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ורבה ראה שהוא שמח מאד [ונראה כפורק עול - רש"י] אמר ליה רבה, הרי כתוב "וגילו ברעדה", וענה לו אבוי: אני הנחתי היום תפילין, וזוהי הסיבה לשמחתי הגדולה].

וממשיך האריז"ל (שם): "וזה פירוש הפסוק (דברים כח, מז) 'תחת אשר לא עבדת את ה' אלוקיך בשמחה ובטוב לבב מרוב כל' - פירוש תשמח יותר מכאשר תרויח רוב כל ממון שבעולם, וזה מרוב כל פירוש יותר מכאשר הוארב כל", עכ"ל.

עתידים אנו להיתבע על כך שלא עבדנו את ה' בשמחה, ועל שלא הרגשנו בזמן עבודת ה' תחושת שמחה יותר משמחה על השגת אלפי זהב וכסף. כל הנאות עולם הזה אינם משמחים באמת, והשמחה האמיתית היא רק בעבודת ה'!

והאריז"ל (שם) כתב לבאר גם את ההפסד הנובע מחוסר השמחה, היינו מדת העצבות, וז"ל: "גם מדת העצבות בעצמה, היא מדה מגונה מאד, ובפרט אם רוצה להשיג חכמה ורוח הקודש. ואין דבר גורם מניעת ההשגה, אפילו עם יהיה ראוי אליה כמו [מי שיש בו] מדה של העצבות, והעד בזה מה שאמר הכתוב (מלכים ב, ג), ועתה קחו לי מנגן, והיה כנגן המנגן וכמה ראיות אחרות", עכ"ל.

לומדים אנו מכאן שמדת העצבות היא הגרועה שבמדות, ואם האדם לקוי בה, הוא מפסיד את כל הרוחניות שלו. אי אפשר לעבוד את ה' ולהתעלות במדרגות בזמן ששרויים בעצבות, ודוד המלך - כשרצה לקבל נבואה, והיה עצב, התחיל לשיר, כדי שתשרה עליו רוח שמחה, ואז זכה לרוח נבואה, כמבואר בגמ' פסחים (דף קיז ע"א). וכן כל הנביאים כשרצו לקבל הנבואה ביקשו שינגנו לפניהם.

בשער הכוונות (דף א טור ב) כתב **רבי חיים וויטאל**, וז"ל: "אסור לאדם להתפלל תפילתו בעצבון, ואם נעשה כך, אין נפשו יכול לקבל

לקחי חיים ודברי התעוררות נסדרו עפ"י פרשיות השבוע

מאוצרותיו של המגיד

ופרוס עלינו סוכת שלומך ותקננו בעצה טובה מלפניך וכו' (תפילת ערבית)
עניין הסוכה – שמשפיעה שלום לכל

השבועות, י"א].

ולפי זה יש לומר, שכיון שב'סוכה' יש את ההשפעה של 'ענני הכבוד', יש בה גם את ההשפעה שלמידת השלום והאחדות. ואכן מצינו, שכמו שב'ענני הכבוד' ישבו כל ישראל בתוך היקף אחד- 'אחדות', כן בעניין הסוכה מבואר בגמרא (סוכה כ"ז), ש'כל ישראל ראוים לישב בסוכה אחת'.

וכיון שעניין הסוכה היא השלום, לכן גם בה שורה השכינה, וכמו שדרשו בגמרא (סוכה ט): 'כשם שחל שם שמים על החגיגה, כך חל שם שמים על הסוכה, שנאמר 'חג הסוכות שבעת ימים לה', מה חג- 'חגיגה' לה' אף סוכה לה'."

וגם בשמה נרמז שם ה', שהרי 'סוכה' שמספרו צ"א היא בגימטריא שני השמות של ה'- 'יהוה' ו'אדני-ל'. (ע' מה שכתב על זה ב'**חשק שלמה**' ריש מסכת סוכה).

ולפי זה מובן מדוע ביכולתו של הסוכה להשפיע שלום בבית היהודי. ומטעם זה גם יבואר מדוע בסגולת הסוכה להשפיע פרנסה בריווח וברכה, וכמבואר ב'**תפארת שלמה**' (סוכות, ד"ה במשנה), שכתב על דברי המשנה (סוכה כח): 'מי שהי' ראשו ורובו בסוכה, ושלחנו בתוך הבית וכו', "הנראה לרמז בזה, שע"י שהיה יושב בסוכה

האור העליון הנמשך עליו בעת התפילה. אמנם, בעת שמתודה הוידוי ומפרט חטאיו, אז טוב להתעצב בלבד, אבל בשאר התפילה נמשך לו נזק נפלא גדול ע"י עצבותו. אבל צריך להראות לפניו יתברך הכנעה גדולה, באימה ויראה, אמנם תהיה בשמחה יתירה וגדולה בכל האפשר, כדמיון העבד המשמש את רבו בשמחה יתירה, ואם משמשו בעצבות עבודתו נמאסת לפניו, וכמעט שעיקר המעלה והשלימות והשגת רוח הקודש תלויה בדבר זה, בין בעת תפילתו, ובין כשעשה איה מצהה משאר המצוות וכו' ואל תבוז לענין זה, כי שכרו גדול מאד", עכ"ל.

ואפשר, שזה מה שמרמז לנו שלמה המלך בפסוק (קהלת ג, יב) ידעתי כי אין טוב בם - הגשמיות אינה משמחת את האדם, כי אם לשמוח - אין עצה אחרת להשגת שמחה אמיתית רק ע"י שמחה בהש"ת, ולעשות טוב בחייו - לעשות מצוות ומעשים טובים בעבודת ה'. אלו שתי העצות היחידות שעל ידן ניתן להשיג שמחה בעולם הזה, ולהגיע לשלימות האמיתית.

זמן שמחתנו

סוכות הוא "זמן שמחתנו", והטעם מפני שבסוכות יוצאים מדירת קבע לדירת עראי, ובוה משתחררים מלחץ הגשמיות ומראים שאין רצוננו בגשמיות, די לנו דירת עראי ואין רצוננו בדירת קבע. כל דאגתו של האדם נובעת רק מפני לחץ הפרנסה שמעיק עליו, אבל בשעה שהוא משתחרר מהלחץ, ממילא הוא מגיע לשמחה אמיתית.

לכן, סוכות הוא זמן של שמחה יותר משאר המועדים [כמו שמספרים על אדם אחד שהיה צריך נעליים וביקש מהקב"ה: או שתתן לי נעליים, או שתשחרר אותי מהלחץ, שאבין שאין לי צורך בנעליים...]

מאת הרב שלום פערל שליט"א
נ"ל בישיבת הגר"צ קושלובסקי

This is the true story of *Sukkos* in Russia - how, like the spark of Jewishness itself, Communism never was able to trulystamp*Sukkos* out.

The great *tzaddik* and *Rov* of the “Three Communities”: Altoona, Hamburg, and Wandsbek, was **R’ Yonasan Eibenschutz ZT”L**. Renowned for his genius from a young age, he had earned a reputation as an accomplished scholar in all aspects of *Torah* study, including *Halacha*, *Drush* and *Kabbalah*. It was this last aspect of his learning that became the center of perhaps the greatest internal controversy within the *Torah* community, and eventually the greater Jewish community, throughout the world. Because of his Kabbalistic abilities in assisting his downtrodden brethren, even as far back as the early 1700’s, he was suspected of being an adherent to Shabsai Tzvi (a Jew who proclaimed himself to be *Moshiach*. Vast numbers of the Jewish diaspora accepted his claims, even after he was proven to be a fake and became a Jewish *Meshumad* (apostate) with his conversion to Islam in 1666. Shabsai Tzvi’s followers, both during his life and even up to two centuries later, were known as Sabbateans.). R’ Yonasan vigorously denied this claim his entire life and even got up one year on *Yom Kippur* in front of his entire synagogue to denounce the Sabbatean movement. In 1725, he was among the leading Prague *Rabbonim* who excommunicated the Sabbatean sect.

There were, however, *Rabbonim* that still harbored suspicions about R’ Yonason Eibenschutz and continued to suspect him. Chief amongst them was the great scholar and son of the Chacham Tzvi ZT”L, **R’ Yaakov Emden ZT”L**, who was the lead antagonist in the dispute since he suspected R’ Yonason of harboring secret Sabbatean beliefs as a result of a dispute concerning the *kemayas* (amulets) which he was issuing. It was alleged that these amulets recognized the Messianic claims of Shabsai Tzvi and were thus heretical in nature. Once the controversy started, however, R’ Yaakov Emden later found serious connections between the Kabbalistic and commentative writings of R’ Yonason with those of the known Sabbatean, Judah Prossnitz, who had been an acquaintance of R’ Yonason from his days in Prossnitz.

After R’ Yonasan Eibenschutz passed away, someone opened up his *Tefillin* and found that they were empty! This caused quite a stir in the community. The students of R’ Yaakov Emden, who for so many years had waged a battle against R’ Yonasan, pounced on this opportunity to defame the eminent rabbi, saying that he never really wore *Tefillin*. In their view, this was proof to the validity of their claims that R’ Yonason Eibenschutz was in fact a Sabbatean all along.

It took a bit of investigative inquiry but eventually the truth came out: This specific pair of *Tefillin* of R’ Yonason Eibenschutz dated from the time when he was the *Rov* of Hamburg, where the custom was to wear *Tefillin* on *Chol Hamoed*. R’ Yonasan was not originally from Hamburg and it was against his custom to don *Tefillin* on *Chol Hamoed*. On the other hand, as the leader of the community, he did not want to go against the local custom. In the end, he came up with a brilliant idea. He had a special pair of *Tefillin* made which contained no *parshiyos* inside them, which he would only wear on *Chol Hamoed* in the local synagogue. This way, he could appear to be following the local custom while at the same time, he maintained his own personal practice of not wearing *Tefillin* on *Chol Hamoed*!

משל' למה הדבר דומה

וסוכה תהיה לצל יומם מחורב וכו' (יטעיהד)

משל' There was once a Jewish innkeeper who provided food and lodgings for weary travelers. He was friendly and personable, however, his jealous competitors decided to slander him. Before long, he was ordered to appear in court to defend himself against the baseless charges.

The simple innkeeper was terrified about his fate for he had spoken to individuals who told him that if convicted, he could face a long jail sentence or possibly even execution.

One friend advised him to schedule an appearance before the Emperor who was a benevolent monarch and would no doubt exonerate the innkeeper if he was told the truth. But the poor man argued and said that he had no connections to the Palace and no way to even set up an appointment.

The Emperor had a habit from time to time, to dress up as

a peasant and mingle with his subjects to get to know them. One night, he even came to the inn, where the kind innkeeper served him food and drink and made him comfortable. He had no idea he was actually serving the king.

Later, when he found out that his guest had been the Emperor himself, he was truly distraught over the missed opportunity to plead his case and free himself

גמסל' When sit in our *sukkah*, the *Shechinah* itself sits with us and this gives us the opportunity to draw close to Hashem and plead for the things we need in life. The **Chofetz Chaim ZT”L** advises us to seize the moment and not waste our precious time, for when else will we have this incredible opportunity to sit with the King of all Kings in a personal setting, in our very own *sukkah*?

of the renowned Chassidic leaders.

The young man who had written the letter and worked tirelessly to ensure the arrival of the *esrogim* was disappointed and felt deprived that after all his work, he was not slated to receive one of the precious *esrogim*. Since R’ Reuven was not part of the *yeshivah*, he could not understand why he had received one while the person who made it all happen did not get a thing. In fact, he complained directly to R’ Reuven that he felt he was being treated unfairly.

R’ Reuven had already purchased the other three species at considerable expense. He did not have much money at this time and he used much of the little that he had on the three *minim*. Now, this young man was insisting that he give up his *esrog*. Even R’ Shlomo Heiman got involved and tried to persuade the young man to allow R’ Reuven to keep the *esrog*, but he too, somehow failed to satisfy the young man.

Finally R’ Reuven asked him if he thought he was entitled to the *esrog*. He said that he did. So without another word, R’ Reuven handed over the precious *esrog* to him and that year he was forced to “borrow” an *esrog* from someone else. He later told members of his family, who were visibly perturbed, that he did not want a *mitzvah* at the expense of another’s misgivings. An *esrog* can be borrowed, but nothing can compensate for someone’s ill will.

..... וענף עץ עבות וערבי נחל (שם)

The careful performance of *mitzvos* is one of the characteristic traits of the great dynasty of Brisk. From **R’ Chaim (Brisker) Soloveitchik ZT”L**, down to the present day *Roshei Yeshivah* of Brisk in Jerusalem, every possible addition to glorify a *mitzvah* as well as every stringency in the performance of a *mitzvah*, is upheld in the most optimal manner. *Mitzvos* notwithstanding, there was one aspect of behavior which the **Brisker Rov, R’ Yitzchok Zev Halevi Soloveitchik ZT”L** stressed over every other attribute, a concept which dominated his actions and interactions with every human being: *Bein Adam L’ chavero* - commandments between man and his fellow man. Of course, one must be stringent in his obligations and the *Torah* exhorts us to fulfill every *mitzvah* to perfection - but never must this be done at the expense of the feelings and emotional integrity of another person.

One year, there was a shortage of kosher *hadassim* in the city of Brisk. The Brisker Rov maintained a custom to only use *hadassim* that were 28 centimeters long, as per the opinion of the Netziv. However, try as they might, the members of his household and his students were unable to locate *hadassim* that conformed to his rigid standards.

Understandably, this caused R’ Yitzchok Zev quite a bit of angst and consternation before the holiday. *Sukkos* was fast approaching and there were no *hadassim*! How would he perform this all-important *mitzvah* in the manner in which he was used to? Time was running out and the entire Soloveitchik household could feel the pressure that was building within their father, and consequently, spilling over to the rest of the family.

There was a young boy who would come and go in the house of the Brisker Rov from time to time and was known to R’ Yitzchok Zev and his family. The boy lived nearby and he recognized the air of depression that had settled over the Soloveitchik household due to their inability to locate kosher *hadassim*. He decided to do something about it.

Early on the day before *Sukkos*, the young boy left his house and without mentioning where he was going, he traveled out of Jerusalem to a *moshav* (settlement) an hours walk from the city. He had heard that there were *hadassim* in that *moshav* and he decided that he would make every effort to find ones that met the standards of the Brisker Rov.

He asked and received permission from the owner of a patch of *hadassim* to search for a set that was to be used by the Brisker Rov. For hours on end, he sorted through stalk after stalk until he managed to procure three perfect sets of *hadassim* that would stand up to the most rigid requirements.

He practically ran the whole way back to Jerusalem with a heart bursting with happiness and joy that he would be the one to bring kosher *hadassim* to the Brisker Rov. Yet as he approached the house, he could again sense the depressive feeling that had pervaded the home. So many people had gone to search for *hadassim* but none had been successful.

Suddenly, the door burst open and the young boy practically sailed through. Dusty and sweating, his feet still trailed the mud and grime that had collected on his shoes from the field he had been in for so many hours. Nevertheless, he ran into the home and called out in his shrill child’s voice, “*Hadassim*! I have *hadassim*! Perfect, kosher *hadassim Mehudarim*!” The smile on his youthful face was as bright as the rising sun and he swelled with an inner glow that he had succeeded in bringing the Brisker Rov what he had been lacking.

But R’ Yitzchok Zev did not notice the boy’s smile. Nor did he even glance at the three sets of beautiful kosher *hadassim* that had been laid carefully on his table. All he noticed was that the boy had burst rudely into his home.



leniencies of the Baal HaTanya, including using a *lulav* whose middle leaf is split more than halfway down to the spine. For as we all know, the Baal HaTanya permits the use of such a *lulav*. But yet, would any one of you ever consider using such a *lulav*? G-d forbid! You spend hours looking for a *lulav* that’s completely closed, or almost completely closed!” The students looked downcast as they

recognized the truth of the *Mashgiach*’s words. But R’ Moshe Aharon’s lesson was not finished yet. “Why are some people lenient when it comes to saying *Shema*, and strict when it comes to *lulav*? The answer is that people decide on whatever is convenient for them.” He looked at his students lovingly and concluded, “This is no way for *Bnei Torah* to behave!”

EDITORIAL AND INSIGHTS
ON THE WEEKLY MIDDAH OF ...

דריגה יתירה

FROM THE WELLSPRINGS OF
R’ GUTTMAN - RAMAT SHLOMO

מן שמחתנו

”בסכות תשבו שבעת ימים” – כל שבעת ימים צא מדירת קבע ושב בדירת עראי (סוכה ב).

On the *Yom Tov* of *Sukkos* we are told to leave our permanent dwelling and enter into a temporary dwelling. This is to help us continue our upward climb in spirituality that began on the first day of *Elul* through *Rosh Hashana* and *Yom Kippur* and escalates with the beautiful holiday of *Sukkos*. There is so much meaning and deep understanding in every thing we do on *Sukkos*, from the *lulav*, *esrog*, *hadassim* and *aravos* to the *Ushpizin* who come to visit us each night. But the significance of the *Sukkah* itself is surely of paramount importance and has much to teach us.

According to **R’ Avrohom Pam ZT”L**, the “permanent dwelling” of a person is his own mind! Human nature is to be self-centered. One’s thoughts largely revolve around his own needs. Of course, one also thinks about others, about *chessed*, but that is the “temporary dwelling” of the mind!

The fundamental *mitzvah* on *Sukkos* is to be HAPPY!! For this reason, *Sukkos* is called “*Zman Simchoseinu*” the time of our rejoicing. Says R’ Pam, thinking of the needs of others is the formula for a life of *simcha*!

Rabbi Paysach Krohn Shlit’a is known to say: “Do you want to be happy? Stop thinking about yourself and

start thinking about others!”

This is one idea behind the *Sukkah* - that we leave our “permanent dwellings” - our self centered thoughts - and enter our “temporary dwelling,” focusing on the needs of others. As R’ Pam often quoted: The city of happiness that we’re all looking for can only be found in the state of mind!

The *sukkah* also represents humility and the need for a person to be yielding and מוותר in the way he deals with others. From the halachic requirements of the *sukkah*, we can learn out the meaning of the *sukkah*. לכתחילה, one should have four walls. However, if he can’t manage that, it’s okay, no problem, three walls are okay too. And if he is unable to build three walls, that too, is not a problem! Even two walls and a *tefach* (handbreadth) is still kosher. It’s all about flexibility and compromise. As the **Vilna Gaon ZT”L** famously writes, the “ס” of the word “סכה” represents all four walls. The “כ” comes second for this alludes to three walls. And the “ה” symbolizes the two walls and a piece!

May we take these lessons of thinking about others, of compromise and תרנית, to heart and may the joy of this beautiful *Yom Tov* spill over into our entire lives.

מעשה אבות סימן לבאים

ולקחתם לכם ביום הראשון פרי עץ הדר כפת תמרים (ויקרא כג-ז)

Upon arriving in New York City with his family in 1941, the *Rosh Yeshivah* of *Torah Vodaas* and later *Beis Medrash Elyon* in Monsey, **R’ Reuven Grozovsky ZT”L**, was unsure where to settle his family. Although he was glad and thankful to have escaped the terrors of WWII with his family and his own safety intact, he was now concerned for their spiritual welfare. Eventually, he told them, “We’ll either live on the East Side of New York or in Williamsburg. They are the areas least affected by the excesses of American culture. In such matters, the less exposure, the better.”

When the *Yom Tov* of *Sukkos* arrived, R’ Reuven, as well as the rest of the Jews in New York faced a serious concern. It was war-time, and shipping restrictions made it impossible to secure an *esrog*. Not just a beautiful *esrog* - but any *esrog*. **R’ Nesanel Quinn ZT”L, Menahel** of the *Mesivta* of *Torah Vodaas*, recognized the problem ahead of time and asked a young man in the *yeshivah* to write to horticulture schools, and ask them if they had any spare citrons from their hot-house experiments. Very few schools responded to this request but to their great fortune, the University of Colorado, in Denver, responded that they had five extra citrons which they would be happy to send to New York for the benefit of the rabbis there.

R’ Quinn was overjoyed and he took upon himself the task of distributing the *esrogim*. One was allocated to the *yeshivah* for the students’ use, and one each was given to R’ Quinn, the *Rosh Yeshivah*, **R’ Shlomo Heiman ZT”L**, R’ Reuven Grozovsky (on R’ Shlomo’s recommendation, since R’ Reuven was not yet affiliated with *Torah Vodaas*), and one

וכמבואר במשנה סוף מסכת עוקצין: 'לא מצא הקב"ה כלי מחזיק ברכה לישראל אלא השלום וכו'."

SUKKOS TORAH GEMS

**בסכות תשבו שבעת ימים כל האזרח
בישראל ישבו בסכות וגו' (ויקרא כג-מב)**

The **Rambam** in *Moreh Nevuchim* (ג-מג) writes that sitting in the *sukkah* teaches a man, “*to remember his evil days in his day of prosperity. He will thereby be induced to thank Hashem repeatedly and to lead a modest and humble life.*” The *sukkah* is meant to induce both a feeling of gratitude and a feeling of humility.

Rabbeinu Yitzchok Aboav ZT”L (Menoras Hamaor) gives us a different 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.

והג האסיף בצאת השנה באספך את מעשיך מן השדה וגו'

The *posuk* (משפטים כג-טו) relates each of the שלש רגלים (Three Festivals, to a specific period of the agricultural year. *Pesach* is called “חג האביב” - “*Festival of Spring*” - the season of planting; *Shavuot* is called “חג הקציר” - “*Festival of Reaping*”; and *Sukkos* is known as “חג האסיף” - “*Festival of Harvest.*” The **Maharal ZT”L** elaborates on this relationship between the festivals and working the land. There are three points of contact between an emissary and his dispatcher: the moment he is appointed to his mission; when his task is completed; and when he returns to the one who sent him to inform him that he has completed the mission.

היה ממשיך השפעות טובות על כל השנה לתוך הבית, שלא יחסר כלל וכו', וזאת משום שה'שלום' הוא 'כלי מחזיק ברכה לישראל',

On *Pesach*, *Bnei Yisroel* was created as a Divine agent charged with the task of becoming a nation worthy of being chosen by the Almighty. On *Shavuot*, with the acceptance of the *Torah*, we became this “Chosen Nation.” *Sukkos*, writes **R’ Yitzchok Hutner ZT”L (Pachad Yitzchok)**, is when we, *Klal Yisroel*, return to our Sender - our Creator - and tell Him, “We have accomplished the task. Here we are - Your beloved *Am Yisroel* - and we are prepared to return what we have harvested for You, the Master of the World.”

The beauty of *Chag HaSukkos* is that it crowns both the *Sholosh Regalim*, as well as the *Yomim Noraim*. It is the moment when we report back to *Hashem*, with joy and overflowing song, that we have completed our mission and are looking forward to representing the Almighty once again in the future. This particular joy extends from the depths of the overflowing heart of the *Ba’al Teshuvah* after the Season of Repentance, to the essence of the world of הימים - *End of Days*, when we will walk proudly with our *Lulav* and *Esrog* and proclaim eloquently the victory of *Klal Yisroel*.

**מצוה מן המובחר נוהגין ליטול לולב שלא
נחלק העלה העליון כלל וכו' (רמ"א א"ח התרמה-ג)**

The *halacha* states very clearly that a Jew should take a *Lulav* on *Sukkos* that is straight and “closed up” all the way to the top. Various opinions discuss the minimal amount that it may be open but all agree that the “*hiddur*” (beauty) of performing this *mitzvah* is with a perfectly closed *Lulav*.

Of course, every *mitzvah* should be performed at its most optimal level and one should not look for “*kulos*” - leniencies, where they are not necessary or do not apply.

For example, the **Kaminetzer Mashgiach, R’ Moshe Aharon Stern ZT”L** used to tell his students to follow the *Magen Avrohom’s* opinion that one may only say *Krias Shema* in the morning until a quarter of the day has gone by, counting from dawn to dusk. He added that the halachic authorities say that one should be strict in this.

It happened that a number of students were having trouble waking up in the morning and when R’ Moshe Aharon urged them to wake up early in order to make the *Magen Avrohom’s* time, they protested, “Weren’t the Vilna Gaon and the Baal HaTanya also great halachic authorities? Why can’t we rely on their (later) opinions?”

The *Mashgiach* creased his brow before replying. “So you want to follow the opinion of the Baal HaTanya? Well then, in that case, you should ascribe to follow all the



“Is this the way a person walks into a home?” he questioned the boy with a stern gaze. “Do you understand that today is *Erev Yom Tov* and the floors are being washed? You went out of your way to get *hadassim* with *Mesiras Nefesh*; but the person whose job it is to wash the floors also works with *Mesiras Nefesh*! How do you think she feels that you brought all this dirt into the house where she is cleaning? Where is your ‘*Bein Adam L’ chavero*’?”

..... למען דעו דורותיכם כי בסוכת השבתי את בני ישראל (סם-מג)

In the last fifteen to twenty years, Judaism has sprung to life across Russia. Jews are practicing their religion openly, where they were once forbidden and imprisoned for doing so. However, when it comes to the Festival of *Sukkos*, it is really an open miracle, since this holiday was almost completely forgotten due to the dangers and risks of attempting to put up a *sukkah* or obtain a *lulav* and *esrog*, while Communism was in power and the KGB was on the prowl.

R’ Avrohom Berkowitz, the Director of the international Jewish Community of Moscow, recounts a story that he heard not long ago, while visiting Kazan, Russia, a city in the largely Muslim Tatarstan region.

Moshe Adinov, a 65-year-old local dentist and regular participant in the daily *minyan* in Kazan, told Rabbi Berkowitz a remarkable *Sukkos* story that must be passed on for further generations.

“My father was Reb Nachum Eliyahu Adinov. He was a *sofer* (*Torah* scribe) in Kazan before World War II. He kept the traditions in our home, but of course there was no Jewish school. I went to public school even on *Shabbos*. A lot of tradition was weakened. Nevertheless, I remember growing up with as many Jewish traditions and holidays as was possible.

“My father was afraid for my future. He always warned me not to repeat to others what we did at home. ‘Be a Jew at home and a Russian in the street,’ he would always say. In fact, I probably would have never been accepted at university had I been recognized as a practicing Jew.

“We lived in a small wooden home, not in an apartment building like most people. We had a *besedka*, basically a porch, in the back of our home and every year we’d celebrate the holiday of *Sukkos*. My father would cover the roof of our *besedka* with leaves and foliage and we’d invite over many Jewish friends. The well-kept secret was that the only *sukkah* in town was in our house. My father would make *kiddush* on wine, tell stories and gently speak to us. It was a most memorable experience and this memory of *Sukkos* always stayed with me.

“My father died in 1965, and I inherited the house. I wanted to keep that *Sukkos* tradition alive, to continue the tradition for my children. I thought that, due to his limited means, all my father was able to do was put up trees and foliage. I wanted to do better than him! I had friends in the steel industry, and every year since 1965, I put up a sturdy aluminum roof on the *besedka*. I was proud that I continued my father's tradition.”

Moshe Adinov smiled bashfully at the memory. “In 1998, Rabbi Yitzchok Garelik and his wife Chana moved to Kazan. It was so beautiful to have a young Jewish family celebrating in public what I always did secretly. It was incredible for me and I developed a close personal relationship with the rabbi and his family. That year, Rabbi Garelik said to me, ‘Moshe, tomorrow night is *Sukkos*, and I want you to come to the beautiful *sukkah* we built.’ When I walked into the rabbi’s *sukkah*, I saw Rabbi Garelik in his holiday finest, holding an overflowing glass of wine, candles shining in his face - and wouldn’t you know it - foliage, branches and trees above his head!

“I couldn’t contain my emotions. I began to cry. I suddenly realized that what my father did all those years was the way it was supposed to be done, and for the last 30 years, by placing an aluminum roof, I was not doing it the right way. I had only meant to make my *sukkah* more beautiful!

“Rabbi Garelik asked me to tell my story, and when I was finished, he said to me, ‘Your father is surely looking down from Heaven with all the great Jews of the past and smiling, and I have no doubt that the Almighty had the utmost pleasure from the beauty of your *sukkah* with the aluminum roof more than any *sukkah* in the world with the appropriate foliage, because you did it with such love and sincerity.’ Since then, I have continued to learn and understand our traditions. I come every day to daven at the local *minyan* and my family and I are involved as part of the community. Today, we celebrate all the holidays with their rich fullness.”

Rabbi Berkowitz continues to promote Russian Jewry and is quick to point out that in Russia today, *sukkahs* are mostly built at the synagogues, since it is very difficult to build near apartment buildings. So *Sukkos* becomes an incredible community event. Despite the cold, everyone comes out, with so many people singing, spending family time, laughing and talking, and enjoying words of *Torah*. The *sukkah* keeps everyone warm. Even in the farthest reaches of Siberia it warms the Jewish heart.”