

The Weekly Farbrengens

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SUKKOS

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, similarly on Sukkos, the *schach* and the four walls signify the embracing of HaShem, surrounding the person from every side with *kedusha* and closeness to HaShem.

The Frierdiker Rebbe said that a glimmer of the *sukkah* that will be in the days of Moshiach shines in every *sukkah*.

(לקו"ט יתורה סוכות עט, ב. ספר השיחות תש"ה ע' 45)

Once, as the builders were erecting the *sukkah* outside the home of the esteemed chossid Reb Hillel Paritcher, the elderly chossid 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 sukka*." Reb Hillel responded, "You should know that the three walls of the *sukkah* and the *schach* correspond to the four letters of HaShem's holy name. I too want to have a share in this."

(לקו"ט פרלוב ע' רצו ובלוח התיקון שם)

It is the *minhag* to begin preparations for the *sukkah* on Motzoei Yom Kippur, at least in conversation. The Rebbe explains that since this is the time when *kelipos* are being returned to power, one protects himself by engaging in matters of the *sukkah*, which are a protection like the '*ananei hakovod*.'

(ס' המנהגים, שמח"ת תשכ"ו)

THE ENCOMPASSING KEDUSHA

The Torah commands us to set the *sukkah* as our home on *sukkos*. Therefore, throughout *sukkos* one should perform all respectable activities in the *sukkah*, such as learning, conversing and relaxing. The mitzvah of *sukkah* is unique in that one performs the mitzvah when doing ordinary activities inside it.

However, one must be careful not to act inappropriately in a *sukkah*, which can *ch"v* chase

away the Shechinah. Conversely, through learning Torah in the *sukkah*, one reveals the *kedusha* more.

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

As a young child at his father's *farbrengens*, the Frierdiker Rebbe heard the following sayings:

The Baal Shem Tov said that a *sukkah* and a *mikveh* have a correlation, whereas they both refine the person and draw down new light. The Maggid said that while a *mikveh* purifies the person, the *sukkah* elevates him.

(לקו"ד ח"ג ע' 1010)

CONSIDER

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?

In Lubavitch they would not hang "*noi sukka*" (decorations) on the *sechach* or the walls. The reason for this: by the Rebbe Rashab the "*noi sukka*" was the one sitting in the *sukkah*. Since the fear of accepting the Heavenly yoke on Rosh Hashanah, the *avodah* of Erev Yom Kippur, Yom Kippur and the joy of *Sukkos*, were, for the Rebbe Rashab, experiences of the innermost soul.

(סה"ש תד"ש ע' 12)

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

(שויע"ר סי' תרל"ט ס"ב)

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

(ספר השיחות תד"ש ע' 12)

SPECIAL GUESTS

The Zohar teaches that throughout Sukkos, our *sukkos* 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.

The Rebbe explains that these visits instill in us *kedusha* to overcome the long winter months.

(זו"ג קג ע"ב, שיח"ק תשל"ח ע' ח"א ע' 79, תר"מ ח"ד ע' 33)

There are two versions concerning the order of the *Ushpizin*, 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 entered our *sukkah* before Yosef Hatzaddik."

(סיפ"ח זיין 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, had cried, insisting that he be shown the *Ushpizin* in the *sukkah*.

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

(סיפ"ח זיין מועדים ע' 152)

The Rebbeim added that throughout *sukkos* we are also visited by the seven Rebbes from the Baal Shem Tov through the Rebbe Rashab. They accompany us in our *avodah* of refining the world during the time of *galus*.

The Rebbe added further that on Shemini Atzeres we are visited by Shlomo Hamelech and the Frierdiker Rebbe.

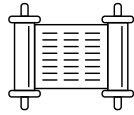
(אג"ק ריי"צ ח"ט ע' 444, ליל א' דחה"ט תש"ג)

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KOSHER HADASIM

I buy hadasim in a package. Do I need to check them?

The posuk refers to the hadasim as "avos," braided. Chazal explain that it is only "braided" if the leaves grow symmetrically in groups of three at the same level around the stem (meshulash). If one of the leaves emerges above or below the other two, it is considered deviant (shoteh) and not kosher.

The minimum height of the stem—not including protruding leaves on top—is three tefachim (approx. 9.5 inches). Poskim are unsure whether the empty stem at the bottom counts, or it only starts from the first set of leaves. The leaves must be long enough to cover the stem. Some hold the majority is sufficient, while others require it to be totally covered.

The geonim hold that the three tefachim must be completely meshulash and even one set of leaves that aren't invalidates the hadas. The poskim, however, rule it is kosher as long as the majority are meshulash. (Some opinions require an apparent majority—around two thirds—but the Alter Rebbe implies that a slight majority is sufficient.) Yet, it is preferable to get hadasim that are completely meshulash.

In calculating the majority, poskim debate whether it is the majority of the length (5 out of 9.5 inches) or of the number of leave clusters (e.g. 11 out of the 20 clusters in 9.5 inches). The Alter Rebbe rules that it depends on the clusters. This usually turns out to be a leniency, as there are more clusters on the upper part of the hadas and those near the top tend to be more meshulash.

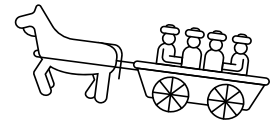
Poskim discuss whether meshulash requires the three leaves to be perfectly aligned or is it enough for the stems to be partially aligned. Some are even more lenient and consider it meshulash if it has that appearance.

Even if a package has a hechsher, it is sometimes not mehudar and sometimes questionable. It's therefore advisable for each person to check their hadasim themselves.

If the hadas is larger than the minimum size and the lower part is problematic, one should shorten the hadas at the bottom to remove as much the part that isn't meshulash, while keeping the minimum shiur.

- 1. ויקרא כ"ג. מ'. סוכה ל"ב ע"ב ורש"י שם.
2. ראה שו"ע ר"י ס' תר"ג ס"א ומשנ"ב ס' תר"ן סק"א וסק"ח, ושם שבדיעבד די בי גודלן (7.9 איניץ).
3. החזו"א ס' קמ"ו סק"ח סב"ל שלא והגרי"י פ"ש ע"ה הסתפק בזה בהסכמתו לס' ד' מינים כהלכה.
4. ראה ביכורי יעקב ס' תרמ"ו, וראה מוק"ם ס' תרמ"ו.

לע"נ מרת ציפא אסתר בת ר' שלום דובער ע"ה



R. SHLOMO OF CHASNIK

R. Shlomo of Chasnik was born in Smilian, to his father R. Yisrael Yafeh of Dubravna, an early chossid of the Alter Rebbe. R. Shlomo was a shochet in Chasnik, and like his father was a baal menagen by the Alter Rebbe. After the Alter Rebbe's passing, he became a chossid of R. Aharon of Strashele.

As a young child of six years old, R. Shlomo suddenly became blind, and the doctors said that it was incurable. (It was during this time period that he learned to play music.)

When R. Yisrael Yafeh heard about a miracle worker in Liozna, he traveled there with his son. The Alter Rebbe opened a Zohar and instructed the boy to read, but the boy said that he could not see it. The Alter Rebbe closed the sefer and opened it again. When he asked the boy to read, he said that it was blurry. The third time the Alter Rebbe opened the Zohar, the boy was able to see clearly.

The Alter Rebbe then instructed him to learn shechita and he sent him to serve as a shochet in the town of Chasnik.

R. Shlomo was a talented violin player, and his tunes would melt the hearts

of his listeners. At the chassunah in Zhlobin between the grandchildren of the Alter Rebbe and R. Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev, R. Shlomo played his violin as the two tzaddikim danced together.

On that occasion, R. Levi Yitzchok exposed his chest and told R. Shlomo, "Gaze at my heart and you won't have machashavos zaros during davening." R. Shlomo later testified that since that time, he indeed never had any foreign thoughts when he davened.

When his end became near, R. Shlomo called for the chevra Kadisha and told them that he would die that day and that a minyan should be present. When they asked him how he knew that with certainty, he explained:

"Twenty years ago, the Malach Hamaves came to take me, but I screamed at him, 'How dare you come to me when the Alter Rebbe told me to be in Chasnik for such a number of years and that time isn't up yet!' I then took a block of wood and hit him on the shoulder, and he became a hunchback.

"Today, that hunchback returned, and I have nothing to tell him. I therefore know that today is my last day."

A Moment with The Rebbe



THE REBBE BATTLES THE YETZER HARA

Simchas Torah night, 5723 (1962). The Rebbe made many l'chaims at the farbrengen and encouraged the festive niggunim, and the sichos poured forth. The sixth sicha began with elucidations on the pesukim of "Ata Hareisa," based on the Baal Shem Tov and the Frieddiker Rebbe's words.

Suddenly, as the sicha was winding up, the Rebbe began weeping openly. Describing how the yetzer hara doesn't let go of a Yid for a moment, the Rebbe exclaimed, "The yetzer hara tells a Yid, 'You want to say Ata Hareisa - say Ata Hareisa! Deliver

a vort from the Baal Shem Tov! You could share a vort of the Rebbe der Shver! But I am here with you!' Even when you say l'chaim in order to transcend limitations, the yetzer hara is present..."

After banging his hand emphatically on the table a few times, the Rebbe cried out though his tears, "Un ot do shteit der yetzer hara! (Here stands the yetzer hara!)"

The Rebbe laid his holy head on the table, and couldn't continue talking...

(As heard from Reb Leibel Shapiro)