

טוב הקהילה

בס"ד

יו"לע"י קהילת שנת בנית ד'

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טיב המערכת

מצוות ישיבה בסוכה

The mitzvah of dwelling in the succah

It is told about Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Vitebsk, that in the first year after his arrival Eretz Yisrael, on the eve of Succos, suddenly all his holy spiritual levels left him. This change was visible on his face, and even his students and close followers, who usually hung on his every word, mistook him for an ordinary person and did not help him build the succah. With no other option, he had to build the succah himself. Since he was not accustomed to manual labor, the task was very difficult for him. Sweat poured from his body, and he even injured himself, with blood streaming from his wounds. He toiled until the succah was finally standing. Just before the holiday began, he hurried to immerse in the mikveh in honor of the festival. When he emerged from the mikveh, everyone was astonished because his face shone with an extraordinary radiance. He then realized that Heaven had intended to elevate him to higher spiritual levels, which could only be attained through engaging in the mitzvah. It was through the sweat and blood from his labor that he merited the spiritual heights he achieved.

The succah is the only mitzvah that one fulfills by entering it with one's entire body—both the 248 limbs and 365 sinews. Indeed, the succah elevates us even from the moment we begin constructing it and through engaging in its preparation. Therefore, it is fitting for everyone to personally involve himself in building the succah to the best of his ability. Now, as we sit in the succah, we must realize that the succah is like the royal chamber of the King, and in His great mercy, HaKadosh Baruch Hu in His abundance of mercy has given us this gift. After the Days of Judgment, when the accusers (angels who advocate for strict justice) seek to continue judgment, HaKadosh Baruch Hu gives us the succah to protect and shield us from them. The succah is like the King's royal chamber, and once a Jew enters the chamber of the King of Kings, the accusers no longer dare to speak against him.

There are many virtues and spiritual benefits to dwelling in the succah, but the greatest of them all is closeness to G-d. For an entire week, we are guests in the personal chamber of HaKadosh Baruch Hu, and we are close to Him. Therefore, it is worthwhile to take advantage of these days, each person according to his ability and spiritual level, whether through Torah study, prayer, or both. As ruled in halacha, the mitzvah of dwelling in the succah is fulfilled by eating, drinking, sleeping, walking, and living in the succah for all seven days, day and night, in the same way one would live in their home throughout the rest of the year. - Tiv Amirim – Succos)

טיב ההשגחה

'תולדותיהם של צדיקים מעשים טובים'

The Legacy of the Righteous is Their Good Deeds

Moreinu HaRav shlita relates: I traveled to offer condolences to the family of a young man, *oveid Hashem*, holy and pure, whose generation was not worthy of him, and whose soul was returned in purity. During the conversation, the father asked what they could do to elevate his soul since he had left no children behind, and they sought guidance. I explained to him that, in fact, he had left many children in this world. They raised an eyebrow and asked how this could be. I responded with a story about a Rav who was sent on a mission to one of the cities in the United States, where he sought to establish a major Torah center. Despite all his efforts, he failed and decided he must leave the place.

Suddenly, there was a knock on the door of the rented basement where he stayed. At the door stood an elderly man who asked to speak with the Rav. What started as a brief conversation extended for several hours, until at the end, the man pulled out a checkbook and wrote a check for \$6,000,000 to build the Jewish center the Rav had dreamed of. From that moment on, the Rav's work flourished, and he built the large Jewish center that brought hundreds and thousands closer to their Father in Heaven. But how did this elderly man come to donate such a sum? The rabbi shared this story at the man's funeral.

The elderly man had visited Israel, and during his visit, he came to the Kosel. There, he saw a Jew from a bygone era praying with deep devotion and attachment to Hashem, shedding silent streams of tears throughout his prayer. This sight left a deep impression on him, and he waited for the man to finish his prayers. However, as the hours passed, it was already 3 a.m., and he had to leave without speaking to the man.

Upon returning to his city, he found no peace. His close friend asked him why he was so agitated and restless? He told him about the Jew at the Kosel, a type of Jew he thought no longer existed in the world after the horrors of the Holocaust. And now, he regretted not speaking with him. His friend responded, "What's the problem? We have such a Jew right here in our city! He directed him to the new Rav who had come on a mission."

Thus, it became clear that the entire Jewish center, along with its vast spiritual outreach, came about thanks to that devout Jew praying at the Kosel. After 120 years, when that Jew ascends to the heavens, he will be rewarded for all the hearts he inspired in distant America, even though he never visited there. **Continued after Tiv HaParsha**

ויאמר ה' מסיני בא וזרח משעיר למו הזפיע מהר פארן ואתה מרבבת קדש מימינו אשדת למו: (לגב)

He said, "Hashem came from Sinai and He shone forth for them from Seir, He appeared from Har Paran, and He came with some of the myriads of the holy, from His right hand He presented a fire of law to them. (33:2)

Rashi explains: Came from Sinai – He went out toward them when they came to stand at the bottom of the mountain, like a groom who goes out to greet a bride, as it says (Shemos 19:17), 'לקראת' 'Toward G-d'. We have learned He went out toward them. And He shone forth for them from Seir – for He proposed to the children of Eisav that they accept the Torah, but they did not want it. He appeared – to them. From Har Paran – for He went there and proposed to the children of Yishmael that they accept it, but they did not want it. And He came – to Israel. A fire of law – for it was written of Him of old in black fire upon white fire. He gave it to them on the *Luchos*, the writing of His right hand.

On the day when *Am Yisrael* rejoice with the Torah, they read this passage, which speaks of their great joy, stature, and merit after having received the Torah. We must reflect inwardly to truly understand how good our portion is, how pleasant our lot, and how beautiful our inheritance.

This *posuk* speaks about the unwillingness of the children of Eisav and Yishmael to accept the Torah. Upon careful examination, we see that the text reveals HaKadosh Baruch Hu's great love for Israel, for in truth, HKBH only wished to give the Torah to His chosen people, Israel. However, He did not want the nations to have any claim, questioning why the Torah was given only to Israel and not to them. Therefore, He first offered the Torah to other nations, but He concealed its light and beauty from them. This caused them to reject it, and they readily agreed to let Israel receive it.

These events are well described in *Pirkei D'Rebbe Eliezer* (Chapter 41): "Rebbe Tarfon says, 'HaKadosh Baruch Hu shone forth from Mount Seir and revealed Himself to the children of Eisav,' as it is written (Devorim 33:2), 'And He said: Hashem came from Sinai and shone forth for them from Seir.' Seir refers to the children of Eisav, as it says (Genesis 36:8), 'וישב עשו בהר שעיר' - 'Eisav settled on Har Seir.' HKBH asked them if they would accept the Torah. They replied, 'What is written in it?' He said, 'לא תרצח' - 'You shall not murder' (Shemos 20:13). They responded, 'Leave us, for we cannot abandon the blessing that Yitzchak gave to Eisav, our father, when he said, 'ועל' 'You shall live by your sword' (Bereishis 27:40). From there, He went and revealed Himself to the children of Yishmael, as it is written (Devorim 33:2), 'He appeared from Har Paran.' He asked them if they would accept the Torah. They asked, 'What is written in it?' He said, 'לא תגנב' - 'You shall not steal' (Shemos 20:15). They said, 'We cannot abandon what our ancestors did, for they stole Yosef and sold him into Egypt,' as it is written (Bereishis 40:15), 'כי גנב גבתי' - 'For indeed I was stolen from the land of the Hebrews.' He then approached all other nations and asked if they would accept the Torah. They asked, 'What is written in it?' He said, 'לא יהיה לך' - 'You shall have no other gods before Me' (Shemos 20:3). They replied, 'We cannot abandon the religion of our ancestors who worshipped idols. We do not want the Torah; give it to Your people,' as it is written (Tehillim 29:11), 'ה' עוז לעמו יתן' - 'Hashem will give strength to His people; Hashem will bless His people with peace.' From there, He returned and revealed Himself to *Bnei Yisrael*, as it is written (Devorim 33:2), 'And He came with myriads of the holy.' The term 'myriads' refers to Israel, as it says (Bamidbar 10:36), 'ובנחי יאמר שובה ה' רבבות אלפי ישראל' - 'Return, Hashem, to myriads of thousands of Israel.' He was accompanied by angels of holiness, and His right hand held the Torah,

as it says (Dev. 33:2), 'From His right hand, a fiery law went forth.'" The Midrash teaches that the nations had such a strong *yetzer hara* that they could not restrain themselves to accept the Torah's restrictions. Their advice to give the Torah to Israel was not out of goodwill but rather out of hatred and fear of Israel. From the time Israel left Egypt and witnessed the splitting of the Red Sea, the nations began to fear them, as it is written in our Torah (Shemos 15:14-15): 'שמעו עמים ירגזון חירך אחז יושבי פלשת אז נבהלו אלופי אדום' - 'The nations heard and trembled; terror gripped the inhabitants of Philistia. The chiefs of Edom were terrified; the mighty men of Moav, trembling seized them; all the inhabitants of Canaan melted away.' For this reason, the nations wanted HKBH to give the Torah to Israel, thinking that if Israel failed to uphold it, Hashem's anger would turn against them, and He would no longer protect them. The nations believed that if they could not handle the Torah, certainly Israel, who were considered the most obstinate of nations (see *Beitzah* 25b), would also fail, and this would remove the fear of them.

However, as explained in the Gemara, this was the reason Israel should receive the Torah. As the Chazal expounded (*Beitzah* 25b) on the *posuk* "From His right hand, a fiery law went forth for them": "The school of Rebbe Yishmael taught: HKBH said, 'These people are worthy of receiving a fiery law.'" The *Maharsha* explains that the "fiery law" refers to a law that would subdue their stubbornness. Despite the Torah's demands, which require a person to subdue their inclinations, it also provides the strength to do so. By adhering to the Torah, a person becomes the happiest being in creation, as the Torah leads him to a righteous path in this world and to a great reward in the World to Come. This was hidden from the nations, as hinted in the verse, "And He shone forth from Seir," meaning, when He left Seir, the light of the Torah was revealed. "He appeared from Har Paran" – after withdrawing from Paran, HKBH illuminated those He wished to give the Torah to, enabling them to understand that "From His right hand, a fiery law went forth for" – a Torah described as "black fire on white fire." With the power of the Torah, they could overcome all negative inclinations.

As we learn in the Gemara (*Kiddushin* 30b): "And you shall place [the words of the Torah]" – as a 'perfect remedy.' The Torah is compared to a life-giving remedy. It is like a person who strikes his child with a great blow but then places a bandage on the wound, telling the child: 'As long as this bandage is on your wound, you may eat and drink whatever you desire, and bathe in hot or cold water without fear. But if you remove it, the wound will fester.' So too, HKBH said to Israel: 'I created the *yetzer hara*, but I also created the Torah as its antidote. If you engage in the Torah, you will not fall into its grasp.' This is what Israel meant when they declared, "We will do" before "We will hear." Even though at the time of receiving the Torah, they may have thought it was impossible to keep it, by accepting it and doing what it demands, they would come to understand and yearn to hear its voice. Indeed, those governed by nature are driven by physicality and cannot overcome their inclinations. But when one merits the Torah, they rise above natural forces and can, through it, expel all negative inclinations. As the *Tanna DeBei Rabbi Yishmael* taught (*Succah* 52b): "If that despicable one encounters you, drag him into the study hall. If he is like stone, he will dissolve, and if he is like iron, he will shatter." In light of the above, we should rejoice and be glad with this Torah, and on this day when we begin reading the Torah from *Bereishis*, each individual should strengthen his Torah learning and delve into it. Then the *posuk* will be fulfilled in us (Devorim 28:6): "Blessed shall you be in your coming in, and blessed shall you be in your going out," as Rashi explains: "That your departure from the world will be without sin, as your entrance into the world."

Each of the *Shalosh Regalim* has its own special quality, which illuminates and influences all the days of the year. This is why they are called "Regalim" (literally, "legs"), as they are the foundations upon which the entire year rests. Each festival has its unique influence that pertains to it: Pesach is the "Time of our Freedom," Shavuot is the "Time of the Giving of our Torah," and Succos is the "Time of our Rejoicing."

The Rambam, expounds in *Hilchos Succah* (8:15) on the great importance of the mitzvah of joy during the "Time of our Rejoicing." His golden words are as follows: "The joy a person feels when performing a mitzvah and in the love of Hashem Who commanded them, is a great *avodah*. And anyone who refrains from this joy is worthy of retribution..., and anyone who humbles himself and lowers himself in these places is truly great, honored, and serving out of love. So too did Dovid, King of Israel, said (Shmuel II 6:22), 'ונקלותי עוד מזאת והייתי שפל בעיני' - 'And I will be even more humble than this, and I will be low in my own eyes.' There is no greatness or honor except in rejoicing before Hashem, as it says (Shmuel II 6:14), 'והמלך דוד מפזז ומכרכר לפני ה' - 'And King Dovid danced and whirled before the Hashem.'"

The Holy Arizal, (in his introduction to *Shaar HaMitzvos*), wrote that the joy in performing a mitzvah is the essence and root of all mitzvos, as it is written (Devorim 28:47), 'תחת אשר לא עבדת את ה' - 'Because you did not serve the Lord your God with joy.' And in the *sefer Avodas HaKodesh* (11:161), Rabbeinu Chida, wrote that the main reward for a mitzvah is for the joy with which it is performed, more than for the actual fulfillment of the mitzvah itself.

It is important to know (as the Vilna Gaon also explains) that the mitzvah of joy is one of the most challenging tasks of the festival. It is forbidden to be sad at all during these days of joy, even for a moment. Just as chametz is prohibited in even the smallest amount during Pesach, so too sadness is forbidden in even the smallest measure during Succos. These are matters of the heart, and it is very difficult to be cautious about them. Therefore, one must make a great effort to be joyous throughout all the days of the festival, and every minute of joy is a mitzvah unto itself!

- Tiv HaMo'adim – Tishrei - Sukkot)
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הננסת אורחים בסוכה הקדושה

Hosting guests in the holy succah

The renowned Rebbe Menachem Mendel of Linisk, the father of the holy Rebbe Naftali of Ropshitz, was very particular about having a guest at his table for the meals during Succos, especially on the first night of Succos, which is the *Ushpizin* of Avraham Avinu, the great host of guests. It is mentioned in *sifrei kodesh* that one must be very diligent about this, and if there is no guest with him in the succah, the holy Ushpizin do not enter.

One year, on the first day of the *chag*, the harsh winter was already in full swing, the roads were difficult and exhausting, and no guest could be found in the city. They searched everywhere, but not a single Jewish guest could be found. The hour grew very late, but the Tzaddik of Linisk did not want to enter the succah to partake of the Yom Tov *seudah* without the holy Ushpizin, and in the absence of a guest, there would be no Ushpizin!

His son, Rebbe Naftali, who was a clever and wise child—later known as 'Chachima d'Yehudai' (The Sage of the Jews)—saw his

father's great distress. As the hour was getting late and the mitzvah of eating in the succah had still not been fulfilled, he went out again to search thoroughly. But when he still could not find any Jewish guest, he devised a plan: he approached a local non-Jew, offering him a good and hearty meal. He dressed him as a Jewish traveler and instructed him not to speak at all, only to sit quietly and eat his meal!

Soon, the boy returned with the new "guest," brought him home, and joyfully declared, "At last, I found a guest!"

However, in the middle of the meal, after the rebbe examined the guest a few times, he realized that this person was a complete non-Jew. He asked his son, "Why did you pull such a prank?"

The child wisely responded, "Isn't today the day of the Ushpizin of Avraham Avinu? And Avraham would also welcome non-Jewish guests! As is clearly stated at the beginning of Parshas Vayeira, he warmly welcomed the men who appeared to him as Arabs. Therefore, on the day of Avraham's Ushpizin, even a non-Jew is a fitting guest!"

'Tiv HaZikhronot', The Holy Rebbe of Ropshitz
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לומד במסכת סוכה שנקבר אצל הבונה ומקים הסוכות

Learning Succah and buried near the builder/keeper of succahs

One of the esteemed *magidei shiur* at the great Beis Medrash in the old Zichron Moshe neighborhood was Rebbe Aharon Leib Shapira. He was renowned as a righteous man, a great Torah scholar of tremendous stature, who dedicated all his days to Torah learning. He sat in the tent of Torah, toiling with heart and body. After his passing, when they brought him to the burial plot he had purchased in his lifetime, they found that he was buried adjacent to Rav Dov Konigsberg, who was a famous metalworker in Jerusalem.

One of Rav Aharon Leib's brothers was friendly with Rav Dov Konigsberg's brother. When they met one day, Rav Aharon Leib's brother expressed his surprise to his friend: "How did your brother, who was a simple man, merit being buried next to such an esteemed Torah scholar and righteous man?"

His friend pondered for a moment and then replied, "Perhaps he merited this due to his great love for the mitzvah of the succah. As a metalworker by trade, he built many succahs throughout Yerushalayim. Many of Yerushalayim's residents would seek his advice on how to build a succah on their balconies, and he became known as the 'Succah builder of Yerushalayim.' Maybe it was this love for the mitzvah that earned him this merit!"

Rav Aharon Leib's brother, filled with joy, responded, "Indeed, Mesechta Succah was Rav Aharon Leib's *mesechta*! He studied it hundreds of times throughout his life and would refer to it as 'my *mesechta* of the World to Come!' (The *mesechta* that I will study in the World to Come)."

It was no coincidence that these two were buried next to each other. One held tightly to the study of Mesechta Succah all his life, and the other cherished the mitzvah of succah and devoted himself to building succahs for the Jewish people.

What a wonder!