

# ניצוצי אור Sparks of Light

בס"ד



No. 51

פרשת האזינו תשע"ו

## Sukkos

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### A Holy Abode

The *mitzvah* of *sukkah* is described in the *possuk*, "His [HaShem's] right hand embraces me." Just as a person embraces his friend out of great love, not letting him separate from the embrace, so too on *Sukkos*, the *schach* and the four walls signify HaShem's embrace, surrounding the person from every side with *kedusha* and closeness to HaShem.

A glimmer of *Sukkas Dovid*, which will be extant in the days of *Moshiach*, shines in every *sukkah*.

(לקוטי תורה סוכות עט, ב, סה"ש תש"ה ע' 45)

Once, as the builders were erecting the *sukkah* outside the home of the great *chossid* and *rov* of Babroisk **Reb Hillel Paritcher**, the elderly *rov* himself appeared. Taking a hammer, he joined the effort by knocking nails into the walls. "Rebbe," the men pleaded with him, "We do not need your help. You can be sure that we will build for you a kosher *sukkah*."

"You should know that the four walls of the *sukkah* correspond to the four letters of HaShem's holy name. I too want to have a share in this" the *Tzaddik* answered.

(לקו"ס פרלוב ע' רצז)

There's a *minhag* to begin preparations for the *sukkah* on *Motzoei Yom Kippur*, at least in conversation. At this time when *kelipos* are being returned to power after the holiness of *Yom Kippur* recedes, one protects himself by engaging in matters of the *sukkah*, which shield us like the '*ananei hakovod*.'

(שמח"ת תשכ"ו)

### The Encompassing Kedusha

The Torah commands us to treat the *sukkah* as our home thus performing

all respectable activities there, such as learning, conversing and relaxing. The *mitzvah* of *sukkah* is unique in that one fulfills the *mitzvah* even when doing mundane activities inside it.

One must be careful however not to act inappropriately in a *sukkah*, which can *ch"v* chase away the *Shechinah*. Conversely, through learning Torah there, one reveals great *oros*.

(שוע"ר סי' תרל"ט ס"ד, וראה לקו"ש ח"ב ע' 418, יערות דבש ח"א דרוש ו)

The **Baal Shem Tov** said that both *sukkah* and a *mikveh* share the ability to refine a person and draw down upon him new lights. The *Maggid* added that while a *mikveh* purifies the person, the *sukkah* also elevates him.

(לקו"ד ח"ג ע' 1010)

The *sukkah* is a *mitzvah* article and must therefore be treated with reverence by keeping it clean and respectable.

(שוע"ר סי' תרל"ט ס"ב)

The *meshares* of the **Maharash of Lubavitch**, Reb Yosef Mordechai, once entered the *sukkah* in anger. The Rebbe said to him: "One must have *derech erez* for the *sechach* which does not like *kaas*."

(ספר השיחות תד"ש ע' 12)

### Special Guests

The **Zohar** teaches that throughout *Sukkos*, we are honored with the *ruchniyus'dike* presence of the *Ushpizin*, the seven shepherds of *klal Yisroel*. On each day, one of the *tzaddikim* heads the visit, and his *kedusha* dominates that day.

These visits instill in us *kedusha* to

overcome the long winter months.

(זח"ג קג ע"ב, שיחור"ק תשל"ח ח"א ע' 79, תו"מ ח"ד ע' 33)

There are two versions of the *Ushpizin's* order, whether Moshe precedes Yosef or follows him. After many years of following one order, **Reb Yitzchak Aizik of Komarna** considered changing to the other order, and sent his son *Reb Eliezer* to consult with **Reb Yitzchak Aizik of Zidatchov**.

The Zidatchover Rebbe replied, "I am surprised that your father suggested this change, for didn't we see last year how Moshe Rabbeinu first entered our *sukkah* and then Yosef Hatzaddik."

(סיפוח זוין מועדים ע' 151)

**Reb Avrohom Mordechai of Ger** once arrived late at the *sukkah* of his father the **Chiddushei Harim**. When questioned about his delay he replied that his young son, later to become the **Sfas Emes**, tearfully insisted to be shown the *Ushpizin* in the *sukkah*.

"Nu," responded the grandfather, "So why didn't you oblige?"

(סיפוח זוין מועדים ע' 152)

## Consider This

Can the *kedusha* of the *sukkah* be felt? Does it affect us?

What does it mean that the *Ushpizin* 'visit us'? What is the difference who heads the visit?

## Sparks of Greatness

### Reb Boruch Mordechai Babroisker - י"ד אלול

Reb Boruch Mordechai Itinga, known as **Reb Boruch Mordechai Babroisker**, was an exceptional *gaon* and *chossid*, renowned for his sharpness and wit. He served as *Rov* in Babroisk for about 50 years. He later traveled to *Eretz Yisroel*, and passed away on the 14th of *Elul*, תרי"ד and is buried on *Har Hazeisim*.

Two business partners once came to the **Baal HaTanya** to help resolve an argument. The *Rebbe* looked into their contract, where he found their exact issue addressed. The two departed, pleased with the ruling. Soon, however, they returned with a different argument, and again the *Rebbe* looked into their contract and again found a clause that resolved the exact problem. After a few more repetitions of this occurrence, the *Rebbe* inquired about the author of their contract. It was Reb Boruch Mordechai.

On his next visit to the Baal HaTanya, the *Rebbe*

reprimanded him, "Your head's too engrossed in business if you are able to think of every situation that can crop up between *shutfim*."

Two women, who worked as vendors in the market, once approached Reb Boruch Mordechai for a *Din Torah*. When the *Rov* *parkened* in favor of one of women the other woman began shouting derogatory statements against the *Rov*. Reb Boruch Mordechai's *rebbezin* could not contain herself, and asked her husband why he does not chase this wicked woman out of the house. "Don't worry," the *Rov* soothed her, "She does not mean what she is saying." Hearing this, the rants and curses escalated further!

Turning to the woman, the *Rov* asked, "Would you want your children to grow up like me?" The woman jumped up, "Oy, *halevail*! If only that were to become true..." Reb Boruch Mordechai commented to his wife, "You see, she does not mean it."

## Library Sparks

The festival of *Sukkos*, which follows *Rosh Hashana* and *Yom Kippur*, marks the beginning of the true days of rejoicing of the month of *Tishrei*, coming as it does after the solemnity of the High Holidays. Although *Sukkos* has many similarities and characteristics in common with *Rosh Hashana* and *Yom Kippur*, it is actually the culmination and fulfillment of the first two holidays. The difference between the two lies in the fact that the holiness that was in a concealed and hidden state on *Rosh Hashana* and *Yom Kippur* is revealed for all to see during "the *z'man simchaseinu* (*Sukkos*)."

One of the fundamental themes of *Rosh Hashana* and *Yom Kippur* is that of the unity of the Jewish People. On *Sukkos* this motif finds its highest expression.

The Jew's worship on the High Holidays lies in his uncovering the *pintele Yid* within him - the impossible to be extinguished - Jewish spark, which he shares in common with every other Jew. All of us stand as equals before G-d in prayer on *Rosh Hashana*, accepting His sovereignty and crowning Him King over us all. On *Yom Kippur* we are equally aroused to do *teshuva* (repent) and return to G-d. When a Jew does *teshuva*, he is merely uncovering and revealing his innate belief in G-d and love of Him.

The unity of the Jewish People during the High Holidays is a unity based on the common denominator inherent in every Jew. It does not take into consideration the many differences of temperament, intelligence, or any other marks

which distinguish one person another.

On *Sukkos*, however, we reach an even higher level of unity than before, developing the theme of *Rosh Hashana* and *Yom Kippur*.

One of the most important *mitzvos* of *Sukkos* is the taking of the *Daled Minim*. These four species symbolize the four different types of people which exist within the Jewish nation. The *esrog* symbolizes one who possesses Torah learning and also does good deeds; the *lulav* stands for one who possesses only Torah learning. The *hadass* (myrtle) symbolizes one who performs commandments and does good deeds, but does not have Torah learning. The *Arava* (willow) symbolizes the Jew who possesses neither Torah nor learning.

On *Sukkos* we take these four disparate species, bringing them together in the performance of a singular *mitzva*. Our unity does not lie in ignoring the external differences which divide us, but rather, we go out of our way to include all types of Jews, even those in the category of *arava*, who would seem to have no positive contribution to make. Despite all our differences we are all bound together.

This is the highest degree of unity achievable. It is far easier to concentrate only on that which we have in common than to acknowledge that we differ as individuals and still remain together.

On *Sukkos* we reaffirm the unity which was achieved during the High Holidays. This sustains us and gives us the strength to live in harmony and solidarity with one another throughout the coming year and *lanetzach*.

## Halacha Sparks

### Canvas Sukkos

Rabbi Chaim Chazan

Is it permissible to *lechatchila* make a *sukkah* with walls of canvas?

A *sukkah* wall which billows in regular winds, even if the wind does not have the strength to it knock down, is not considered a kosher wall for a *sukkah*.

There is a *machlokes* among contemporary *poskim* how much, if at all, the sheets can billow before the *sukkah* becomes *posul*. Some say that if it is stretched tightly and does not wave more than three *tefachim* it is kosher. Others invalidate any *sukkah* with walls made of canvas or plastic sheets.

*Poskim* grapple with an additional problem concerning a *sukkah* made of sheets. The *Shulchan Aruch* states, "It is improper to make all the walls [of a *sukkah*] out of sheets of linen, even if he tied down the sheets well, because they can get untied without him noticing and they will then be a 'wall that cannot stand before a regular wind' [which is invalid as a wall]." The *Shulchan Aruch* suggests adding rods around the walls of the *sukkah* with less than three *tefachim* between them, to serve as independent halachic walls. This is based on the principle of '*lovud*,' that two objects less than three *tefachim* apart are considered to be connected.

Some *poskim*, in an effort to justify the widespread use of canvas *sukkos*, say that today's sheets are different than the sheets referred to in the *Shulchan Aruch*. Today's canvas' are tied down on all four sides and are made of strong durable material, often with special holes made to allow the canvas to be fastened to the frame. This holds the fabric tight and secure without a realistic concern that they'll become dislodged, and therefore the issue raised by the *Shulchan Aruch* no longer applies.

As mentioned, others nevertheless categorically invalidate canvas *sukkos*. Consult your *posek* for a final *psak*. Rav Moshe Feinstein points out that nothing can be concluded from the fact that such *sukkos* are sold, because this was not necessarily done in consultation with *rabbanim*.

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