

**Mazel Tov to Mr & Mrs
Leibel Minzer on the birth
of twin einiklach to their
children, Yechiel Ber &
Aidel Kranz. May they see
much nachas from all
יבנו לגדלם לתורה לחופה ומע"ט**

ולהרים ידיים, כי העיקר הוא מי שנותן את המכה האחרונה.

לכן אל ייפול האדם ברוחו ולא תידלשל דעתו, בראותו לפעמים שדווקא לאחר שהתאמץ בעשר יגיעות לכבוש את צירו, פתאום הוא מוצא את עצמו שוב במלחמה כבירה, ולגדול צערו הוא יוצא מנוצח מן המלחמה, ואינו מסוגל להבין היאך דווקא לאחר שכבר הצליח להתגבר פעם אחד וחשב שכבר כבש את יצרו, והנה שוב הוא מוצא את עצמו מועד ונופל תחת כפות היצר. לזאת צריך לדעת כי אין שום סיבה להלישות הדעת, ואדרבה הדבר הזה הוא סימן מובהק על הצלחתו הקודמת במלחמתו שבעט ביצרו וסטר על לחיו בגאון ובגבורה, ולכן הגיע תורו של היצר להחזיר לו מנה אחת אפים, אך חס ושלום להיבהל מכך ולהזים ידים, כי כך היא דרכה של מלחמה, ואם ימשיך לעמוד על משמרתו בעז ותעצומת מבלי תת לרשת הייאוש לפרוס עליו כנפיו, אז או יוכל להיות סמוך ובטוח שבסופו של דבר ייתן הוא את המכה האחרונה, ויצא מן המלחמה וידו על העליונה.

הלולב מורה כי הנם שהתרחק מהש"ת ישוב וידפא לו: עניין זה מתגלה לנו ביותר על ידי עבודת הנענועים, שהוא כל צד שמנענע בו את הלולב מכוון כנגד מידה אחרת שעליו לתקן ולהשלים עצמו באותה הבחינה, והנה יש כאן פלא והפלא גדול, כי כל אימת שמנענע את הלולב לרוח מסוימת, בראשונה הוא מרחק את הלולב מגופו ומיד אחר כך מקרבו שוב אליו, וכמעט שעדיין לא הספיק לקרב אליו הלולב מיד מרחיקו עוד הפעם ושוב מקרבו, וכן שונה ומשלש דבר זה בשילוש פעמים, מוליך ומביא, מרחק ומקרב, ואך כשמסיים ברוח זו פונה לרוח אחרת ושוב עושה כסדר הזה, מרחק ומקרב. אין זאת אלא שבא לרמוז לאיש הישראלי את הדרך הנכונה בעבודת הש"ת ממנה יעלה במסילת העולה בית א-ל. שכאשר נגיש לעבוד את קונו מיד קודם עליו רגונו של אותו זמן וכסיל, היצר הרע הוא השטן, ומתחיל לפתות את האדם בתואנות שונות ומדומות ומנסה להרחיקו מן העבודה, והיות שיצר לב האדם רע מנעוריו הרי שלא אחת ולא שתיים עולה ביד אותו מלך כסיל להטות את האדם ולהנותו מן המסילה. ועל אף שעלה ביד האדם לנצחו באחד מענייניו לפתע יגלה כי היצר אורב

לקח חיים ודברי התעוררות נסדרו עפ"י פרשיות השבוע

לו בדבר אחר, ולאחר זמן, כאשר משים אל לבו לראות כי מעשה שטן הצליח וכי נכשלו רגליו וכמעט ונתרחק מאת קונו וצורו, עלול הוא להיכנס לזכרוך ושבירו לב על מר גורלו ונכנס בקרבו דרגשות של ייאוש וחילדון, מה יהיה עמו כי חלילה אבד תוחלתו ושיברו עד שהוא תנועה כשה אובד. לכן באו אלו הנענועים, שלמרות שדרכם להתרחק ממנו אבל מיד שבים להתקרב, ומלמדים את התועים בינה שידעו כי כך הוא דרכו של תורה וכי 'שבע יפול צדיק וקם', בשום פנים ואופן אסור להתייash ולהשלים עם הירחוק והירידה שנתדרדר לתוכה, אלא מיד יחשב פעמיו כיצד צדיק מצרה נחלץ והיאך הוא יכול להתחזק שוב ולעלות שנית על דרך המלך ולהתקרב אל הש"ת, ושב ודפא לו. **נעימות בימינך נצת** השתא יובן לך יפה יפה מדוע דווקא מצוות נטילת לולב הוי כגיידא וכחץ בעינא דשיטנא, כי על ידי מצווה זו ונענועיה ניכרת הכח הגדול שיש לישראל שלא להתייash ולא להרפות מן העבודה, ולמרות כל ניסיונותיו המרובים להדיח את לב האדם הרי הוא מתגבר שוב ומחדש כנשר נעוריו ומתחיל את עבודתו כאילו לא היה. דבר זה קשה לו לס"מ לסבול ודוקך לו כחץ בעיניו. הן זאת דרשו רבותינו במדרש (פסיקתא דרב כהנא – פסקא כז אות ב) על הפסוק בתהילים (טז, יא) "תודיעני אודה חיים שובע שמחות את פניך נעימות בימינך נצח", ומרו 'נעימות בימינך נצח'? אמר רבי אבין: משל לשנים שנכנסו אצל הדיין, ואין אנו יודעין מי נצח, אלא מי שנושא שרביט בידו (בצאתו מלפני הדיין) אנו יודעים שהוא המנצח. כך ישראל ואומות העולם באין ומקטרגין לפני הקדוש ברוך הוא בראש השנה ואין אנו יודעים מי נצח, אלא במה שישראל יוציא מלפני הקב"ה ולולביון ואתרוגיהן בידן, אנו יודעים שישראל הם המנצחים. הרי לך כי מצוות נטילת לולב היא ככלי זין וכלי מלחמה שמכניעים את שונאי המלך, וכאשר אנו נוטלים בתג הסוכות את הלולב ומנענעים בו אנו מגלים כי אנו עבדי הש"ת – ניצחנו את אויבי המלך ולא נכנענו לתכסיסהם, ולכן הוי מצוה זו כגיידא בעינא דשטנא, כי דבר זה מגלה שנצחו אותו ישראל במלחמה הגדולה – מלחמת היצר "שרואה בעיניו שאין בו כח לנתק מעלינו עול מצות "לשון רש"י הק".

מאת הרב שלום פערל שליט"א מגיד מאורצרותיו של המגיד מגיד מישרים בק"ק בית שמש

למען ידעו דורותיכם כי בסוכת הושבתי את בני ישראל בהוציא אותם מארץ מצרים וגו' (ויקרא כג-ג)

ובמפתים, והסוכות שאומר הכתוב שהושיבנו בהם הם ענני כבודו שהקיפן בהם לבל יכה בהם שרב ושמש, ודוגמא לזה ציוונו לעשות סוכות כדי שנוכר את נפלאותיו ונוראותיו, ואף על פי שיצאנו ממצרים בחודש ניסן, לא ציוונו לעשות סוכות באותו הזמן, לפי שהוא ימות הקיץ ודרך כל אדם לעשות סוכה לצל ולא היתה ניכרת עשייתנו בהם שהם במצות הבורא יתברך, ולכן ציווה אותנו לעשות סוכות בחודש השביעי שהוא זמן הגשמים ודוקר ודרך כל אדם לצאת מסוכתו ולישב בביתו ואנחנו יוצאין מן הבית לישב בסוכה, שבוה יידאה לכל שמצות המלך היא עלינו לעשותה".

ובב"ב שם (אות ב' ד"ה על כן וכו') הסביר את דבריו, "כוונת רבינו לבאר, דפשט המקרא הוא שעיקר הכוונה במצות סוכה היא לוכור 'ציצית מצרים', אבל אין פירוש המקרא שהכוונה במצות סוכה היא רק 'למען ידעו כי בסוכות הושבתי את בני ישראל' בלבד ובוה יקיים את המצוה כתיקונה, ומה שאמר הכתוב 'בהוציא אותם מארץ מצרים' לא קאי א'למען ידעו' אלא שהתורה הודיענו שההושבה של בני ישראל בסוכות היה באותו הזמן, אבל קיום המצוה היא בידיעת ההושבה בסוכות לבד, שזה אינו, אלא עיקר הפירוש שידעו כי ההושבה היתה בסוכות בהוציאו אותם מארץ מצרים, וזהו שכתב 'תלה הכתוב מצות סוכה ביציאת מצרים, וכן הרבה מצוות' כלומר דמשאר הרבה מצוות שתלאן הכתוב ב'ציצית מצרים' יש להבין אשר גם מצות סוכה תלואה הכתוב ב'ציצית מצרים' ושזה עיקר הדיעה בישיבתה כמו שאמר 'למען ידעו וגו', ואמר טעם לזה לפי שהוא דבר שראינו בעינינו וכו', פירוש, שאם היה הכוונה באלמנן ידעו וגו' אל 'הושבת ה' את בני ישראל בסוכות במדבר' בלבד, אם כן לא היה בזה אלא זכירת החסד שעשה עמם במדבר, ובוודאי דהיה מקום להקשות הרי כמה מעלות טובות למקום עלינו במדבר שהאכילנו את המן ונתן לנו את הבאר

As we ponder our existence this new year, it’s wonderful to recognize the import of these two words. They help us focus on the meaning of life while keeping its complexities quite simple. All we have to yearn for is to reach that great level of simplicity. (Rabbi S. Price)

קול מבשר מבשר ואומר

שישו ושמחו בשמחת התורה ותנו כבוד לתורה (סדר הקפות לשמחת תורה)

It was the morning of *Simchas Torah* as Reb Boruch Rabinowitz and his son, Nata Shlomo, who had Down Syndrome, headed off to *Yeshivas Torah Vodaas* to dance, sing and revel in the completion of yet another cycle of the annual *Torah* reading. Young Nata Shlomo was as happy as could be, as he carried along his beautiful, little *Sefer Torah* made of paper which his parents had bought him. It was by no means an authentic *Sefer Torah* which could be read from during *Krias HaTorah*, but to little Nata Shlomo it was as real as could be.

As the festive dancing and singing concluded, it was now time to read from the *Torah*, and call up each individual for an *aliyah*, as customarily done on *Simchas Torah*. Yet, as often done when large crowds are present, numerous *Sifrei Torah* were taken out and carried to various parts of the building for multiple *Torah* readings to simultaneously occur.

As Nata Shlomo looked on at the many *Sifrei Torah* being carried off, he began to wonder what would be of his own little *Torah*. Approaching the *gabbai*, he posed his question. “Are you going to read from my *Sefer Torah*?”

The *gabbai* looked at Nata Shlomo, knowing what the answer was, but not quite having the heart to tell him. His little paper *Sefer Torah* was beautiful, but couldn’t be used to read from. Looking over at Nata Shlomo and the *gabbai* was **R’ Avraham Pam זי”ל**, the great *Rosh Yeshivah of Torah Vodaas*. He had overheard what Nata Shlomo had said and realized the issue. Without hesitating, R’ Pam got up and walked over to Nata Shlomo, who still stood aside the *gabbai*, waiting for the answer as to why his *Sefer Torah* could not be used.

R’ Pam whispered something into Nata Shlomo’s ear. All that was heard from Nata Shlomo was a soft, compliant reply, “Oh, okay, okay...” And with that, Nata Shlomo quietly took a seat. Everyone watched in surprise as R’ Pam appeared to have said the perfect words to ease Nata Shlomo, yet no one had any idea what it was.

Nata Shlomo peacefully remained seated throughout the remainder of the prayers, periodically asking his father when everyone would begin going home. By the time the prayers finished, it was close to two o’clock in the afternoon. Now it was finally time. R’ Pam walked over to Nata Shlomo, who was now eagerly waiting. “Do you remember what I told you Nata Shlomo?” Rav Pam said. “Now it is your turn.” And so, right then and there, as the many men and women filed out of the shul, R’ Pam remained with Nata Shlomo dancing and singing. The two of them enjoyed their own little *Hakafos*. Nata Shlomo was even given a make-believe *aliyah* to his *Torah* as it was read from aloud.

Now everyone understood what R’ Pam had whispered to Nata Shlomo earlier. “Nata Shlomo, right now it is time for the older people in *shul* to use their *Sifrei Torah*. After we finish praying, we will use your *Torah*, and you will receive an *aliyah* and we will dance together.” And that is exactly what they did.

The great *Rosh Yeshivah* made time for young Nata Shlomo and showed him that he mattered and was just as important. Such is the true joy of *Simchas Torah* and the mark of a great *Torah* leader. (Rabbi Chaim Dahan)

זה היום עֲשֵׂה ה' נִגִּילָה וְנִשְׂמַחַה בּוּ (תהלים קיח-כד)

Each *Simchas Torah* during the *hakafos*, the **Satmar Rebbe, R’ Yoel Teitelbaum זי”ל**, would address the assembled *chassidim*. “The **Zohar** in *Parshas Pinchos* writes that when *Yidden* make a *simcha* here on this earth, their ancestors in heaven come down to take part in the festivities. Is there a greater *simcha* than when *Yidden* rejoice with the *Torah* and with *Hashem*? Surely on *Simchas Torah* our ancestors come down from their heavenly abode!”

On *Simchas Torah* in the year 5644 (1884), the first year after the passing of the **Yetev Lev, R’ Yekusiel Yehuda Teitelbaum זי”ל**, the *Rosh Hakahal* of Sighet, **R’ Moshe Aryeh Freund זי”ל**, suddenly fainted in the middle of the *hakafos*. When he came to, he said that he had seen the *Yetev Lev* participating in the *hakafos*. The great *tzaddik* had come down to dance with his *kehillah*. The awesome vision had caused him to collapse. (*Moshian shel Yisroel*)

In this connection, R’ Moshe Aryeh related that before his passing, the *Yetev Lev* told him that if anyone sees him after his death, that person should be buried next to his grave. On the *Simchas Torah* after the *Yetev Lev’s* passing, his son, **R’ Chanania Yom Tov Lipa Teitelbaum זי”ל (Kedushas Tom Tov)**, declared during the *hakafos*, “Rejoice and be happy on *Simchas Torah*, because my father and my grandfather are here with us.” R’ Moshe Aryeh Freund cried out, “Yes! I see them too!” Therefore, he was buried alongside the grave of the *Yetev Lev*, a wall with a window separating the two graves.

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משל למח הדבר דומה

זה קלי ואנורו - התנאה לפניו במצות עשה לפניו סוכה נאה ולולב נאה ע"כ (שבת קלג):

משל: There was once a Jew who would come into the *shul* of **R’ Shlomo Zalman Auerbach זי"ל** on the first day of *Sukkos* and show off his *esrog* to others. He would ask them, “How much do you think I paid for my *esrog*?” After everyone gave their opinions, he would boast to them about how little he really paid. When asked how he obtained such a nice *esrog* for such a low price, he replied that he waits to buy his *esrog* until the eve of *Yom Tov* when the merchants are trying to finish up and sell whatever more they possibly can. Then he would go and bargain the merchant down for the lowest price.

When R’ Shlomo Zalman heard about this man’s custom, he did not like it at all. One year he finally went over to the person and said: *Chazal* tell us (*Beitzah 16a*) how Shammai and Hillel would prepare for *Shabbos*. They said about Shammai that all his days he would eat in honor of *Shabbos*. How so? If he found a choice animal, he would say: This is for *Shabbos*. If he subsequently found another one choicer than the first, he would set aside the second for *Shabbos* and eat the first. He would eat the first to leave the better-quality animal for *Shabbos*, which continually rendered his eating an act of honoring *Shabbos*.

Hillel however, had a different trait in him. All of his actions, including those on the weekdays, were for the sake of Heaven. Meaning, he would wait until Friday and trust

אשר בחר בנביאים טובים ... תורת צבי על הפטרות

ויהי אחרי מות משה עבד ה' (יהושע א-א)

The *Haftorah* of *V'zos Habracha* is, in essence, the *Haftorah* of *Simchas Torah*. For it is on this day that we not only conclude the reading of the entire *Torah*, it is likewise the day when we begin anew the reading of the *Torah* with *Parshas Beraishis*. The *Haftorah* reflects this paradigm with the death of *Moshe Rabbeinu*, the greatest prophet and leader the Jewish people ever had, during the reading of *V'zos Habracha*, and the rise of his protege and successor, *Yehoshua bin Nun*, during the reading of the *Haftorah*.

It is interesting to note that throughout the *Haftorah*, Moshe is mentioned reverently with the unique accolade “*Eved Hashem*” - “Servant of Hashem” no less than five times. *Moshe Rabbeinu* achieved a closeness to the Almighty that is insurmountable. He actually “lived” in Heaven for forty days and nights upon receiving the *Torah* on *Har Sinai*. And yet, upon his death, he receives what appears to be a two-word eulogy; “*And it was after the death of Moshe, servant of Hashem.*” This was the question bothering **R’ Elchanan Wasserman זי"ל**, a dilemma he addressed in his eulogy of his great *rebbe*, the holy **Chofetz Chaim זי"ל**, and later codified in his *sefer Kovetz Maamarim*. He quotes a perplexing **Rambam** (*Hilchos Teshuva* 5:2)

ועשה עמנו עוד חסדים ומדוע ציווה לזכור את החסד של ה'הושבה בסוכות? יותר משאר חסדים, אבל אם עיקר הכוונה לזכור את 'ציאת מצרים' אתי שפיר, שכן הרבה מצוות נצטוו ישראל זכר ל'ציאת מצרים' כי 'הוא דבר שראינו בעינינו וכו'. ואחר כך הוקשה לו לפי זה, דאם כן היאך ימשך משיבת הסוכה התכלית המכוון מן המצוה, דהיינו שיזכור 'ציאת מצרים', ועל זה אמר 'והסוכות שאומר הכתוב שהושיבנו בהם הם ענני כבודו וכו', כלומר, שוודאי דלרבי עקיבא דפרק קמא דסוכה (יא) דאמר 'סוכות ממש עשו להן' לא יימשך משיבת הסוכה וזכרון 'ציאת מצרים', ואפשר דלרבי עקיבא אין הכי נמי ד'למען ידעו וגו' לא קאי אלא אישיבת סוכה לבד, אבל לרבי אליעזר דפלגי עליה ואמר 'ענני כבוד הוי' ודבריו עיקר דכן תידגם אונקלוס 'ארי במטליות ענני אותיבית ית בני ישראל' והקיפן בהן לבל יכה בהם שרב ושמש, וזכרון זה יעלה על ידי מצות סוכה שמצותה 'צילתה מדובה מחמתה' וזכר לענני כבוד שהגינו עליהם מפני החמה, והרי היקף והגנה זו היתה כבר עם 'ציאתם ממצרים וכנאמר 'זחמושים עלו בני ישראל מארץ מצרים...וה' הולך לפניהם בעמוד ענן', ואם כן על ידי זכירת ענני כבוד שהגינו על בני ישראל מפני החמה כבר עם 'ציאתם ממצרים יזכור הוישב בסוכה את שאר נפלאות וגוראות ה' שעשה עמם כדי להגן עליהם כבר עם 'ציאתם ממצרים, והוה שאמר 'ודגמא לוח ציוונו לעשות סוכה כדי שנוזור את נפלאותיו וגוראותיו'. ואחר כך הוקשה לו לפי זה, דאם כן שמצות סוכה היא זכר ל'ענני כבוד' שהקיפו אותם כבר עם צאתם ממצרים, היה מן הראוי לעשות סוכות בניסן זמן צאתם ממצרים, דבשלמא אם נאמר ד'סוכות ממש הוי' איכא למימר דלא עשו להם סוכות במדבר כי אם בתשרי זמן הגשמים והדור, אולם אם 'ענני כבוד הוי' הלא היו כבר עם 'ציאתם ממצרים בניסן, ועל זה אמר 'זאף על פי שיצאנו ממצרים בחודש ניסן וכו'."

אולם בט"ז (שור"ע שם אות ביאר את דבריו בדרך הפוכה, "נראה בכוונת רבינו, דהלא נחלקו ר"א ור"ע בכוונת המילים 'בסוכות הושבתי וגו', דלר"א היא אל 'ענני כבוד' ואילו לר"ע היא אל 'סוכות ממש שעשו להם', והנה, לר"ע אין כל רבותא באותן הסוכות ואם כן מה זכרון יש בדבר אלא ודאי שהוא אל 'ציאת

למען ידעו דורותיכם כי בסוכות הושבתי

this single wish before his death?

Rabbi Dr. Abraham J. Twerski *shlit'a* explains as follows: The *Medrash* states that Moshe presented five hundred and fifteen pleas on his own behalf, praying that *Hashem* set aside this severe decree. As we read some of his heart-rending supplications, it appears to us that they would move even a heart of stone, yet *Hashem*, the Lord of infinite mercy, would not yield. Moshe’s first statement in the “Song of *Haazinu*” is “*Hashem is perfect, just, and fair. All His ways are justice.*” Did Moshe understand why *Hashem* was so unyielding? Obviously not, or else he would not have persisted in his efforts to have the decree revoked. Moshe’s statement was one of absolute faith. It was his acceptance of Divine judgment being perfect even though it defied all logic.

At times we may pray fervently and sincerely for Divine mercy, and if our prayers go unanswered we may be resentful. Moshe did not teach us that we must approve of Divine judgment, but rather that we must accept it and have faith that somehow it is perfect, fair, and just.

כי יצפני בסוכה ביום רעה יתירני ... (תהלים כז-ה)

The consecutive holidays of *Rosh Hashana* and *Yom Kippur*,

מצרים' וכמו בשאר מצוות וכגון מצות ציצית שתלה הכתוב את עניינם ב'ציאת מצרים', והנה, רבינו תפס את דברי ר"א לעיקר, וכמו שתפס רש"י בחומש ובימורחי' ביאר את דבריו ש'הניח דברי רבי עקיבא אף על פי שדבריו יותר נראין, מפני שמילת 'הושבת' מורה על פועל אלוקין שהן ענני הכבוד, לא על פועל אנוש; דאם כן 'כי בסוכות ישבו אבותיכם בהוציא' אותם מארץ מצרים' מיבעי ליה למימר'.

ולפ"ז התחיל וכתב ש'תלה הכתוב ענין מצות סוכה (-שהוא לא מצד זכירת 'ציאת מצרים' אלא מצד זכירת ענני כבוד) ביציאת מצרים כמו בשאר מצוות וכגון ציצית שתלה את עניינן (-שאנים מצד זכירת 'ציאת מצרים') ביציאת מצרים לפי שהוא דבר שראינו בעינינו ובאזינונו שמענו (-מאבותינו' שסיפרו לנו) ואין אדם יכול לרכושנו והיא המורה על אמתות מציאות הבורא יתעלה שהוא ברא הכל לדצינו והוא אשר לו הכח והממשלה והיכולת בעליונים ובתחתונים לעשות בהן כרצונו ואין מי שיאמר לו מה תעשה כאשר עשה עמנו בהוציאו אותנו מארץ מצרים באותות ובמופתים' ובכך נירא ממנו ונקיים את מצוותיו.

והמשך והסביר את דבריו שהם רק משום ש'הסוכות שאומר הכתוב שהושיבנו בהם הם ענני כבודו שהקיפן בהם לבל יכה בהם שרב ושמש, ודוגמא לזה ציוונו לעשות סוכות כדי שנוזכר את נפלאותיו וגוראותיו' בזה (שאני מצד זכירת 'ציאת מצרים' [אלא שתלאו הכתוב ביציאת מצרים], ודלא כמאן דסבדא ליה שהן 'סוכות ממש שעשו להם' ולפ"ז עניינה זכירת 'ציאת מצרים' וכנתבאר).

ולפי זה המשיך והקשה, דכיון שנצטווינו לעשות סוכות כדי לזכור עניין 'ענני כבוד' (שהתחיל כבר עם 'ציאת מצרים'), מדוע לא נצטווינו לעשותן בחודש ניסן זמן 'ציאת מצרים', הלא עניין זה התחיל כבר עם 'ציאת מצרים' בחודש ניסן, דבשלמא למד' סוכות ממש עשו להם' שלדידיה עיקר כוונת המצוה היא אל זכירת 'ציאת מצרים' לא קשה מידי כי איכא למימר שרצה ה' שנוזכר 'ציאת מצרים' גם בחודש ניסן בתחילת הקיץ וגם בחודש תשרי בתחילת החורף (ע' ברמב"ן על הכתוב- 'והנה ציווה וכו', שכתב על דרך זה), אולם לדידן קשה כנתבאר, ועל זה יישב שזאת משום ש'חודש ניסן הוא בימות הקיץ וכו'".

הצור תמים פעלו כי כל דרכיו משפט ... (לב-ד)

In this second to the last *parsha* of the *Torah*, prior to giving his final blessings to *Klal Yisroel*, Moshe assembled them to give his final teachings. The above *posuk* is the first statement following the few introductory lines of *Shiras Haazinu*. Its selection as the opening statement indicates its importance. When we see things that appear to be unjust, we may question Divine wisdom. There is so much suffering we see as unfair, that we cannot but wonder how this could occur in a just world.

Moshe himself asked *Hashem* to reveal to him the secret of Divine justice, but this request was denied (*Berachos 6a*). Moshe’s devotion to *Hashem* and his loyalty as a shepherd of His flock during the forty years of wandering in the desert certainly earned him a reward. Moshe had only one request: to be allowed to set foot. on the soil of *Eretz Yisroel* before he died. Was this too great a request? Was Moshe’s “sin” of smiting the rock instead of speaking to it so grave a transgression that it warranted what was for him the severest of all possible punishments? Could *Hashem* not find it within His infinite mercy to forgive this single transgression, or at least to commute the sentence to a lesser punishment, so that the faithful servant be granted

Baal Hanes, I am to go and *daven* at Rabbi Meir’s *kever*. The second thing is that on the day of his *yahrtzeit*, I am supposed to find a poor bride and pay for her all of her wedding expenses. In addition to that, I am to commit to support her and her husband for their entire first year of marriage. Rena, my dear *kallah*, you will not have to look for any free-loan *gemach* gown. You will not have to borrow any dress. I will provide you with a beautiful new wedding dress and all the expenses for your first year of marriage will be taken care of!”

CONCEPTS IN AVODAS HALEV
AND HEMSHECH HADOROS

מחשבת הלב

FROM THE FAMILY OF
R' CHAIM YOSEF KOFMAN ZT"l

כי בסוכות הושבתי את בני ישראל (ויקרא כו-מג)
On *Sukkos*, we commemorate how *Hashem* gave us a protection with either the "ענני הכבוד" or actual *Sukkos*. The **Bnei Yissaschar** asks: why do we make a זכר for this miracle and not for the *nes* of the *Mann* or the *Be'er*?

He answers that providing *Bnei Yisroel* with food and water, the staples of life, doesn’t show the immense mercy of *Hashem*. But when *Hashem* provided us with an extra measure of comfort, that showed His mercy. Thus says the *posuk*, "כי בסוכות הושבתי.....אני ה' אלקיכם", using the *sheim* of *Rachamim*. Perhaps we can add a *machshava* to his answer. In the *Yom Tov davening* we say:אתה בחרתנו: "אתה בחרתנו, ורצית בנו". אהבת אותנו, ורצית בנו". The **Siddur HaGra** explains that each expression corresponds to a different *Yom Tov*. The highest level of love is "רצית" - where you desire someone and will do anything for them. This, says the **Vilna Gaon**, refers to *Sukkos*. Thus, the epitome of love is giving to someone - not just the basics - but even extras. Thus, on *Sukkos* we remember our special connection with *Hashem* through the *sukkah* rather than the *Mann* or the *Be'er*.

It is said that the reason that the *sukkah* is kosher with three walls is because it resembles a person standing with his arms outstretched in a hug. As the *Yamim Noraim* conclude and *Sukkos* begins, let us walk into *Hashem's* embrace and strengthen our relationship for the entire year.

תורה צוה לנו משה מורשה קהילת יעקב ... (לג-ד)
The *Gemara* (סוכה מג) instructs us that the first words we should teach to our children when they learn to speak are the words of this *posuk*: "תורה צוה לנו משה מורשה קהילת יעקב". The word "מורשה" is often translated as “*an inheritance*,” but this is not a precise translation. The exact translation is “*an heirloom*.” An heirloom is something we hold precious and dear. Something our children cherish because it connects us to our treasured past and is something we hope to pass along to future generations the same way we received it from earlier generations.

The **Chofetz Chaim זT"l** asks a very painful question. *Chazal* tell us (ב"מ פה) - “*The Torah always returns to its host*.” This means that once a family has established a firm connection to *Limud HaTorah*, then the *Torah* will always remain in that family for generation after generation. However, asks the *Tzaddik*, we do find great *Torah* scholars whose descendants do not always follow in their footsteps - in the *derech HaTorah*.

Sometimes they are not “learners”; sometimes they stray off the proper path. How, then, can the Sages issue a guarantee that the *Torah* always returns to its host?

The *Talmud Yerushalmi* (ב"ב ר) explains the difference between the word "מורשה" and "ירושה". “*Morasha*” is not a “*Yerusha*.” The connotation is that one has less ownership in an object that has come to him as a “*Morasha*” than he does in an item that comes to him as a “*Yerusha*.” The *Gemara* explains that there is only one other place in the entire *Torah* where the word “*Morasha*” is used. That is when *Bnei Yisroel* were redeemed from Egypt. The *posuk* in *Shemos* (ו-ח) states:“ונתתי אותה לכם מורשה” - “*I will give you (Eretz Yisroel) as an heirloom (not as an inheritance)*.” Not everyone who received this promise received this heirloom. The *Meraglim* were punished for their sin by perishing in the desert, never entering into the Holy Land.

My *machshava* here is that the inherent difference between a *Yerusha*, inheritance, and a *Morasha*, an heirloom, is that when one inherits something he takes ownership of it. It belongs to him permanently. An heirloom, on the other hand, is something that belongs in one’s family, however, there is no guarantee that he will hold onto that heirloom and keep it in his possession. He does have the ownership rights to it but based on his behavior, these rights may be passed over him and go to his children. The *Yerushalmi* is telling us that some generations will have possession over the *Torah* and will create *Gedolei Yisroel*, whereas other generations will only have the rights to the *Torah* but their *Torah* will have to pass to their children or future descendents. When *Chazal* say that the “*Torah returns to its host*,” it means that when a guest spends time with a host and leaves, and then wants to return he will always come back to the same host. But, as the *Chofetz Chaim* explains, a proper guest will not open the door before knocking and being invited in by his host. We have a guarantee that the *Torah* will always come back to us knocking on our door. It’s up to each one of us to open the door quickly, let the *Torah* in, and make it feel comfortable. That way, we will take possession of this precious heirloom - “*Morasha*” - and not have it skip over to the next generation.

As we conclude the reading of the *Torah* this year on *Simchas Torah*, and start it anew, we dance and sing, and hold the *Torah* close to our hearts, and the *Torah* will know that it will always be welcome in our warm homes. Whenever it knocks, our door will be open wide.

and *Sukkos* can be compared to the cleansing of a baby. A baby must be unclothed in order to be properly washed for this is the preparatory stage. For *Bnei Yisroel*, this cleansing process takes place on *Rosh Hashana* and *Yom Kippur*. It is the rigorous spiritual purification of body and soul that occurs on the High Holidays, when our sins are laid bare before the Almighty and mercifully erased.

In *Tehillim*, *Dovid Hamelech* said: “לדוד ה' אורי וישעי” - “*Hashem is my light and my salvation*.” *Chazal* learn out that *Rosh Hashana* parallels “אורי” - “*my light*,” for on *Rosh Hashana* we bask in the light of *Hashem's* royalty and thus merit to “*walk in the path of His light*,” so that He may shine His countenance upon us. Yet we remain burdened by the sins and spiritual debts that must be repaid. Then comes *Yom Kippur*, which parallels “ישעי” - “*my salvation*,” when *Hashem* redeems His Chosen Nation from the prison of spiritual indebtment, leaving us cleansed of the dirt of impurity.

Now, says **R’ Dovid Kviat shlit’a (Sukkas Dovid)** finally on *Sukkos*, we become akin to the “baby” who is clothed and given a place to live, in order to protect him from harmful elements. As it says: “*For He hides me in His sukkah, during bad times He covers me in the concealment of His tent*.” The *sukkah* serves as a protective shield against the forces of spiritual evil and impurity. When one performs the *mitzvah* of *sukkah* with every one of his 248 limbs, then each of his limbs are shielded spiritually by the greatness of the *mitzvah*. This is the concept of, “*I shall dwell in Hashem’s house*.”

Yet one is also required to go out into the world. Thus, we are given the additional *mitzvah* of taking the four species, and waving them in all directions, symbolically meriting *Hashem's* protection not only in the *sukkah* but throughout the four corners of the earth. has gone from eating poor man’s bread, to bread of freedom, bread of a praiseworthy individual!

מי שלא ראה שמחת בית השאובים לא ראה שמחה מימיו (סוכה נא).
During the time of the *Bais Hamikdash*, a unique form of offering was brought on the *Mizbeach* (Altar) during *Sukkos*. Each morning of the *chag*, a water libation was poured on the Altar when the *Korban Tamid shel Shachar* (daily morning sacrifice) was brought. The pouring of the water was called “*Nisuch HaMayim*” and was celebrated with much fanfare. From the evening before, masses of people would congregate on the Temple mount to watch the great sages of the generation dance, perform, and sing in celebration of the special event. Special lamps were lit, whose lights illuminated the entire Jerusalem.

This celebration occurred every single night of *Sukkos*, except for *Shabbos* and the first night. Indeed, *Chazal* tell us (סוכה נא): “*Whoever did not see this celebration (Simchas*

Bais Hashoeva) never saw a celebration in his days.”
The choir stood on the *duchan* platform. At the pouring of the water, the *Levi'im* raised their voices in song, accompanied by a thirty-nine piece orchestra. Each day of the holiday the *Levi'im* chanted the appropriate Psalm for the day, pausing twice for the sounding of the *shofar* - the *tekiah, teruah, tekiah*. At the end of the Psalm the *shofar* was sounded again, and the entire assemblage bowed down to *Hashem*. On their way home, the *Levi'im* cheerfully wished each other well with the words of the *Shir Hama'alos*: “*May Hashem bless you from Zion, and may you gaze upon the goodness of Yerushalayim all the days of your life. And may you see children born to your children, peace upon Yisroel*.” (*Tehillim* 128:5,6)

Rav Yehoshua ben Chananiah was a member of the choir during the days of the Temple. “When we were rejoicing at the *Simchas Beis Hasho’evah*,” he reported, “our eyes saw no sleep. The first hour we were busy with the daily morning sacrifice. From there we went to pray *Shacharis*. Then there was the additional *Mussaf* sacrifice, followed by the *Mussaf* prayer. Then off to the *Beis Medrash* to learn Torah. Afterwards, we stopped for something to eat and drink. And then came the afternoon prayers, the daily evening sacrifice, and the *Simchas Beis Hashoevah*, which lasted throughout the night.” But how was this possible? No human being can go without sleep night after night for so many days in a row! They slept, but they did not enjoy a good night’s sleep. The *Levi'im* simply dozed fitfully on each other’s shoulders. (*Sukkah* 53a)

נגיל ונשיש בזאת התורה כי היא לנו עז ואורה (פיזש לשמחת תורה)
R’ Isaac Sher זT"l once related that whenever a person is being surrounded by other people, the main focus is what is in the middle of the circle. **R’ Chaim Yossel Kofman זT"l** explains that on *Hoshana Rabba*, we take out one *Sefer Torah* which is held in front of the *bimah* while the entire *kahal* encircles the *bimah* and *Sefer Torah* seven times. This symbolizes our eternal bond to *Torah* and *mitzvos* which is based on the *Torah* which is held in the middle of the circle.

However, on *Simchas Torah*, all of the *Sifrei Torah* are removed from the *Aron Kodesh*. We then dance joyously, singing while encircling the empty *bimah* in the middle. The *bimah* becomes the essential focal point because the *Torah* is placed upon it whenever we read from it. Our tables and *shtenders* take the place of the books when we open up or *seforim* to learn.

The *Torah* is a *Toras Chaim*, dictating every nuance of our lives, and on *Simchas Torah* we celebrate this honor and privilege. The *shtender* symbolizes our unending quest for *limud HaTorah*. Truthfully, our *seforim* gain their beauty not from being placed neatly in fancy bookcases, but when the pages are worn from daily usage in our

homes and *Bais Medrash*. Therefore, *Simchas Torah* is not merely a *simcha* of the completion of *Chamishei Chumshei Torah*, but more profoundly, it is a *simcha* of the renewal of

our everlasting commitment and dedication to a new *zman* of *ahavas and limud HaTorah* with our *shtenders* as our focal point of the center.

EDITORIAL AND INSIGHTS
ON THE WEEKLY MIDDAH

דרכי התורה

FROM THE WELLSPRINGS OF
R' GU'TMAN- RAMAT SHLOMO

ולקחתם לכם ביום הראשון - ראשון לחשבון עונות (ויקרא כו-כז)

From *Rosh Chodesh Elul* until *Shemini Atzeres* we find ourselves in the glorious period of the *Yamim Noraim*, the Days of Awe. In fact, these days, every single one of them is truly awesome in many different ways. *Elul* is the period of connection. It is the time to connect with *Hashem* and develop a real relationship with Him. That then leads us into *Rosh Hashana*, when we are so closely connected to Him that we crown Him as King over the world, and over ourselves. Once we have the clarity of the purpose of life in this world, which is only to serve *Hashem*, the true *Melech*, we only want to return to Him. This is the period called *Aseres Yimei Teshuva*, days that we can get rid of our sins and achieve a new level of closeness with *Hashem*.

This leads us into *Yom Kippur* when *Hashem* forgives us for all our sins. *Yom Kippur* is a day of tremendous joy because *Hashem* literally cleans us from our sins. **R’ Zev Leff *shlit’a*** explains that it is comparable to a mother giving her child a bath. Even though the baby is going to get dirty again, that bath is very important and necessary.

After *Yom Kippur* we enter into a new sphere. We are surrounded by *mitzvos*, we are so busy getting ready for the great and festive holiday of *Sukkos*. While up until now most of our days were in the category of DIN, there was a lot of *avodah*, *teshuvah*, and judgment. *Chag HaSukkos* begins a new and more elevated level of *avodas Hashem*. *Sukkos* is called the *Yom Tov* of CHESHBON. On every action, there is a *din* and a *cheshbon*. The *din* is the judgment for what was done, the *cheshbon* is the calculation of what could have been done instead.

Sukkos starts a new *cheshbon*. It is living the life that *Hakadosh Boruch Hu* created us to live. We are cleansed of sin, we only wish to serve *Hashem* our King, and so we enter into a higher form of existence. We become *sukkah yidden*. We leave our homes, our comforts and all the “things” we think we can't live without. We enter into our clouds of glory. In fact, when the *Torah* describes the *sukkos* that *Hashem* settled us in when we left *Mitzrayim*, He was referring to clouds of glory. We lived a spiritual existence in a physical world. This is what *Sukkos* is all about. It is like living in *Gan Eden* before Adam sinned. In fact, the *Yom Tov of Sukkos* is called the *Yom Tov* of *daas*. (*Pesach* is called *chochma* and *Shavuos* is *bina*, but that is for another time.)

The *Torah* tells us, “*Bchol Derachecha Da’ayhu*” - In all your ways KNOW *Hashem*. So on *Sukkos* we take a *lulav* and *esrog*. Explains the *Medrash* in *Sefer Bereishis*, the *Aitz*

Hadaas tov v'ra was an *esrog* tree. Adam was created on *Rosh Hashana* and was placed in *Gan Eden*. *Hashem* told him that he can eat from all the trees in the garden except the *Aitz Hadaas*. *Hashem* wanted him to WAIT. He needed to experience the *Aseres Yimei Teshuva* and *Yom Kippur* in order to fully experience the *aitz hadaas*. *Hashem* wanted him to wait until *Sukkos* when he would receive the special *daas*, this unique knowledge necessary to eat from this tree.

On *Rosh Hashana*, Adam did not have enough *daas* to eat from the *Aitz Hadaas*. This is why we take an *esrog* on *Sukkos*, after we have achieved true purity from *Yom Kippur* and we become one with *Hashem*. We make a great *tikkun* for MAN and we create a great bond between us and *Hashem*. When we take the physical world and raise it up in the service of *Hashem*, we are actualizing the purpose of the world. We are fulfilling the *mitzvah* of “*Bchol Derachecha Da’ayhu*” in the greatest way.

We take three other *minim* as well, each one is meant to represent a different part of our bodies, and we raise them all up, as well as all of our material possessions that we left behind, and in our very own *Gan Eden*, we dedicate our existence to the service of *Hashem*.

This is why *Sukkos* is called *Zman Simchaseinu*, the time of our rejoicing. There is no greater joy in the world than the DAAS, the knowledge of what you are living for. When we finally get rid of ALL the things that take us away from *Hashem*, and we can bask in the purity of knowing what we are living for, that is true bliss. On *Sukkos*, we come to the full realization that AIN OD MILVADO. There is nothing else worth striving for than *kirvas Hashem*. We threw away our sins, we threw away the *yetzer hara*, and we got rid of all the outer pressures that pull us down. We threw away our comfortable homes and beds, we threw away everything that takes us away from *Hashem*, and we enter the *Yom Tov* of *Sukkos* when we can raise up a fruit and make it holy. We can take everything and lift it up to be used in the true service of *Hashem*. The only way to do that is with DAAS, and that is what we receive on *Sukkos*. In fact, it is the very first thing we *daven* for in our *bakashos of shemona esrei* every day. Before we ask for health and forgiveness and *parnassa*, we ask for *daas*. Without *daas*, we are like everyone else who doesn’t know why they are alive.

May this *Sukkos* be filled with much joy, much singing and laughter, and much, much *daas* to be able to always know the great mission we are doing here.

coming to him!”

This, says R’ Zilberstein, is the meaning of what we say everyday in *davening*: "ברוך משלם שכר טוב ליראיו" - Blessed is He (*Hashem*) who pays back the righteous what they deserve!

ואתה ה' מנן בעדי כבודי ומרים ראשי. קולי אל ה' אקרא ויענני מהר קדשו סלה וגו' (תהלים ג-ד ה.)

The following story is related by **Rabbi Dovid Goldwasser *shlit’a*** and it illustrates how a Jew can merit unique Divine intervention, if he or she stands up for what is right. The story took place in *Eretz Yisroel* and is about a poor bride named Rena who could not afford her own wedding gown and needed to resort to procuring one from a free-loan *gemach* organization. She did her research and found such an organization that had just what she was looking for. The problem was that it was in a distant city and she would have to travel there if she wanted the gown.

She was determined and made the arrangements. As Rena made her way into the van and took a seat in the back, she took in a deep breath. Settling herself down, she anticipated a two-hour drive ahead until she reached her destination. Seated as well in the car was a rabbi who was wearing earphones and listening to a lecture, attempting to block out any disturbing noises.

The van continued along as a few more people boarded and after a few minutes, the driver turned on the radio. To Rena’s immense dissatisfaction, the radio was set to a popular Israeli rock station and it was playing a song which was quite decadent and something she wished to avoid hearing. As she unwillingly listened to the disturbing words, she eventually could no longer take it. “Excuse me driver, but could you by any chance turn the music off?”

Turning around in his seat, the driver stared straight back at her. “No. There are other people here that enjoy this music and I’m not turning it off for one person - I’m going to leave it on. They are also paying for their transportation.”

Unable to do anything more about the situation, Rena remained silent. As a few more people soon joined as passengers, the music increased in volume. It was soon becoming too much for Rena to bear; she literally couldn’t stand it. The music was hurting he ears. Again, she kindly pleaded, “Sir, I am nicely asking you, could you please turn it off?”

Yet again, the drive turned around and said, “I am sorry, but you are not the only passenger in this van, and you are not going to overrule everyone else here. We are going to listen to this music because we enjoy it.” And with that, he turned back around to face the road.

“Fine,” said Rena, “you don’t have to turn it off, but please let me out of the van right here.”

Swiveling back in his seat a third time, the driver said, “I want you to know that I will not give you back your money.”

“Okay,” replied Rena, “just please let me off.” As Rena was about to get out of the car, the rabbi sitting in the front seat took note of all the commotion. “Wait, wait! What’s going on?” When he learned of the predicament, he too began to beg the driver to turn off the music, but it was to no avail. The driver was firmly adamant that matters run as he wished. With no other resort remaining, the driver pulled over to the side and let Rena off in a lonely, deserted area.

Later that day, the rabbi was on his way back from running his errands. Walking down the street, he was surprised to see right before him Rena, the very same girl who had made the commotion and who had so boldly stood by her opinion earlier that day. He recognized her because she made such an impression on him. He quietly asked if she was okay.

“I am perfectly fine,” she replied. “In fact, I am doing quite well. Let me tell you what happened; you won’t believe it. After I was let off the van, I had to wait for only ten minutes until another car came along and picked me up. As I made my way inside, I took a seat next to an elderly woman. She was very kind and jolly, introducing herself as Faige. She asked for my name and where I was headed. I told her that my name was Rena and explained that I was heading to a *gemach* organization because I am a bride in need of a wedding gown. This organization provides brides who cannot afford more procey gowns with used but nice gowns and I was thrilled I would be able to get one.

“I then asked the kindly woman Faige where she was going. She told me the following: “Right now I am on my way to the gravesite of the holy *Tanna Rabbi Meir Baal Hanes*. It is his *yahrtzeit* today, the anniversary day of his passing, and every year I go there. The reason I have this custom is because of my father. I grew up in one of the poorest families in Jerusalem. My family was so impoverished that we could barely afford food for each day, let alone for *Shabbos* and *Yom Tov*. My father did what he could but we struggled mightily to make ends meet. Matters continued to decline until one day, in a cry of desperation, my father went to the grave of *Rabbi Meir Baal Hanes* and prayed his heart out.

“By the time he returned home, he was clearly a different person. Something unexplainable had changed in him. From that day onwards, money began to flow into our house. There was more money and more money. My father started making successful business deals and we eventually became one of the wealthiest families in the city.

“My father in due time passed away, but he left two requests in his will. Every year on the *yahrtzeit* of *Rabbi Meir*

are other *mitzvos* which urgently need to be seen to in our community. Why, what about marrying off poor brides? There is an orphaned girl in our very own town who is not getting any younger. Wouldn't that be a more fitting way to spend the community's money?"

One rabbi listened quietly until the rich man concluded his plea, and then he began to speak. “It is certainly true that the girl you speak of needs a match. And it is true, as well, that it is a great *mitzvah* to endow a poor bride and to help an orphan. But, I can't help thinking: Why, in all these years, did our speaker never think of helping this girl? Why, only now, when the question of acquiring an *esrog* came up did he remember her? I will tell you the reason. My friends, what we are witnessing here is the work of the *yetzer hara* - the evil inclination. The evil inclination is wily and crafty. He will use any argument to discourage a Jew from doing the *mitzvah* at hand, even if it means that he must convince him to do a different *mitzvah* in its stead!"

“This,” the rabbi explained, “is typical of human nature. Often, when a person is about to fulfill a certain *mitzvah*, in steps the evil inclination to cloud his mind with doubts. ‘Why are you choosing to do this *mitzvah* instead of that one? That one is surely more important.’ Then the person becomes confused and his will to perform the *mitzvah* is weakened. No, my friends, we must confront and expose the evil inclination for what it is and do battle with it. When we emerge successful, we will be able to perform the original *mitzvah*, thus fulfilling the will of *Hashem*.”

אם עשק רש וגול משפט וצדק תראה במדינה אל תתמה על החפץ כי גבה מעל גבה שמר ונבחים עליהם ... (קהלת ה-י)
Shlomo Hamelech teaches us that one must never think that there is no judgment in the world - לית דין ולית דיין - for better or for worse. Sometimes we just have to work a little harder to see it. To illustrate this point, **R’ Yitzchok Zilberstein *shlit’a*** tells over the following incredible story.

As a good son, Efrat would go regularly to visit his elderly father, who lived in a *moshav* up in the northern part of Israel. The trip from Netanya where Efrat lived with his family, was a long and arduous one, but what wouldn’t he do for his father. On one of his trips, Efrat pulled into his father’s block and was surprised to find all the residents of his father’s building standing outside, bewildered and frightened. He parked his car and ran over to find out what was going on. His father came over and told him how frightened everybody was as a poisonous snake had somehow gotten loose and entered the building through the front entrance. Nobody knew where the dangerous beast was and everyone hurriedly evacuated the building. They were all standing outside and the snake seemed to have disappeared.

Efrat couldn’t help but smile. “Well,” he said to the frightened tenants, “It just so happens that I capture snakes by profession; give me a couple of minutes and I’ll have this whole ordeal taken care of - free of charge!”

Efrat grabbed his gear from his car and entered the building cautiously. He was inside for what seemed like the longest few minutes of their lives, and the people - especially Efrat’s father - began to get worried. A minute later and the residents were very relieved to see Efrat walking out of the building, the captured snake securely encased in a container. He really did know what he was doing! They all thanked him profusely and admired his quick handiwork. Then, they all went back into their respective homes. Efrat himself took the case with the snake, placed it carefully on the back seat of his car, and locked the door. He would deal with the snake later. Now, he just wanted to spend some quality time with his father at home - the intended purpose of his trip.

Father and son had just sat down to a glass of tea when suddenly they heard blood-curdling cries from outside the building. It sounded like someone was choking. Efrat and his father ran to the window to see who was screaming and if there was anything to do.

The screaming was emanating from the driver’s seat of his own car! To Efrat’s utter shock, he saw a man sitting in the front seat of his car with the snake coiled around his neck. Apparently, this man had broken into the locked vehicle intending to steal it and didn’t even have time to close the front door before he was attacked by the massive snake that had quickly escaped its containment. The snake wrapped its powerful body around the thief and was beginning to squeeze him to death. The man was immobilized and even his choked screams were beginning to dim as he lost oxygen.

Efrat dashed downstairs to his car to watch the snake biting the thief again and again (which is a normal occurrence for a snake when it feels under pressure). Efrat knew how to handle reptiles like these and he managed to pull the snake off the half-conscious man just in time. This time, he properly secured the snake and made sure that it couldn’t escape again. Someone called an ambulance and the man was rushed - more dead than alive - to a nearby hospital for treatment.

Turning to the crowd that had gathered from the commotion, Efrat shook his head in wonderment and said, “Who can know if there was not a decree upon me in heaven that my car be stolen today, but because of the *mitzvah* of rescuing people from the snake, I was saved the tremendous trouble of being robbed. And the thief apparently got what was

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מעשה אבות ... סימן לבנים

בסוכות תשבו שבועת ימים כל הזרח בישראל ישבו בסוכות ... (ויקרא כג-מב)

The **Menoras HaMaor, Rabbeinu Yitzchok Aboav זt”l** gives us an illuminating perspective on the purpose of the *sukkah*, one which applies in every generation and in every place. “*When Chazal (סוכה ב.) instruct us: ‘Go out from your permanent dwellings and live in a temporary dwelling,’ they meant that the mitzvah to dwell in the sukkah teaches us that a man must not put his trust in the size or strength or conveniences of his house, even though it may be filled with the best of everything; nor should he rely upon the help of any man, even though he may be the lord of the land. But let him put his trust in Him whose word called the universe into being, for He alone is mighty and faithful, and He does not retract what He promises.*” What the *Menoras HaMaor* is telling us is that the main point of living in the *sukkah* for seven days is to increase our faith in *Hakadosh Boruch Hu*. When we live in a sturdy house, we are protected from the elements; rain and cold and heat do not harm us. As a result, we begin to have faith in our homes, in our wealth - and not in *Hashem*. Likewise, we tend to place our trust in men, especially influential rulers and leaders. By living in a flimsy *sukkah* for seven days, exposed once again to the elements, we realize that ultimately we must put our trust in *Hashem* who rules over our houses, the elements, and all human rulers.

During the *Yom Tov* of *Sukkos* many of our great *Gedolim* throughout the generations had a custom to never leave the *sukkah* unless absolutely necessary. Even in the heat and cold, mist and humidity, in sickness and health, they adamantly clung to the *mitzvah* and refused all attempts to get them to come inside. The same was true of the **Gaon R’ Yisroel Belsky זt”l**. He would say that he fully understood the teaching of *Chazal*: "מי שסוכה ערבה" - one whose *sukkah* is “pleasant” for him, and therefore wishes to eat there even on *Shemini Atzeres* when Biblically there is no such *mitzvah*. He would declare with great relish, “The *sukkah* is a delight to be in, a wonderful place to be.”

R’ Belsky fulfilled this *mitzvah* in the fullest sense as well as the teaching that one should make the *sukkah* his dwelling. He rarely left the *sukkah*; he ate, slept, and learned there. He was very careful not to say anything negative about the *sukkah*. Even if it was very hot, he would never say that it was uncomfortable in the *sukkah*.

Each year on *Chol Hamoed Sukkos*, people would come from all over to be מקבל פני רבם - to greet their *Rebbi*, as dictated in *halacha*, and they would be welcomed by R’ Belsky’s shining radiant face. He would also host a *simchas beis hashoeivah* in his *sukkah* for his Camp Agudah *Masmidim*, who always found a special place in his heart. Even in his later years, when he was having terrible back pain and required a walker to get around, nothing stopped him from spending time with his beloved “masmidim family.”

One particular year, some *talmidim* showed up a little early and found R’ Belsky inside his house, something quite unusual for him. After setting up the tables in the *sukkah*, they entered the Belsky kitchen and found R’ Belsky sitting at the table, shivering and looking quite ill. Very concerned, a family member called the doctor. R’ Belsky was an individual who quite literally “knew it all,” so the doctor quickly cut to the chase and asked R’ Belsky if perhaps he had recently stopped taking his pain medication that was prescribed because of his back condition.

”Yes,” replied R’ Belsky, to which the doctor responded, “That’s probably what it is. When one stops taking that medication, there are withdrawal symptoms such as those that are you are describing to me.”

R’ Belsky hung up the phone and broke into a huge smile. “So I'm not sick!” he exclaimed. He took hold of his walker and quickly propelled himself toward the *sukkah*, where he joined his *talmidim*.

His fear that he would be deemed halachically sick and thereby *patur* from sitting in the *sukkah*, bothered him even more than the pain he was experiencing from not taking his medication. As he joyfully made his way into the *sukkah*, a son-in-law standing nearby asked him if he planned to sleep in the *sukkah* that night.

“Of course!” he replied, “where else would I sleep?”

ולקחתם לכם פרי עץ הדר כפת תמרים וענף עץ עבת וערבי נחל (ויקרא כג-מ)

One year, the *esrogim* dealers of the town decided to band together to raise the price of *esrogim*. Now, an *esrog* had always been expensive, so much so, that it was customary for the wealthy leaders of the town to purchase one *esrog* to fulfill the *mitzva* for the entire community. This year, however, the price was so exorbitant that even that one *esrog* was beyond their reach. How would the community manage to celebrate *Yom Tov* without even one set of the Four Species to share amongst themselves?

Finally, the *rabbanim* called a meeting at which they hoped to raise the money needed. Only the richest members of the town had been invited, as they had always supplied the *esrogim* for their fellow Jews.

After the formal request was issued, one wealthy businessman stood and addressed the gathering. “I believe that it is an outrage to spend so much money on an *esrog*. Who do those dealers think they are to hold us hostage like this? There