrong way to do *hisbodedus*. The main thing is to become comfortable talking to Hashem in your own words and realizing that He loves you, He is close to you, and He wants to hear from you! It's not always easy to make time for this every day, but it is one of the most powerful ways to build your personal relationship with Hashem *(see sefer hishtapchus hanefesh, a compilation of all Rebbe Nachman's Torah on hisbodedus)*.

Eating with Holiness

When we eat, says Rebbe Nachman, we can access *heoras haratzon (Liku"m Tinyana 7:10)*, a feeling of Hashem's kindness to us and an increase in our desire to get close to Him. When one eats, he feels Hashem's *shefa*, His outpouring of kindness, and he can become filled with a strong yearning to connect to Him in return. It's as if we are making "eye contact" with Him.

Ahavas Yisroel

Rebbe Nachman taught his talmidim that the love one Yid feels for another Yid should be so obvious that people who observe it should be taken aback by the powerful Ahavas Yisroel they are witnessing *(Chayei Moharan 292)*. He taught his talmidim to be *m'karev* other Yidden, to bring them closer and closer to *avodas Hashem* wherever possible, all through the power of their pure love for them and a desire to share the truth of Torah with them.

Mitzvah Gedola Lihyos B'Simcha Tamid!

Rebbe Nachman coined the famous phrase, "*Mitzvah gedola lihyos b'simcha tamid* — it is a great mitzvah to be happy, always!" *(Liku"m Tinyana 24)* This might sound simple, but we can't just flip a switch and become happy. It is a lifetime avodah that involves acquiring real tranquility, connecting everything that happens to us back to Hashem's kindness, and understanding that everything that comes our way is for our best.

But even the feeling of happiness itself is important. He even taught people to do external actions to brighten their own mood when they don't currently feel happy *(ibid)*.

Basic Yiddishkeit, says Rebbe Nachman, should be enough to fill us with joy. A Yid should be so happy that he's a Yid! He gets to do so many mitzvos, learn Torah, and live a life full of meaning! *(Chayei Moharan 593)*

Holy Aspirations

Although Rebbe Nachman taught his students to be *b'simcha* with whatever they have in Yiddishkeit, he also taught them never to be satisfied with what they've already achieved, but rather to keep working toward acquiring the greatest levels in *avodas Hashem*. No peak should be too high to conquer, and we should keep climbing! *(Likutei Moharan 6)*

Finding Hashem When We're "Low"

Rebbe Nachman taught that a Yid can find Hashem even in the lowest of places, with work. He held that this is actually a much more common avodah, as a person may find himself in a "low" state frequently. His main focus at those times should be to remember that Hashem is with us in every situation, standing at our side.

However you're feeling at the current moment, it is from there that Hashem wants you to serve Him.

Whenever a person falls in his spirituality, it is another opportunity to stop and find Hashem at that level. In this way, the person merits to reveal Hashem's presence in a brand-new place where it was never revealed before *(ibid)*.

Dealing With Spiritual Disconnect

Avodas Hashem, he would teach, shouldn't be based on how we feel. Even if we feel spiritually disconnected (called "*katnus*," or smallness), we shouldn't stop pursuing any mitzvah. We should keep doing the simple actions of *avodas Hashem* with humility, because even if we don't feel just how great those actions are, the truth is that they haven't gotten any smaller!

However you're feeling at the current moment, that's how Hashem wants you to serve Him. Even a "little bit" is a lot in *ruchniyus*. One should respect even the slightest move in the right direction *(ibid)*.

Temimus Up'sheetus

A common theme in Rebbe Nachman's teachings is the need for a Yid to have emunah full of *temimus up'sheetus* — simple but steadfast — and to engage in Yiddishkeit as it is, not trying to be anything special other than a regular Yid (which is already truly special!). A Yid should connect to Hashem from wherever he is, not only with his intellect and thoughts, but with his whole heart *(Liku"m Tinyana 12 and 19)*.

continued on next page

Fighting the Desire for Money

We all have a natural desire for many things, such as food and water. Rebbe Nachman taught that there is a separate natural desire for money (*taavas mamon*). A person has a craving to amass wealth, which can lead to all sorts of issues. He would tell his students that an important way to beat this temptation is to excel in the mitzvah of giving tzedaka *(see Liku"m 23, Sipurei Maasiyos 12)*.

Hishtokekus (Yearning)

Another amazing avodah that Rebbe Nachman emphasized was *hishtokekus*, or yearning. We might think that yearning is only valuable because it pushes us to eventually reach greater levels in avodas Hashem — as the saying goes, **ואין לך דבר העומד בפני הרצון**, "nothing stands in the way of one's will." But Rebbe Nachman taught that holy yearning is much more than just a means to get somewhere else. The yearning itself is a powerful avodah. Even when a person has not yet reached the level he longs for, the very fact that he truly wants to come closer to Hashem is precious and creates a real closeness to Him *(Sichos Hara"n 51)*.



The Fire Burns On

The backbone of all these teachings is that Hashem is very real. He is with us in everything we do, and He wants us to serve Him from exactly where we are.

Rebbi Nachman's Torah demonstrates that when two *middos* of *avodas Hashem* seem to contradict each other, we don't have to settle for 'one.' We can feel good about what we've done without losing our motivation to do more, and we can be motivated to do more without being discouraged by what we haven't done. We can live with real joy, even while we go through painful challenges. We can feel like we really are a big, big tzadik, while also feeling like we have barely just gotten started in our spiritual growth. We can be obsessively in love with another Yid while also not being negatively influenced by his mistakes.

We can learn when to focus on which *middah* to give us the right balance of living a life of *simcha* and *dveykus* and non-stop growth! It takes intentional, inner work to internalize this, but it can be done and we should not settle for anything less than holding on to both truths at the same time.

Rebbe Nachman left behind a real and practical path in *avodas Hashem* — a way for any Yid, on any level, to live a meaningful life with a deep connection to Hashem. Perhaps that is why, more than two centuries after his passing, more and more Yidden continue to discover his teachings and find themselves strengthened by them. Rebbe Nachman famously said, "My fire will burn until the coming of Moshiach." Looking at the way his teachings continue to spread and inspire Yidden today, those words feel more alive than ever.



Masters of Returning



Nechemia Bochner

Almost every year, something happens to me during one of the strangest moments of the year.

It's Hoshana Rabbah, the "last day" to seal our fortune for the year, the culmination of everything we've been striving for throughout the Yamim Noraim. The journey that starts in Elul comes to its crescendo during this mysterious *minhag* of the *nevi'im*. After fasting, davening for hours, crying, laughing, dancing and yearning, the *tefillos* seem to get more and more intense as we repeatedly plead, *Hoshana, Hoshana.*

And then it all comes to a sudden stop with this final action.

We take our *hoshanos* and we hit them on the floor. The *kavanos* are so exalted that many of us don't even attempt to have any. We trust the *nevi'im*, people who genuinely heard Hashem's voice, and we follow their lead. With nothing left to do and nothing left to say, we hit these five simple branches on the ground in a last effort to accomplish what we've been trying to build.

continued on next page

And it's at that moment I usually start crying under my tallis.

It just happens and for years I didn't really know why I was crying or what it was about. When I stand up, I feel lighter, almost free. Over the years, I've come to identify that moment as a type of deep and beautiful surrender into Hashem's will. But that moment doesn't really begin on Hoshana Rabbah. It starts much earlier…

From the beginning of Elul there is an energy in the air. A movement of desire, yearning and commitment to try to come home to ourselves and to Hashem. There's an urgency to fully take advantage of everything these awesome days have to offer, to really meet the King in the field, to crown Him as my Father and King on Rosh Hashanah, to come back to Him and cleanse myself on Yom Kippur. To become the best version of myself.

And while the *yomim noraim* are an amazing and transcendent experience, they can also be intense, especially when you put all your kochos into it. Sometimes, the yearning to get close can highlight how far we still have to travel in our inner work and avodas Hashem. Often, our deep *ratzon* for growth brings hopes and dreams and sometimes hidden expectations. Sometimes even an almost desperate need to make sure we "get there." And when we are striving so much to "get there" it can imply that we are not satisfied with the "here".

And then after all the ratzon, all that desire and yearning to move ahead, to be closer, it's time to shift to a completely different energy. We head towards Sukkos. We shift to an attitude of love and acceptance. It's time to rest and trust the process, to stop trying and start a kind of deep, holy sitting — *leisheiv basukkah.* A time to descend with these exalted lights we tasted and bring them down with us into our everyday lives. A time for deep integration.

There was a time for *ratzon* and running toward being better. And now we transition into a time of returning and sitting. Rebbe Nachman teaches that on the path of teshuvah we need to be *baki b'ratzo* and *baki b'shov*, masters of running and masters of returning.

Running towards Hashem makes sense, but what is a master of returning?

For me, it means returning to our "normal" selves, with all our normal challenges, but with a totally different light. We need to integrate, but in a specific way. Not by holding on to the light of those high moments, but by learning to shine love, light and new perspective into our old darknesses. To return to the parts of ourselves that still need work and meet them differently. To be able to love and be loved, without needing to be perfect anymore. To return to the simplicity of the sukkah. To sit in a flimsy, temporary dwelling and somehow feel totally protected and held. To realize that I don't need to fix everything right now. I can simply sit with Hashem and allow myself to be held exactly where I am.

The *seforim* connect the days of Sukkos to **וימינו תחבקני**, Hashem's embrace. There is something unique about a hug. A hug shows: I can hold you. We don't need to fix anymore right now. I accept you, I love you, and I can hold all of you exactly as you are. We are invited into the Sukkah, a place of unconditional love, protection, and joy and our *avodah* on Sukkos is simply to receive that hug. To allow my deepest self to be held and loved by

> Hashem's Sukkos hug says: I accept you, I love you, and I can hold you exactly as you are.

Falling, Not Fallen

There's a line we sing all Sukkos, *harachaman hu yakim es sukkas dovid hanofeles*. The *meforshim* ask why *hanofeles* is present tense. We should be davening for Hashem to rebuild the sukkah that has fallen, in the past. But maybe the present tense is the whole point. We can still be standing while we're falling.

Hashem. And when we experience that, we can begin to do that for ourselves as well.

Sukkos is *zman simchaseinu*. The Maharal teaches that *simcha* comes from *shleimus*, from a sense of wholeness or completion. **כי השמחה היא מצד השלימות**. We tend to believe that *simcha* will come when all the pieces of our lives finally become okay. But maybe real *simcha* begins when I become okay with all the pieces of my life. All the pieces of myself. That is *shleimus*. That is *simcha*.

That is the precious gift that Hashem gives to us on Sukkos. A loving reminder that while we have so much more to go, we are exactly where we need to be and we can rejoice **now**. Sukkos teaches us to be *sameach b'chelko*, happy with what I have right now, even while I keep working toward more.

> Maybe those Hoshanos tears are where the ratzo and the shov finally meet.

During Sukkos, we open our hearts and allow this message to sink in. We've experienced running forward toward who we want to become, and we've experienced the deeper avodah of sitting with who we are. *Baki b'ratzo, baki b'shov.*

And with both of those experiences within us, we approach Hoshana Rabbah. Suddenly there is an air of Yamim Noraim again. The *tefillos* intensify. We circle the *bimah* again and again, pleading *Hoshana, Hoshana*. We are asking for more, reaching for more, striving again.

But there is a difference. *We* are not the same people doing the striving anymore. We have spent days sitting in the sukkah, days allowing ourselves to be held. We have learned that acceptance was never meant to replace growth. It was meant to change the place we grow from. We can give our avodah everything we have, while learning to let go of the results. We can strive from a place of acceptance.

And then comes that final, mysterious act. After everything we have done since Elul, after all the davening, fasting, crying, dancing, yearning and sitting, we are left holding five simple *aravos*. We execute one final act of *hishtadlus*. We hit them against the ground, and there is nothing more to do.

And I think that is why I cry.

Maybe those tears are where the *ratzo* and the *shov* finally meet. I still want so much. I still have so far to go. I hope I never stop yearning to grow and become closer to Hashem. But I am also learning that I can love every step of the way. I can give it everything I have, and then let go into Hashem and His plan for me.

So I take my *aravos*, the simplest of the four *minim*, and with tears in my eyes and joy in my heart, I leave them on top of the *Aron Kodesh*, right where they belong.

After all the trying, perhaps what's left is something much simpler.

Just me and Hashem.

Nechemia Bochner, co-founder of Kavana, is a dedicated teacher with over 15 years of experience. Known for making deep concepts easy to grasp, he inspires spiritual growth and connection to Hashem. A talented musician, he blends music and storytelling into his teachings, creating warm, immersive experiences. With a passion for helping others live meaningful lives, Nechemia empowers individuals to integrate Jewish wisdom into their daily experiences, fostering purpose and inner peace.

KAVANA
MINDFUL JUDAISM

To experience more of these ideas, check out the free Sukkos meditations on the Kavana app.

KavanaApp.com

One More Day Together



Artwork by Penina Schleider | Artbypenina.com



R' Chaim Davies

I'll admit it: I have a soft spot for the underappreciated Yamim Tovim. Shemini Atzeres is one of our *moadim* which is often overlooked and not given the credit it is due. Following in the footsteps of Sukkos, and dressed in the customary festivities of Simchas Torah, it's easy to never realize that there is something different going on — something very special indeed.

Chazal, however, saw it very differently. The *Gemara (Chagigah 17a)* tells us that the eighth day is a *regel bifnei atzmo* — a Yom Tov standing entirely on its own, with its own unique light to usher into our lives.

The *Medrash (Shir HaShirim Rabbah 7:2)* draws a direct parallel between the seven days of Sukkos culminating in Shemini Atzeres and the seven days of Pesach culminating, seven weeks later, in Shavuos — which is precisely why Chazal call both of those days *Atzeres*. From this, Rabbeinu Bachya *(Kad HaKemach, Atzeres)* arrives at a startling conclusion: **הא למדת ששמיני של חג זה שקול כיום מתן תורה** — Shemini Atzeres weighs out equal to the day of Kabbalas HaTorah!

> It is at this precise moment that Hashem turns to us and says: "Don't leave yet. Stay one more day. Just be with Me a little longer."

The parallel runs deeper. Just as Shavuos is linked to Pesach by seven weeks of gradual development through the Omer, each week corresponding to a different *Sefirah*, so is Shemini Atzeres linked to Sukkos by seven days of development through the *Ushpizin* — as we ascend, day by day, from finding our happiness in the physical realm towards something that lies altogether beyond it.

This is clearly a high-voltage day. But what is it all about?

The *Medrash (Tanchuma, Pinchas 16)* offers a beautiful analogy. Imagine a king who invites the entire kingdom to a massive banquet. As the party winds down and the last few guests don their coats and leave, the king collapses onto his couch, remaining at home with his close family. "You know what?" says the king. "We've been so busy with everyone else until now — let's spend some quality time together, just you and me! Nothing fancy, no ceremonials — just a light, intimate meal together with my loved ones."

During the times of the *Beis HaMikdash*, Klal Yisroel would bring a total of seventy bull *korbanos* — and, according to the *Gemara (Sukkah 55b)*, these offerings corresponded to the seventy primal nations of the world. Astoundingly, during Sukkos we also focus on tending to the spiritual needs of humankind at large; the *Beis HaMikdash* is, after all, a **בית תפלה לכל העמים**, a house of prayer for all of the nations.

But then comes Shemini Atzeres, and we would bring just one korban – a single bull; corresponding, according to the Gemara, to Klal Yisroel. **פר יחידי למה? כנגד אומה יחידה** — a singular bull, for the singular nation.

Rashi (*Bamidbar* 29:36), commenting on that single bull, gives us the phrase which, in a nutshell, defines the entire day:

> **לשון חבה הוא זה, כבנים הנפטרים מאביהם והוא אומר להם: קשה עלי פרדתכם, עכבו עוד יום אחד**
>
> *This is an expression of affection, like children taking leave of their father, and he says to them: your parting is difficult for Me — stay one more day.*

You see, we have been drawing close to *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* for almost two months now. Through *Chodesh Elul* we sought Him out; on Rosh Hashanah we crowned Him as our King; on Yom Kippur we stepped clean out of this world; and then, for a full week, we moved out of our comfortable homes and into a fragile little hut to share a space with Him.

If Shemini Atzeres is Hashem saying, "It's hard to see you depart", Simchas Torah is Klal Yisroel replying, "Eibishter, for us it's inconceivable!"

And now it is drawing to a close, and ahead of us lies the long, dark, dormant stretch of winter, when the season of closeness quietly slips into our memories.

It is at that precise moment that Hashem turns to us and says: not yet. Stay one more day. Nothing fancy — no lulav, no sukkah, no *mitzvas hayom*; none of the trappings. Just be with Me a little longer.

Notice what's absent from Shemini Atzeres. Every other Yom Tov provides us an action, a mitzvah through which we encounter Hashem; Shemini Atzeres (like Shavuos) asks of us nothing at all, because on this day the encounter isn't mediated by a deed. Rav Tzadok HaKohen puts it beautifully: the joy of this day comes not from doing something which Hashem commanded, but from being *davuk* to that unextinguishable *nekudah* of connection with Hashem which lies at the core of every Yid *(Pri Tzaddik, Sukkos 43)*.

Shemini Atzeres is a Yom Tov dedicated to realizing that we are in a loving, personal relationship with *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* — He wants us.

Everything until now has been Hashem reaching towards us. But Klal Yisroel, it turns out, had something to say in return. For seven days we rejoice, seeking to find Hashem's presence within the physical. On the eighth day, we discover what we have been ascending towards all along: we reach for the Torah, take it in our arms, and passionately commit never to let go.

Simchas Torah is, by the standards of our *mesorah*, a very young institution. In Talmudic times, the Torah reading cycle was completed once in three years, not annually *(Megillah 29b)* — and the name Simchas Torah doesn't even appear in writing until the Machzor Vitry in the eleventh century! Yet it

continued on page 25

Q&A with the B'yam Darkecha

שואלים ודורשים

I often find that after the first night of Sukkos, my excitement to live and eat in the sukkah already starts to fade away. Sometimes, it even becomes uncomfortable. How can I keep that first-night geshmake throughout the rest of Yom Tov?



A mitzvah which is a *chov* (requirement/obligation) means that one cannot sustain himself spiritually without it. It is required for his spiritual nutrition, just like bread and water are needed to live. But we all understand that if one eats only bread and water, even though he can live, he is far from being happy, content, and healthy. The same with mitzvos: if we only connect to the mitzvos that are a *chov*, we are only eating bread and water, not living in a blissful spiritual way.

Another example of this — one fulfills his *chov* to learn Torah by learning once in the morning and once in the evening, but clearly, this is the bare minimum. Anyone who wants to have a *geshmake* spiritual life knows that more learning is needed. So it is in every area, there is a bare minimum, and then there are additions.

The seven days of Sukkos are "Elokus concentrated." These are seven days when one can change his whole spiritual perspective, living in Hashem's house, where the Shechinah dwells. As the Arizal teaches, the word **סוכה** is the numerical value of *shem havayah* and *shem adnus* together [91]. We walk into the sukkah and enter a totally new atmosphere!

If we focus on this, that these days give us spiritual nutrition, we will be able to work a little harder to connect to the mitzvah and grab as much as we can. These days can change the entire year ahead!

This is why Sukkos lasts for seven days: a full week is a set amount of time in which one can build a real connection. It is like *sheva brachos* with Hashem, a time to build our relationship with Him in the most intimate way. That is why, even though it isn't an actual *chiyuv* to eat in the sukkah during the rest of Yom Tov, it is still prohibited to eat outside the sukkah. That would be like a *chassan* who tells his *kallah* during *sheva brachos*, "Oh, today I'm going out for lunch with some friends," or, "Today I'm going to sleep at my parents' house." That would be a terrible betrayal! But if he stays home with her, it wouldn't be a betrayal for him to choose to simply not eat. The same is true of the sukkah: we are building our connection with Hashem, so let's be excited about it. It isn't just another item on our to-do list; it is a precious opportunity.

As the *chag* continues, it's normal that our excitement will dissipate, and we will start noticing some discomfort. This is our opportunity to show Hashem true loyalty. We can refocus and say, "even if it is a little hard, I deeply want this connection. I am not ready to give up this opportunity!"

This is also like a wedding. Most guests attend just to show their faces and show respect and affection for the *baal simcha*, and they usually try to think of the shortest way to go in and out. But a true friend who is genuinely happy for the *ba'al simcha* tries to attend as much as possible and not miss a thing!

I find myself thrown off by the various aspects of Hoshana Rabba. It is still zman simchaseinu, but there is a yamim nora'im type of atmosphere in the air. And then there are the hoshanos, and so on. Why are there so many different aspects in one day, and how do I connect to it all properly?

First of all, there really are a lot of things happening on this day, and by understanding each of the *avodos* separately, one can gain lots of clarity. We will not go into these details now (everyone should do that on their own, using a sefer they connect to). Let's focus on why it is that so many things come together on this day and why we tend to get thrown off.

MY REBBE, HARAV YITZCHOK MEIR MORGENSTERN SHLIT'A, LIKENS THE NON STOP CALL OF HOSHANOS TO A SMALL CHILD CRYING OUR "MOMMY, MOMMY, MOMMMMMYYY," AGAIN AND AGAIN!

Sukkos is made up of seven days. These days correspond to the seven *sefiros*, the seventh one being *malchus*. *Malchus* always corresponds to *emunah*, and therefore, there is a particular *avodah* of strengthening our emunah on this day.

Why do we say "hoshana" so many times? Isn't it repetitive? My Rebbi, Harav Yitzchok Meir Morgenstern *shlit'a*, likened it to a small child in need of help. He comes to his mother and calls out, "Mommy, mommy, mommmmmyyyy," again and again! This is what we are doing on Hoshana Rabba. On this day, the avodah isn't with big *mochin* and explanations; it is with simple, steadfast *emunah*. We are like a baby begging his mother to help him.

continued on next page

Now, during the *yamim nora'im*, we also have this *emunah*, of course. We believe that Hashem does everything and we need to ask Him for help. But we also do lots of *hishtadlus*. There is *vidui* and *teshuvah*, a certain feeling of dealing with our own actions. On Hoshana Rabba, we go back to simple *emunah* with zero *mochin*, like a little baby crying to his mother!

This explains that lack of clarity on this day, since it is a day when we don't use our intellect. We simply connect with Hashem since He is our father and mother. And just like a baby, when in his mother's arms, cries and laughs all at once, so too, we are in our dear Father's hands, so we cry and laugh together!

This also explains why some have a *minhag* to be awake on Hoshana Rabba, even though this often brings one to be tired or doze off during Shacharis. On Hoshana Rabba, we aren't driven by that intellectual calculation, we are driven by the passionate desire for real, deep *emunah* and closeness to Hashem.

This *avodah* prepares us for the great *yichud* of Shemini Atzeres.

JUST LIKE A BABY, WHEN IN HIS MOTHER'S ARMS, CRIES AND LAUGHS ALL AT ONCE, SO TOO, WE ARE IN OUR DEAR FATHER'S HANDS, SO WE CRY AND LAUGH TOGETHER!

I know that all the seforim say that Shemini Atzeres and Simchas Torah are the culmination of all of the yamim nora'im, but I find it very hard to focus on this, since everything is so chaotic. One guy is singing in your ear from one side, another one is pulling you into the circle, people are fighting with the gabbai about the length of the hakafos, etc. How can I connect with the great yichud within this balagan?

The reason for these *bilbulim* (spiritual confusions) is that we tend to think that the great yichud is dependent on some outer action. If only I would be able to sing the song I wanted or dance to the beat I wanted, I would be able to connect with the great *ohr*. This is yet another myth of the *yeitzer hara*, who makes a big deal out of small matters in order to steal the show.

The truth is that the great light of the *yichud* is accessible to everyone at his level and isn't dependent on anything — not on when you woke up, not on the guy next to you who is annoying you, not on anything!

The light of the *yichud* teaches us that *ein od milvado*; there is nothing but Hashem. He is everything, including all these things that are bothering us. The day is a mixed-up one specifically so that we should find Hashem within everything we do. We should have a takeaway from Simchas Torah that everything in our life is Hashem. Not only when we are davening or learning, but even when we are feeding or cleaning our children, we are also fully connected to Hashem.

This is why on this day we are very much dependent on things or people outside of us — the shul, the *gabbai*, and *baal korei*, etc., since our *avodah* is to realize that there too, everything is really Hashem.

This is also why on Shemini Atzeres we say *tefillas geshem*, since rain is a type of *shefa* that Hashem controls in a clearly independent way. The rain comes however and whenever He wants it to, even if it isn't convenient for us. We are supposed to realize that this is everything in life — Hashem orchestrated everything the way He wants!

When this is clear to us, we will always connect to Hashem and always have a great Simchas Torah, never getting boxed in by any of the *chitzoniyus*!

"One More Day Together" from page 21

has effectively overtaken the biblical Yom Tov on which it sits. What's the *penimiyus* of that?

Here's the clincher: Simchas Torah is Klal Yisroel's reply to Hashem's request for Shemini Atzeres.

If Shemini Atzeres is Hashem saying, "It's hard to see you depart", Simchas Torah is Klal Yisroel replying, "Eibishter, for us it's *inconceivable*!" We excitedly take the Sifrei Torah and dance with them deep into the night, and then we open them up again at Bereishis, immediately, so that not a single moment passes in which we are not engrossed in her light. The Tur *(Orach Chaim 669)* explains that this is why we begin again straight away: so that nobody can claim that Klal Yisroel finished the Torah and walked away from it.

On Simchas Torah we dance with the Torah at our center and no destination anywhere in sight – spinning until the sefer in our arms and the arms wrapped around it are no longer entirely distinguishable from one another.

Simchas Torah is a live-action expression of **ישראל אורייתא וקודשא בריך הוא חד הוא** — *The Jewish people, HaKadosh Baruch Hu, and the Torah are one* (*Zohar Acharei Mos* 73a). We enact this with our bodies: dancing in concentric circles with the Torah at the center and no destination anywhere in sight — spinning until the *sefer* in our arms and the arms wrapped around it are no longer entirely distinguishable from one another.

The Ramban writes in his Hakdama to Chumash that the whole of the Torah is composed of the Names of *HaKadosh Baruch Hu*. To hold a Sefer Torah against your chest is to hold tight to your Beloved. That is the type of simcha which can last the entire year; as the Shem MiShmuel writes, **ושמחה זו נותנת כח לכל השנה** *(Simchas Torah 5672)*.

The opportunity here is massive. If this is the day when *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* expresses His deepest will to be one with us, then today we are in a private audience with Hashem. Think of what that implies. Listen to the words of the *Zohar HaKadosh (Tzav 31b)*:

בההוא חדוותא לא משתכחי במלכא אלא ישראל בלחודייהו. ומאן דיתיב עם מלכא, ונטל ליה בלחודיה, כל מה דבעי שאיל, ויהיב ליה.

In that joy, none are found together with the King but Yisroel alone. And one who sits with the King and has Him all to himself — whatever he wishes, he asks, and He gives it to him.

Every day since Elul began, we've been saying **אחת שאלתי** that there is truly only one thing that I seek, Hashem: **שבתי בבית ד' כל ימי חיי** — that I may dwell in Your house all the days of my life. Shemini Atzeres is the day this entire season has been building towards; it's the day when Hashem says yes to our *bikush*, and when our dreams can become a reality.

Hashem, don't let these be our last moments of closeness together. Permanently establish Your *Dirah b'Tachtonim* right here among us. Come home.

May we all seize the opportunity to rejoice with HaKadosh Baruch Hu for one final day of this Yom Tov season, and truly internalize Hashem's love for us, and our love for Hashem. May the feelings which take root on Shemini Atzeres give us the energy to forge upwards and onwards for the rest of the year.

If you ask him, Reb Chaim will self-identify as a mevakesh Hashem. He is a maggid shiur in Columbus and the author of Walking with Light on Sefiras HaOmer and Awakening the Light on Chanukah. He lives in Columbus, Ohio, with his wife, Tova, and their four spectacular children.

KAVANOS WHEN SHAKING THE LULAV DURING HALLEL



Harav Yussie Zakutinsky Shlita
Rav, K'hal Mevakshei Hashem, Lawrence NY

Every time you **push the lulav out**, the *kavana* is the same — "I just want You, Hashem." The intention is to cut through all distractions (*gashmiyus* and *ruchniyus*) and connect to the ***essence of Elokus***.

Every time you **pull the lulav in**, you ask that connection to **manifest in a specific way**, depending on which of the four sets of *nanuim* it is. Each of the four sets builds on the previous one (i.e. we need the foundation of humility and ahavas Yisroel to then move on to ask for *hislavus* and *hisorerus*, and so on)

Each shaking is done **three times in each direction**, building intensity with each movement.

The **six directions** represent our tefillah to absorb that middah in every form and scenario it comes up in (from every "direction").

PART OF HALLEL	WHEN PUSHING LULAV OUT	WHEN PULLING LULAV IN	INTENTION	MAIN THEMES
First *Hodu*	*"Rebono Shel Olam I want to connect with You Yourself."*	Daven that this connection manifests as **humility** and **ahavas Yisrael**.	*Rebono Shel Olam I want my connection to Elokus to manifest itself by me being humble and loving every single Yid.*	• Humility • Ahavas Yisrael
First *Anah Hashem Hoshiah Na*	*"Rebono Shel Olam I want to connect with You Yourself."*	Daven that the connection be expressed through ***hislahavus*** and **hisorerus** — fire and excitement in Avodas Hashem, built on humility and love of others.	*Rebono Shel Olam, please allow me to express my connection with You through passion and excitement in my Avodas Hashem, while still fully retaining my humility and Ahavas Yisroel.*	• Hislavus • Hisorerus
Second *Anah Hashem Hoshiah Na*	*"Rebono Shel Olam I want to connect with You Yourself."*	Ask that the connection be expressed through **Torah** and **mitzvos** — for the right reasons — for the sake of Hashem, and with the intention to bring brachos to Yidden and bring the *Shechinah* out of *galus*.	*Rebonoh Shel Olam, please allow me to express my connection to You by learning Torah and doing Mitzvos for Your sake, with a fiery passion and a foundation of humility and ahavas yisroel.*	• Torah • Mitzvos Leshmah
Final *Hodu*	*"Rebono Shel Olam I want to connect with You Yourself."*	Ask that the connection be expressed through ***emunah***, ***bitachon***, ***simcha***, and ***yishuv hadaas***, built on all the previous layers.	*Rebonoh Shel Olam, please allow me to express my connection to You by having emunah, bitachon, simcha, and yishuv hadaas, through learning Torah and doing Mitzvos L'shma, on a foundation of humility and ahavas yisroel.*	• Emunah • Bitachon • Simcha • Yishuv Hadaas



Gently pull this spread out of its staples to take it on the go

Simcha THROUGH Giving



Rav Reuven Sasson

Simcha is a rare commodity, one that the entire world searches for desperately. The Torah teaches that there is no simcha as great as the *simcha* of Sukkos, about which the Torah says, *"vehayisa ach sameach."* This Yom Tov, then, can teach us the recipe for true, inner *simcha*.

Sukkos comes out at a very particular point in the year. A person has finished gathering in the crops from the field, and Hashem's blessing now stands before him in the produce he has brought home. For this reason, the Torah calls it *Chag Ha'Asif*.

The entire *chag* is built around rejoicing before Hashem and giving thanks for the blessing of a successful harvest and for one's efforts not going to waste. This gratitude flows from the recognition that every blessing comes from Hashem, and our joy in that abundance must be brought back to Him, in His presence, in the place that He chose.

However, before speaking of this celebration, the Torah teaches us something even more fundamental: "You shall rejoice in your *chag*, you, your son and your daughter, your servant and your maidservant, the Levi, the stranger, the orphan, and the widow within your gates" *(Devarim 16:14)*. Joy needs to be shared. We have to gladden the poor and the needy, whose hearts are burdened. We have to bring them light.

The purpose of coming before Hashem in gratitude is precisely to open our hearts to others in need.

At first glance, we might think that the primary mitzvah is the *aliyah laregel*, to come before Hashem to give thanks, and to care for the needy is a secondary obligation. But that is not how the *pesukim* are arranged. The Torah places the *pasuk* concerning the needy before the *pasuk* concerning giving thanks. From this we may understand something profound: the purpose of coming before Hashem in gratitude is precisely to open our hearts to others in need. One who truly recognizes that everything he possesses comes from Hashem will naturally share his blessings with those who have less.

Gratitude is meant to refine us, not to inflate us. It's easy to fall for the illusion of personal achievement, to fill our own hearts with pride, and to be left hardened and unable to care for the weak and needy. But if we know that our success came from Hashem, that won't happen. We will recognize what we've been given, and want to give to others in return.

Sukkos is about giving. It is about providing for those who lack. And in general, this is the true purpose of the Torah, and it lies at the very heart of a person's attachment to his Creator. For how does one attain *dveikus* with Hashem? By

following in His ways: "just as He is compassionate and gracious, so must you be compassionate and gracious" *(Sotah 14a)*. When a person becomes a giver, reflecting Hashem's own ways, he is elevated and clings to Him with an overwhelming *dveikus*. Through giving, we resemble Hashem, and those who resemble one another are bound together in an enduring bond that cannot be severed. Perhaps this explains Chazal's teaching concerning Avraham Avinu, that *hachnasas orchim* is greater than receiving the *Shechinah* *(Shabbos 127a)*, for the entire purpose of everything is that we become like Hashem through our actions.

From here we can understand the true essence of *simcha*: when we give to others, we come into contact with our own *neshamah*, and this fills us with boundless *simcha*. This is the *simcha* that we can learn from Sukkos. We can now understand why, specifically on Sukkos, at the very moment when a person is blessed with tremendous abundance, when his crops have been gathered and his storehouses are filled, the Torah instructs him to build a sukkah — so that he can bring in guests!

Ordinarily, when a person enters another's home, he feels a certain discomfort, as the "ownership" of the other stands out. And if he enters in order to ask for assistance, that discomfort only deepens. On



Teo K / Shutterstock.com

In the sukkah, everyone is a brother and everyone is a guest, and therefore the distance between giver and recipient naturally grows smaller.

Sukkos, however, the homeowner has also left his permanent home. He, too, sits in a simple, temporary dwelling near the street, and the distinction between host and guest begins to fade. The person in need can enter and enjoy what is being offered while feeling more comfortable than if he was sitting in his host's permanent home.

There is a sense of flow and simplicity in the sukkah, a warmth that comes precisely from the absence of a permanent house and a dominant owner. In the sukkah, everyone is a brother and everyone is a guest, and therefore the distance between giver and recipient naturally grows smaller. The sukkah is the ideal setting for giving to another person in the most pleasant and dignified way possible.

continued on page 31



DON'T TOUCH THE GROUND



Danny Louis

A few years ago I went to a *simchas beis hashoeiva* at the shul of a very holy Yid, a Rav who's a real *mashpia*. And I don't know if it's because I'm still (mostly) a *kalta litvak*, but all I could focus on the whole night was one thing.

Right next to a massive speaker, volume cranked up way too high, there was a five year old chassidishe boy. Fast asleep. I had earplugs in and my ears still hurt afterward. This kid was *shluffing* away like it was the quietest room in the world.



How do you explain that? The only conclusion I've been able to reach is that the more holy the Jew, or the community of Jews, the less they seem to actually live in this world. That kid had entered some other dimension where things were quiet, and he used the opportunity to catch up on some well-deserved rest.

Whether or not you agree with my theory about the chassidishe boy's sleeping abilities (I'm not sure I fully agree with it either), I don't think it would be heretical to say that the holiday of Sukkos demands something similar from the rest of us. We are somehow meant to make a truly drastic change in our lives.

We leave the large homes we'll never pay off and spend a week in odd little structures that we also won't pay off, fueled by some childhood dream of being a handyman we never got to live out. We buy strange looking plants for way too much money and shake them around, apparently to scare off bad rain for the coming winter. We eat (well) and sleep (not so well), and we invite in the greatest people of our history, who, for some reason, want to have a l'chaim with us.

You have to step outside reality to get into this world. For 347 days a year I've been enjoying my *seichel*, my mattress, my privacy, and my air conditioning. And then the Torah tells me to knock it off, watch out for that phantom bent wall over there, and make sure to be otherworldly happy the entire time. Why the total 180?

If we're pushed to an extreme like this, it has to

FOR ONE WEEK A YEAR WE GET THE CLOUDS BACK, AND WE GET HIT OVER THE HEAD WITH THE FACT THAT THIS IS ACTUALLY WHERE WE BELONG.

mean our regular life is putting us at some real risk. Something about the comfort, the walls, and the mattress, needs to step aside.

The Ramchal writes that the *ananei hakavod*, the clouds of glory, which the sukkah is meant to reflect, lifted the Jewish people off this world. In the literal sense, there was a cloud beneath them, so indeed, they were above the earth. But more than that, those clouds separated klal yisroel from all other nations and removed them from *olam hazeh* as much as a living human being can be removed from it. And that same heavenly *hashpa'ah* comes back around every year during Sukkos.

Indeed, it's an extreme jump, but not a random one. It's a change of pace with a destination, and the destination is where we really belong. The "regular" world, it turns out, is the one where we're standing on the same ground as everyone else, no clouds underneath us, feet flat on the floor like the rest of creation, and that's not where we're meant to be. But for one week a year we get the clouds back, and we get hit over the head with the fact that this is actually where we belong.

The noise is only *olam hazeh-dik*, walls are what the Torah calls walls, shaking plants can indeed prevent bad weather if Hashem says so, the big fancy house we "need" isn't what we need at all, and yes, this is the happiest way a Yid can live. We're meant to be a nation that doesn't touch the floor. It takes something drastic, some real distance from *olam hazeh*, to remember our actual position in the *briah*.

The sukkah is our real world. It just doesn't feel that way, because we've spent 347 days convincing ourselves otherwise. Let's remember our real place in this world, and try to keep the clouds with us well into the rest of the year.

Danny Louis is a copy/content writer and musician based in Beit Shemesh. Reach out to him at danny@dannywritescopy.com

"Simcha Through Giving" from page 29

When we sit in the sukkah, surrounded by thin walls, the sound of our zemiros carry into the street, reaching those passing nearby and inviting them to enter.

When a family sits outdoors in a sukkah, surrounded by thin walls, the sound of its *zemiros* carries into the street, reaching those passing nearby and inviting them to enter. In this way, the sukkah itself serves the central purpose of the Yom Tov: *hachnasas orchim*, welcoming guests and sharing one's blessings with them. This emerges from the teaching of Chazal that Klal Yisrael merited the mitzvah of sukkah because of the tree beneath which Avraham Avinu welcomed his guests *(Bereishis Rabbah 48:10)*. He did not bring them into his home — perhaps precisely for this reason, so that they could experience his generosity with comfort and without shame. And it is from Avraham Avinu that we learn what it means to be people of *chesed* with a good heart.

The *avodah* of the *Yamim Nora'im* can itself be understood as a form of "receiving the *Shechinah*." From there, we rise to a further level: following in Hashem's ways and welcoming guests on Sukkos. In this way, we connect *bein adam laMakom* with *bein adam lachaveiro* and step into the new year filled with spiritual light and *kedusha*.

Rav Reuven Sasson is the author of the Talelei Chaim series as well as many other seforim, including a recently published two-volume work on the Zohar. His first sefer in English, Ayeka: The Path to True Spiritual Freedom, is forthcoming with a foreword by Rav Moshe Weinberger. For more illuminating Torah from Rav Sasson please see the Mala HaAretz Deah website mhd.co.il



Artwork by Penina Schleider | Artbypenina.com

by Shana Cohen

What makes Sukkos so magical?

Over the years, I used to chalk it up to different reasons. It's the long break from school. It's the sukkah-hopping. It's the crispy weather. It's the wholesome feel outdoors. It's the decorations. It's the hot soup on the cold nights. It's spotting sukkahs all around the neighborhood as you drive around. It's the family time. It's hearing neighbors singing from their sukkahs and joining in. It's the Chol Hamoed trips. What is the 'it' though?

Now, let's shift the question momentarily. What makes a Jew a Jew?

An Italian worker in a pizza store made a comment to me just the other day about the similarities between Jews and Italians. He said, "Same CEO, different president." I opened my mouth to respond, but couldn't formulate an answer. No, we are not two sects of the same thing. No, no, no, just, no. I appreciate you, and your (delicious) contributions to the world. You are part of the family of humanity that Hashem created in His image. You have a place and a role down here on earth, and you have inherent value and dignity. But no, Yidden do not exist as a parallel yet somewhat different, more monotheistic version of Italians. *Domem, tzomeach, chai, medaber,* and then, Yisrael. Different strata of reality.

This interaction in the pizza store led me back to my bookshelf to find the kuntres written by R' Yaakov Klein, *'Chagei Tishrei and the Essence of Jewish Identity.'* He points out that physically, we might seem the same as every other group of humans. What is so remarkable about us? What is the 'it' that makes a Jew a Jew? We have been chosen by G-d to be His ambassadors. And why are we specifically chosen by G-d? We may attribute it to different things, but at its deepest essence, our chosenness is beyond explanation. We are the ambassadors Hashem desired, and we are okay with not fully understanding what makes *nishmas Yisrael* so holy and precious to the One Above.

'Ashrei ha'am shekacha lo — fortunate is the nation for whom this is so'. Our chosenness just *is*. *'Kacha,'* this is the way it is, in a way that our minds can't even fully understand.

STEPPING INTO THE SUKKAH IS STEPPING INTO HASHEM'S *loving embrace.*

Hashem chose us, '*V'romamtanu mikol haleshonos* — and He elevated us above all the nations.' The way in which Hashem elevated us is '*mikol haleshonos* — beyond our capacity for articulation.' I feel better about my inability to formulate an answer in the pizza store now. Thank you, Rabbi Klein.

Enter Sukkos, the third installment to a three-part set of holidays, where we, as a nation, come into the fullness of our chosenness. On Rosh Hashana, we accept the macro-plan for creation, and crown Hashem King over the entire Kingdom. On Yom Kippur, we acknowledge our personal shortcomings and missteps in our relationship with Hashem, and promise to do better. And then on Sukkos we celebrate the knowing, breathing, and being of being a Yid. We lean into Hashem's welcoming embrace and we revel in it.

Or do we?

I'll never forget our first Sukkos in Israel as a young

couple. My husband built an enormous wooden sukkah, complete with fake grass and even a couch (see the article "Shabbos Money, NT 95"). I decorated each wall with a theme. We hosted family over the whole chag, and for each seudah, every spot at the table was full. I spent hours preparing for Sukkos, running around Geula for the white cloth to drape the walls, Yafo for the tablecloths, the big bargain store for all the paper goods, and about six different grocery stores to fully round out the menu. I spent ages cooking, setting up, and preparing. Hosting, serving, clearing, and repeat. On the last day of Sukkos, I realized I had barely spent time actually inside the sukkah! I hadn't taken the time to just relax and actually enjoy the magnificent sukkah.

So on that last day, I left my baby upstairs with a family member, and went down to sit on the couch in the sukkah by myself. After a few minutes, I had an itch to get up. I tried my hardest to stay still, be present, and just soak it in. But I wasn't so good at it.

This isn't a paragraph of self-criticism, just a subtle noticing: If Sukkos is an embrace for being Hashem's beloved people, a moment of pure relational intimacy with Hashem, was I able to tolerate the hug? How much was I able to sit in the Divine embrace?

It's interesting, a Sukkah is a hug, but how do we humans feel about prolonged hugs? Sometimes, a long hug can make us feel awkward, or squeamish.

In a relationships workshop, Mrs. Shanny Gejerman, Kallah teacher and LaMFT, taught about a concept called 'exits'. Exits are any behaviors that help you avoid investment in your relationship. A catastrophic exit can be addiction etc, but softer exits include being on your phone too much, being heavily involved in community activities, or going to take care of the kids. These are normal things, but they can also be used subtly to avoid vulnerable moments in a relationship.

Hashem's desire

FOR CONNECTION WITH ME DOESN'T WAX AND WANE, SO I'LL TRY TO STAY PRESENT IN THE 'EIGHT-DAY HUG' FOR AS LONG AS I CAN.

Each part of the three-part series of *yamim tovim*, accomplishes something in the process of deepening our relationship with Hashem. We've committed ourselves over Rosh Hashana, we've done the personal work of Yom Kippur, and now we're here. As the Arizal explains, the walls are likened to Hashem reaching out His right arm, *v'yemino techabkeini — His right hand embraces me*. We've arrived at the eight-day hug called Sukkos.

Nevertheless, although Hashem's hug lasts all of Sukkos, we still make the decision how much time we want to spend there. We can technically choose to dip in and out of the sukkah; eat our snacks elsewhere, go on Chol Hamoed trips, and so on.

And over time, as we grow closer, we lean in to embrace that hug more and more. We remind ourselves when we walk into the sukkah that we are entering Hashem's *v'yemino techabkeini*, a real hug from the *Ein Sof*! No wonder it's so magical. This is the answer to the question we started with — this is the "it."

This year, I've been thinking about Hashem's side of the relationship a little more. I want to be as present as possible in the Sukkah. I want to enjoy the magic of Sukkos, and feel the warm embrace of the Sukkah, for as long as possible without any 'exits.' This year, I'm thinking of trying not to bring my phone into the sukkah with me, keeping it a more intimate, phone-free zone.

Hashem's desire for connection with me doesn't wax and wane. So I'll try to stay present in the 'eight-day hug' for as long as possible.

Shana Cohen is a grateful wife, mother, and teacher living in Passaic-Clifton, NJ. She connects deeply with Pnimiyus Hatorah, and co-runs the TYH Women's division, devoting herself to initiatives that connect women and girls more deeply with Hashem. She can be reached at shanac@tyhnation.com.

TYH WOMEN

TORAH | EVENTS | SHIURIM | PROGRAMS | INITIATIVES



DESIGNED WITH THE WOMEN, GIRLS, TEENS, & MOMS OF KLAL YISROEL IN MIND



WE'RE BUILT ON:

TEACHINGS OF THE BAAL SHEM TOV AND OUR TZADDIKIM

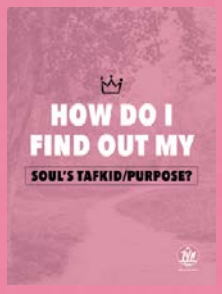
STRIVING TO LOVE ALL YIDDEN

YEARNING FOR GEULAH

COMMITTED TO SEEING THE INNER DIMENSION OF EXISTENCE - THE PNIMIYUS

SEEING TORAH AND MITZVOS AS PATHWAYS OF CONNECTION TO HASHEM













BE A PART OF A COMMUNITY OF WOMEN & GIRLS WHO CARE ABOUT CONNECTING TO HASHEM AND WANT TO BE PART OF THE UNFOLDING GEULAH, TOGETHER.

LED BY FAIGY BLUMSTEIN AND SHANA COHEN

Join TYH Women on WhatsApp
516-849-9174

Women@TYHnation.com
TYH.org

Follow on Instagram
@tyhwomen

Yahrtzeit
Wed. Sept. 30
(Chol HaMoed)

CONNECTING WITH OUR TZADIKIM

The Vilna Gaon zt"l

LIVED	229TH YAHRTZEIT	BURIED
1720–1797	19 TISHREI	VILNA, LITHUANIA

Rav Eliyahu Kramer of Vilna, also known simply as the "GR"A" (HaGaon Rav Eliyahu) or the "Vilna Gaon," was one of the greatest Torah giants of the last three hundred years. He knew every part of Torah backwards and forwards with incredible depth and clarity. The GR"A wrote a peirush on all of Shulchan Aruch and Tanach, books of mussar, as well as important works on Kabbalah.

FUN FACTS

When young Eliyahu was just ten years old, he learned Gemara with a chavrusa for most of the day. But for a few hours each day, he would learn Kabbalah on his own. Even at such a young age, he completed several works of kabbalah, including the Pardes Rimonim, the writings of Arizal, and the entire Zohar!



Artwork by Moshe Milstein

When he was eleven years old, on Simchas Torah night, he suddenly remembered that he had wanted to finish Masechtos Zevachim and Menachos (both very difficult and long) by the morning of Simchas Torah. He wasted no time and quickly went to go learn. A few hours later, one of the great talmidei chochomim of the city noticed that the young boy was already up to daf nun of zevachim, almost halfway through! He couldn't believe that anyone, especially a child, could possibly understand so much Gemara in such a short amount of time. He decided to test him, and to his surprise, the boy knew everything he had learned!

The next morning, the same talmid chochom noticed that young Eliyahu was already in the middle of Menachos. He tested him again — on the rest of zevachim and the first half of menachos — and again he was blown away! By the time Shacharis began, this future gadol had mastered both masechtos.

The GR"A's children wrote that his davening was very sweet and filled with ahavas Hashem. Many people would come to shul just to be as close as they could to the GR"A and listen to the way he davened. They said that those who heard his davening would themselves be filled with a spirit of clarity, ahavas Hashem, and yiras Hashem, that could stay with them for years!

STORY In Vilna during that time, most people weren't able to have their own esrog for sukkos. It wasn't like today where there are plenty for everyone. Growing esrogim was difficult and expensive. The talmidim of the GR"A, however, always made sure to find a very nice esrog and make sure it was saved only for their rebbi. One year, they simply couldn't find a good esrog locally. Not being able to bear the thought of their rebbi going through sukkos without a beautiful esrog, they decided to travel to other cities and keep looking.

After many days, they finally found a gorgeous esrog. There was only one problem: The man who owned it refused to sell it. They offered him more and more money, but he simply wasn't interested.

Finally, they told him that they were buying the esrog for the Vilna Gaon. When he heard this, he immediately agreed to give it to them, but he wanted a very unusual payment. Rather than money, He wanted the schar of the mitzvah itself! That's right, if they wanted this esrog for their rebbi, they would have to agree that all the reward that would come from the mitzva would go to this other man!

The talmidim felt they had no choice, and agreed. When they returned to Vilna and showed the esrog to the GR"A, he was very excited. They then nervously told him the price they had agreed to pay.

When the GR"A heard, a huge smile spread across his face. "I've always wanted to do a mitzvah shelo al menas lekabel pras – without receiving any reward, purely l'shem shamayim. Now I finally have the opportunity!"

The elders of Vilna would later remember the tremendous simcha the GR"A showed throughout Sukkos that year.

I WANNA BE LIKE ...

The GR"A showed us what it looks like to serve Hashem with both tremendous effort and tremendous love. Let's try to follow in his ways by putting more heart into our learning and davening, and by doing mitzvos simply because we love Hashem and want to do His will.

Behind the Artwork

"IN HIS EMBRACE"



When painting this artwork for the Nekuda Tova Sukkos magazine, I felt deeply how our lives are filled with unexpected turns, yet wrapped on all sides by curtains of divine love. On Sukkos, we step away from physical distractions to enter our true home — our inner connection to Hashem. The walls of the Sukkah form a loving embrace, **בימנו תחבקני,** enveloping us in His calming presence after the growth of the Yomim Nora'im.

Visually, brilliant light showers down from above, representing Hashem's constant Shefa guiding our every step. As the flowing strokes cascade downward into deep, spiritual hues of violet, purple, and blue, His light continues to break through the darkness. The subtle reflection of the Sukkah along the right side evokes **ה' צילך על יד ימינך**, the constant reminder that Hashem is right beside us, we are simply vessels created to experience His goodness and reflect that light outward.

Penina SCHLEIDER

Penina Schleider is a contemporary Jewish artist based in Beit Shemesh. Her heart-centered work captures rich movement, light, and are full of inspiration, inspired by our own daily life and connection to Hashem. She specializes in bringing personal visions to life through custom originals and fine art prints enjoyed in homes worldwide. Explore more at artbypenina.com or penina@artbypenina.com

Torah Toons: Sukkos in the Holy Land

MERON

Meron, where the fire of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai still awakens yearning, song, and light.

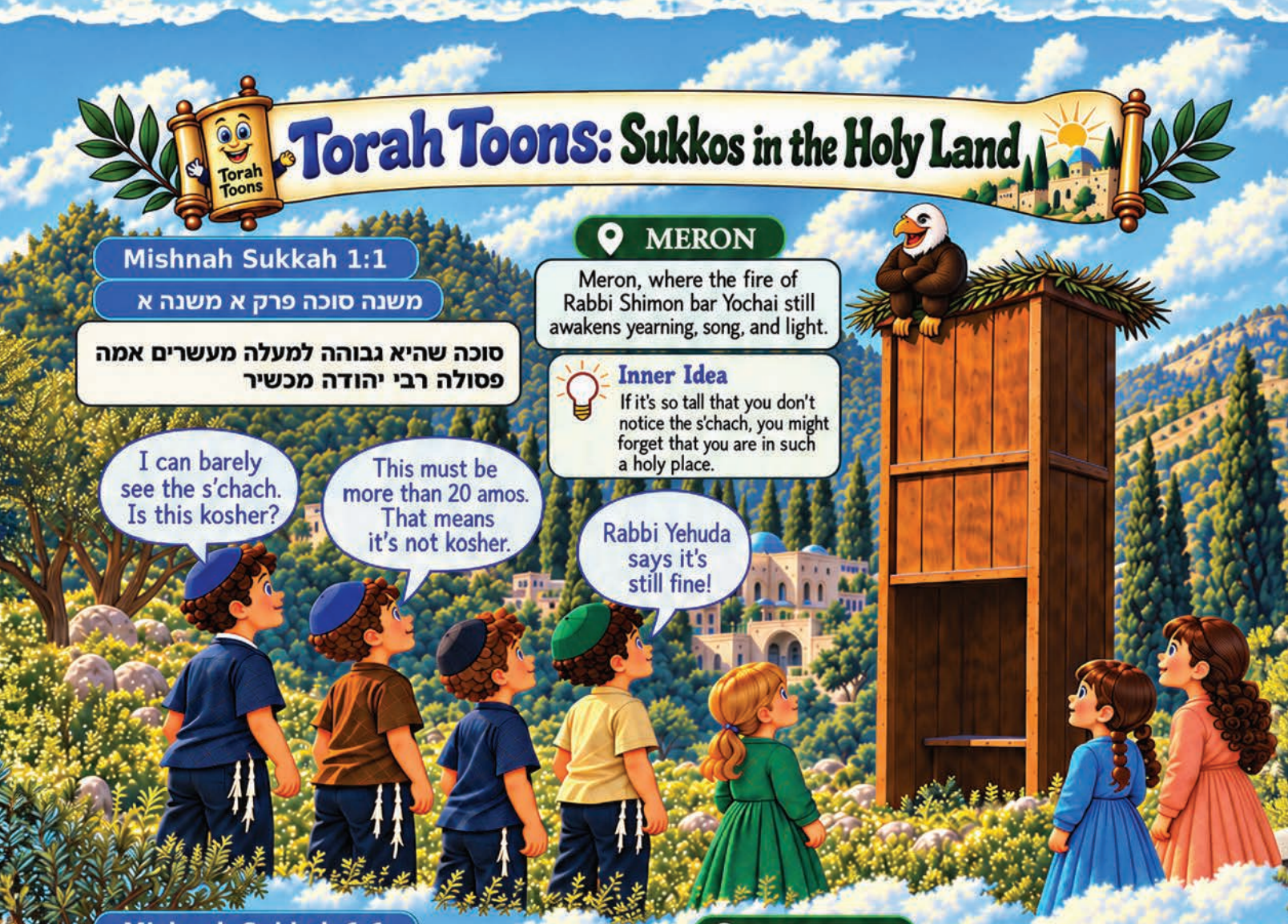
Mishnah Sukkah 1:1

משנה סוכה פרק א משנה א

סוכה שהיא גבוהה למעלה מעשרים אמה פסולה רבי יהודה מכשיר

Inner Idea

If it's so tall that you don't notice the s'chach, you might forget that you are in such a holy place.



CHEVRON

Chevron, a place of emunah, chessed, and the unbreakable connection to our Avos and Imahos.

Mishnah Sukkah 1:1

משנה סוכה פרק א משנה א

סוכה שהיא גבוהה עשרה טפחים פסולה

Inner Idea

A sukkah is one of the only mitzvos that we fulfill with our entire body, so we need to be able to go inside it!



Mishnah Sukkah 1:1

משנה סוכה פרק א משנה א

ושאין לה שלש דפנות פסולה

KOSEL

The Kosel, where Klal Yisrael pours out their hearts, filled with tefillah, hope, and closeness to Hashem.

Inner idea:
The three walls of the sukkah are like Hashem wrapping His arm around us in a giant hug.

Umm, I think this sukkah is missing something.

A kosher sukkah needs at least three walls.

Mishnah Sukkah 1:1

משנה סוכה פרק א משנה א

סוכה ישנה בית שמאי פוסלין ובית הלל מכשירין ואיזו היא סוכה ישנה כל שעשאה קודם לחג שלשים יום אבל אם עשאוה לשם חג אפילו מתחלת השנה כשרה

KEVER RACHEL

Kever Rachel where tears become tefillah and a mother's love never stops guarding her children.

Inner idea:
What makes a sukkah holy is not only when you build it, but also what you were thinking about as you built it.

Is it okay that we built our sukkah last month?

It's a machlokes, but if you made it for the mitzvah it's definitely okay.

30 DAYS OLD

1 YEAR OLD


Mishnah Sukkah 1:3
משנה סוכה פרק א משנה ג
פרס עליה סדין מפני החמה פסולה
YERUSHALAYIM
In Yerushalayim, every stone seems to whisper holiness.
Inner Idea: We don't want anything to block the sukkah from being directly under the Heavens.
It's so hot! Can we cover the s'chach?
No. If you put a cover over the s'chach, the sukkah is not kosher.


Mishnah Sukkah 1:3
משנה סוכה פרק א משנה ג
או תחתיה מפני הנשר פסולה
KINNERET
By the Kinneret, the waters shimmer with calm, wonder, and emunah.
Inner Idea: We want to be able to see the stars and the majestic and awesome world Hashem created.
Can we hang something so s'chach leaves don't fall on my head?
No! If something hangs under the s'chach it's not kosher.


Mishnah Sukkah 1:4
משנה סוכה פרק א משנה ד
הדלה עליה את הגפן ואת הדלעת ואת הקיסום וסוכך על גבה פסולה
TZFAT
Tzfat, a city of mystery, midgun, and deep blue longing for Heaven.
Inner idea: Sometimes we need to detach ourselves from the physical things around us in order to become more holy and spiritual.
The vines look so beautiful! Is this kosher?
Not yet! They are still attached to the ground!
Mishnah Sukkah 1:4
משנה סוכה פרק א משנה ד
ואם היה סכוך הרבה ממן, או שקצצן, כשרה
MASADA
Masada, a place of courage and eternal strength.
Inner idea: Once you cut the vine it looks like it dies, but really it gets eternal life because it has been used for a mitzvah!
Why is this one kosher?
Once the vines are cut and the shade is coming from kosher schach, the sukkah becomes kosher!
Mishnah Sukkah 1:5
משנה סוכה פרק א משנה ה
זה הכלל כל שהוא מקבל טומאה ואין גידולו מן הארץ אין מסככין בו
Inner idea: The schach represents pure love and kindness from Hashem, and tumah represents judgement, so it doesn't belong in our schach.
Can I use plates as schach?
No. Anything that can become tamei, or does not grow from the ground, cannot be schach.


Mishnah Sukkah 1:6
משנה סוכה פרק א משנה ו
מסכין בנסרים דברי רבי יהודה ורבי מאיר אוסר
YERUSHALAYIM NIGHT
Yerushalayim Night glows with golden stone and the quiet beauty of a city turned toward Hashem.
Inner idea: The sukkah needs to be temporary, reminding us to do as many mitzvos as we can while we are in this temporary world.
We ran out of bamboo! Can we use wooden boards?
Yes! Rabbi Yehudah allows narrow boards.
Mishnah Sukkah 1:8
משנה סוכה פרק א משנה ח
החטט בגדיש לעשות לו סוכה אינה סוכה
CAESAREA
By the Mediterranean Sea, ancient stones tell stories of the past.
Inner idea: We want to get involved in the mitzvah and build the sukkah from scratch, and not take the easy way out.
Look, I made a kosher sukkah!
Nope! The sukkah needs to be built, not dug out.


Mishnah Sukkah 1:9
משנה סוכה פרק א משנה ט
המשליש דפנות למעלה למטה
אם גבוהות מן הארץ שלשה טפחים פסולה
SHIMON HATZADDIK
Shimon HaTzaddik, where humility, Torah, and quiet greatness still echo.
Inner idea: We need to start from the ground and build our way up, without skipping steps.
Oh no! The goat is escaping!
That big of a gap makes the sukkah not kosher.
Mishnah Sukkah 1:9
משנה סוכה פרק א משנה ט
מלמטה למעלה אם גבוהות עשרה טפחים כשרה
HERMON MOUNTAIN
Hermon Mountain, with its towering peaks and pure snow, reveals the grandeur of Hashem's world.
Inner idea: Once we do our part and build our way up, Hashem always helps us get closer to Him.
Uh oh, we ran out of wood! Is this sukkah kosher?
Yes! If the walls rise ten tefachim from the ground, the sukkah can be kosher even if they do not reach the roof.


Mishnah Sukkah 1:9
משנה סוכה פרק א משנה ט
הרחק את הסיכוך מן הדפנות שלשה טפחים פסולה
BELZ BEIT MIDRASH
At Belz, grandeur and order awaken awe, tefillah, and yearning for dveikus.
Inner Idea: Only a mitzvah that is halachically kosher will give us the closeness to Hashem and holiness we are looking for.
There is a big gap between the walls and the s'chach!
If the s'chach is three tefachim or more away from the walls, the sukkah is not kosher.
Mishnah Sukkah 1:10
משנה סוכה פרק א משנה י
בית שנפתח וסיכך על גביו אם יש מן הכותל לסיכוך ארבע אמות פסולה
Inner Idea: We follow halacha to be strict or to be lenient even when our logical minds do not understand why.
והגית בו יומם ולילה
Is this room actually a kosher sukkah?
Yes! Since the opening is within four amos of the walls it is fine.
יגדיל תורה ויאדיר
YESHIVAT ATERET SHLOMO
At Yeshivat Ateret Shlomo, deep Torah and steady diligence lift the soul.


Mishnah Sukkah 1:11
משנה סוכה פרק א משנה יא
העושה סוכתו כמין צריף או שסמכה לכותל רבי אליעזר פוסל מפני שאין לה גג וחכמים מכשירין
JERUSALEM BIBLICAL ZOO
The Jerusalem Biblical Zoo brings the animals of Tanach to life in the heart of our holy city.
Inner Idea: The many halachos of the roof of the sukkah remind us to always remember the One Above!
בירושלים
I was expecting a den, not a sukkah.
Nobody ask me to test the roof.
Finally, a roof at my eye level!
What if the walls lean inward and there is no flat roof?
Rabbi Eliezer says no, because it has no real roof.
The Rabbis say it can still be kosher.
These are some wild-looking sukkahs!

Sukkos

Sitting in the Sukkah

בַּסֻּכֹּת תֵּשְׁבוּ שִׁבְעַת יָמִים

WHY?

The Sukkah reminds us of the way Hashem protected the Yidden when they were in the midbar. He shielded them with *ananei hakavod*, clouds of glory that protected us from heat, cold, wind, sand, and anything dangerous the desert had to offer. We also remember the physical Sukkahs that the Yidden lived in back then.

The *Medrash* says that the Sukkah also can save a Yid from punishment. If, *chas v'shalom*, a Yid did a certain type of *aveirah* that would require him to go into *galus* (exile), he can choose to be "exiled" from his home and go into the Sukkah. That's got to be the best "punishment" ever!

The *sifrei pnimiyus* teach that when a person is sitting within the walls of the Sukkah, he is truly surrounded by the *ohr hamakif*, a special spiritual light. As well, every part of the Sukkah corresponds to a different part of Hashem's name. On a practical level, it's like Hashem is telling each Yid, "Now that you've been cleaned up by going through Yom Kippur, you are invited to come into my house and enjoy seven festive days together with me!!"

STORY

Rabbi Dovid Biderman, also known as "Reb Dovid Lelover," was the leader of the Lelover chassidim. He lived in Yerushalayim and he had a truly beautiful Sukkah. The frame and boards were filled with beautiful hand-made moldings and carvings. These boards were amongst his most prized possessions.



This was the case for many years until one year, Reb Dovid built his Sukkah out of regular, plain wood. The word got out, and everyone wondered where his beautiful Sukkah boards had gone, but Reb Dovid wouldn't tell anyone.

One day, one of the poor tailors of Yerushalayim revealed the secret. In the middle of the previous winter, one of his children had gotten dangerously sick with pneumonia. The doctor told them that the only way their child would get better was if they would keep their home warm by having a fire going all the time, and thereby protect the child from the cold weather. This poor yid, however, had no money to buy wood. He went to the Reb Dovid for guidance.

When the rebbe heard the dilemma, he responded that, while he didn't have any money to give or any bright ideas, he did have some wood he could give. He quickly arranged for his beautiful Sukkah boards to be sent to this Yid's house and saved the child's life!

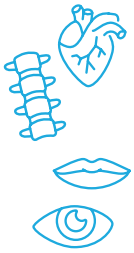
Arba Minim

WHY?



The *Medrash* says that after Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, we are proud to show that we've been forgiven by Hashem and have been granted a good year to come. We hold the *arba minim*, high and proud, as a sign of our victory!

The *Gemara* points out for this mitzvah, we specifically use plants, which need Hashem's rain to grow. Sukkos is the time of year that Hashem decides how much rain will fall during the coming year. By doing a mitzvah with the *arba minim*, we are asking Hashem to bless the coming year with plenty of rain!



The *Medrash* says that the *esrog* is similar to the heart, the *lulav* to the spine, the *arava* to the lips and the *hadasim* to the eyes. Rabbeinu Bechaya explains that we therefore gain forgiveness for any *aveiros* we might have done with these parts of our body, *chas v'shalom*.

In *sifrei pnimiyus*, we are taught that the reason we wave the *arba minim* towards are heart is to take all the great *mochin* — the ideas and thoughts — that we connected do during Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, and bring it down to our hearts, to connect to those ideas on a practical level.

The *Medrash* also teaches that the these four plants represent four different types of yidden. The *esrog* both smells and tastes good, corresponding to a Yid that learns Torah and does mitzvos. The *lulav*, and the dates that grow on it, taste great but have no smell, like a Yid who learns but needs to do more mitzvos. The *hadasim* have a great smell but no taste, like a Yid who does lots of mitzvos but needs to learn more. And the *aravos*, which have neither a good taste nor a good smell, are like a Yid who unfortunately doesn't learn or do mitzvos. Hashem tells us to tie them all together all types of Yidden, even the ones who don't have the *z'chusim* of Torah learning and doing mitzvos. This way, we connect the simplest Yid to the biggest tzaddik and bring him up to a higher level.

Turn the page for more about Sukkos

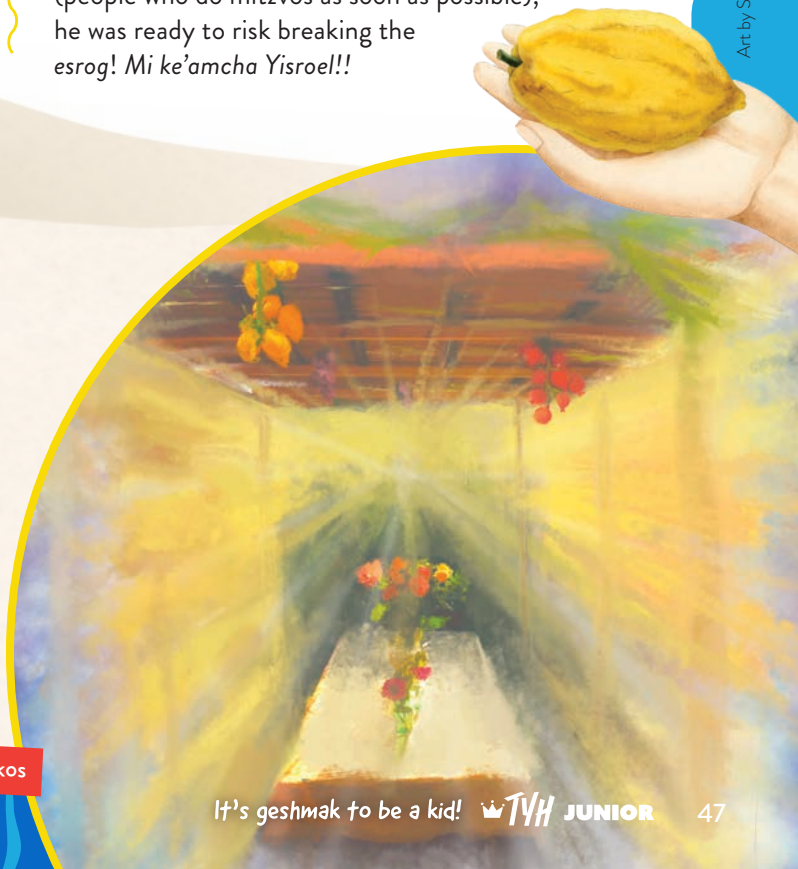
STORY

One year, in the town of Bardichov, there was a major shortage of *esrogim*. Shortly before Yom Tov, the people of the town managed to get a hold of one kosher *esrog*, and they planned to share it each day. The *esrog* was first given to the Rebbe of Bardichov, Reb Levi Yitzchok, and then the rest of the townspeople would take turns using it.

The Rebbe's *gabbai* realized he would be waiting a very long time to use the *esrog*. First it would be the Rebbe, then all the important people of the city, then the older men, and so on. By the time he would get a chance, he thought to himself, it would already be nighttime! He decided to get up early and use the *esrog* even before the Rebbe.

When he went to shake the *esrog* the next day, he was terrified of being caught. His hands shook from nervousness, the *esrog* fell, and the *pitem* broke, making the *esrog* totally *posul*!

When the Rebbe game, his *gabbai* shamefacedly told him what happened, expecting the rebbe to be extremely annoyed. Instead, the Rebbe took the *esrog* lovingly into in his hands and started talking to Hashem. "Dear Tatteh," he said, "look at your precious children! Here is a simple yid who doesn't know the deep *kavanos* of Sukkos, but he was so excited, and wanted to be one of the *zrizin makdimin* (people who do mitzvos as soon as possible), he was ready to risk breaking the *esrog*! *Mi ke'amcha Yisroel!!*



Art by Schwadron Art | www.schwadronart.com

Sukkos

continued



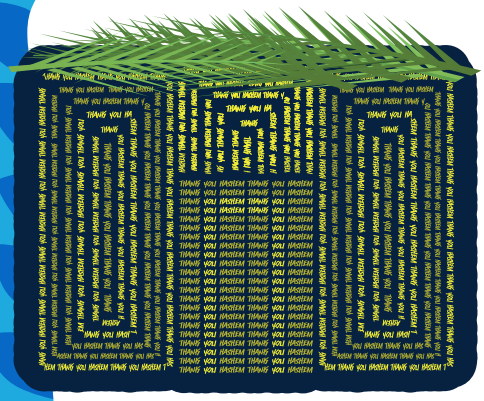
WHY?

Hoshana Raba

The Mishna says that on Sukkos we are judged about how much water we will have during the year and since this is the last day of Sukkos we especially want to invoke mercy from Hashem that there should be lots of water during the year, this is why we daven a lot for water on Hoshana Raba.



The Zohar Hakadosh writes that this is the day when Hashem gives his final verdict for the next year. This is why we daven extra *tefillos* on Hoshana Raba, and some have a minhag to read all of Sefer Tehillim.



In *sifrei pnimiyus*, we are taught that on this day, Hashem wants us to connect with him by being like an *aravah*, which is very simple, having no taste or smell. Even if sometimes, we can't understand Hashem's ways, we should connect to a deep place of *emunah* and believe that everything He does is for the good. It is also a day of davening with our lips, which are the shape of the *aravos*.

STORY

A simple Yid was on his way to the city of Vorka to daven together with his Rebbe, Reb Yitzchok of Vorka, on the holy day of Hoshana Rabba. He was holding the special *hoshana*-bundle in his hands when a *poritz* came over to him and asked what those leaves were. The Yid explained that they are called "hoshanos," but the *poritz* very oddly argued that the leaves were a broom, and wanted the Yid to admit it! The Yid wouldn't give in, insisting that the *hoshanos* were indeed *hoshanos*.

The *poritz* then asked where the Yid was going, and when he said he was going to his Rebbe, Reb Yitzchok of Vorka, the *poritz* insisted the Yid should refer to him as simple "Yitzchok," belittling the tzaddik! The Yid refused, of course, and suddenly, the *poritz* vanished!



When the Yid arrived in Vorka, he told the story to the Rebbe and asked him to explain. The Rebbe told him that the *poritz* was the *yeitzer hora* and he wanted you either to belittle the mitzvah or the rebbe. He planned to use your *aveiros* against you. But since you wouldn't budge, you will definitely merit a great year!

Shmini Atzeres

WHY?

The *Gemara* teaches that during Sukkos, we spent so much time with Hashem, but really, we weren't with him privately. The other nations of the world also benefited from our mitzvos during succos and when the *Beis HaMikdash* stood, they would even come to watch the great celebration. Therefore, before going back into our regular routine, Hashem asks us to stay with him for one more meal, just us and Him. The *Zohar* writes that since we are alone with Hashem on this day, we can ask him for whatever we want!

The Rambam gives another reason. Sukkos is called *"zman simchaseinu,"* the time of our happiness. But the Sukkah itself might not have been comfortable for everyone. We therefore spend one more day afterwards, specifically not the Sukkah, to make sure our sense of happiness is complete.



In *sifrei pnimiyus*, we are taught that *Shemini Atzeres* is the peak of all the holidays during the past month. It is the time when we can connect with Hashem on the highest level and experience very deeply the idea of *"ein od milvado,"* there is nothing else but Hashem in the world!



Simchas Torah

WHY?

The *Rishonim* explain that the reason for Simchas Torah is because we've not finished reading the whole Chumash and have to make a *siyum*!

The *Zohar* says that on Simchas Torah it is as if we are getting married to Hashem, and it is appropriate for every Yid to wear a special crown in honor of the wedding. That special crown is the Torah itself! We sing and dance, thanking Hashem for this amazing gift.

In *sifrei pnimiyus*, we are taught that the only real way to connect to Hashem in our finite world is by learning Torah and fulfilling what Hashem has commanded us. Therefore, we dance with the Torah and rejoice with it, appreciating the connection it allows us to have with Hashem.

STORY

Reb Meir'l of Premishlan had a daughter who had fallen ill during the *Yomim Noraim*. On Simchas Torah, as the Rebbe was dancing with great *hislahavus* and emotion, the *gabbai* came to tell him that his daughter had taken a turn for the worse and was in very bad shape. The Rebbe came to her bedside and spoke to Hashem. He said, "Hashem, you told me to blow the shofar on Rosh Hashana and I did. You told me to fast on Yom Kippur and I did. You told me to sit in the Sukkah on Sukkos and I did. You told me to be happy on Simchas Torah and I am. But you made my daughter sick as well, and the *Mishna* says that one must bless Hashem even for bad things and the *Gemara* explains that this means he should be *b'simcha*. The *halacha* is *ein mearvin simcha b'simcha*, one may not mix two *simchas*. If so, today, I have to be *b'simcha* because of Simchas Torah only and I am not allowed to be *b'simcha* that my daughter is unwell."

Immediately, his daughter started to show signs of improvement and had a complete recovery.

Find Fivel!



Fivel's Family



Fivel Chavel Yoel Yael Chiel Tzurel Nussel Yossel Fishel

Sruly

Special Person to Find



Mitzvah Items



Siddur



Kippah



Tallis



Mezuzah



Tzedakah Box



Washing Cup

Created by Tani Guterman and Designed by Simi Oberlander. Buy Find Fivel! Books 1, 2, & 3 on bn.com! Search "Find Fivel!"

Fivel's Family at Sruly's Sukkah Center



Challah

Kiddush Cup

Candelabra

Special TYH Items

TYH Logo

Flying Carpet

Thankee

ILYH Car

ChiWaWa

Brother Sochi

Afikoman

Bracha

Berel

Teddy Bear

DJ Farbreng

Fabrengavan

THANK YOU HASHEM

INFUSE YOUR AVODAS HASHEM WITH PASSION, JOY & DEPTH



SIGN UP TO GET THE WEEKLY NEKUDA TOVA IN YOUR SHUL



Available wherever you stream podcasts

BE PART OF OUR COMMUNITY OF WOMEN AND GIRLS



STREAM OUR MUSIC EVERYWHERE

TYH TORAH · TYH WOMEN · THANK YOU HASHEM! · TYH MUSIC · TYH JUNIOR

READ EVERY ARTICLE WE'VE EVER WRITTEN ON OUR BRAND NEW WEBSITE: TYH.ORG