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## INTERNET PARSHA SHEET ON SUCCOS - 5772

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### **Selected Halachos Relating to Succos** **By Rabbi Doniel Neustadt**

The following is a discussion of Halachic topics related to the Parsha of the week. For final rulings, consult your Rav.

#### **You should dwell in a Succah (Emor 23:42) EATING IN THE SUCCA ON THE FIRST NIGHT**

Every adult male is Biblically obligated to eat a k'zayis of bread in a succah on the first night of Succos. The Talmud (1) derives this obligation from the similar obligation of eating a k'zayis of matzah on the first night of Pesach. Since these two obligations are closely related, their halachos are similar in many respects. Like all mitzvos, this mitzvah, too, can only be properly fulfilled if there is prior planning and clear knowledge of all the requirements. Let us review the pertinent halachos: **WHEN IS IT EATEN**

In the late afternoon of Erev Succos, one should not fill himself with food or wine so that he will be able to eat the k'zayis of bread with a good appetite (2).

The k'zayis of bread [and the Kiddush that precedes it (3)] may not be eaten until it is definitely night (4), no earlier than 50 minutes after sundown (5). If one ate before that time, he must eat another k'zayis of bread in order to fulfill the mitzvah (6).

The k'zayis of bread may not be eaten after midnight (7). B'dieved, though, one who did not eat before midnight should do so after midnight and recite the proper blessing (8).

Preferably, one should sit down to eat the k'zayis of bread immediately after coming home from Ma'ariv. Unnecessary delays should be avoided (9).

#### **HOW MUCH MUST BE EATEN**

There are various views in the poskim about the exact measurement of a k'zayis. Since this is a Biblical obligation, it is proper to be stringent and eat at least 1.75 fl. oz. of bread, though one who eats 1 oz. of bread fulfills his obligation.

There is a view in the Rishonim (10) that holds that the minimum amount of bread one is obligated to eat in the succah on the first night is a k'beitzah, not merely a k'zayis. Although the basic halachah does not require the larger amount (11), still it is proper to satisfy that view as well (12). The amount to be eaten [to satisfy all views], therefore, is 3.5 oz. of bread (13).

The bread which is eaten [whether it is a k'zayis or a k'beitzah (14)] must be eaten within a time-span of 3 to 4 minutes (15). No talking may take place until the full amount is chewed and swallowed (16). L'hatchilah, it is proper to chew and then swallow the bread in its entirety (17).

#### **THE BASIC PROCEDURE**

One is obligated to eat the minimum amount of bread even if he does not enjoy it and even if it causes him distress (18). Even a person who is classified as a choleh sh'ein bo sakanah is obligated to eat a k'zayis of bread (19).

Before eating the bread, one must have in mind that he is about to fulfill the Biblical mitzvah of eating bread on the first night of Succos (20). If one fails to have this intent and eats the piece of bread as he normally does every Shabbos or Yom Tov, it is questionable if he has fulfilled the mitzvah (21). In any case, he should eat another portion of bread with the proper intent (22).

One does not fulfill his obligation by eating cake, etc. (23) Only bread made out of one of the five species of grain is valid.

Women are exempt from this mitzvah, but if they do eat the required amount of bread in the succah, it is considered a mitzvah and they may recite the blessing (24).

There are some who maintain that the bread should be eaten without being dipped in honey (25), etc. Most poskim are not particular about this stringency (26).

## ARE WE REQUIRED TO FULFILL THIS MITZVAH WHEN IT IS RAINING?

There are many discussions in the poskim concerning the obligation to eat in the succah on the first night of Succos if it is raining. The following points are raised:

If rain is falling, is one obligated to eat in the succah or not? If it is raining, is one obligated to wait and see if the rain will stop so that he can eat in a rain-free succah? If one does eat in the succah while it is raining, can a blessing be recited? If a person ate in the succah while it was raining and then the rain stopped, is he required to eat in the succah again? If a person ate in the succah while it was raining and then went to sleep, is he obligated to get out of bed to eat again once the rain has stopped? Since there are different rulings on all of these issues, the following, then, is a summary of the majority opinion (27):

If it is raining steadily and there is a reliable weather forecast for rain all night, one should make Kiddush [with shehecheyanu] and eat a k'zayis [or a k'beitzah (28)] in the succah. No blessing over the succah is recited. The rest of the meal is eaten inside the house (29).

If there is no reliable weather forecast and there is a possibility that the rain will stop [e.g., it is drizzling or it is raining on and off], it is proper to wait an hour or two for the rain to subside (30). The poskim agree, however, that if the delay will disturb the dignity and pleasure of the Yom Tov, or if the family is hungry and/or tired, there is no obligation to wait.

If the rain stops while the meal is being eaten inside the house or even after the meal has finished, one is obligated to eat at least a beitzah (31) of bread in the succah. Even if the rain stops after midnight, a beitzah of bread must be eaten in the succah. If one has already gone to bed and then the rain stops, there is no obligation to get out of bed in order to eat in the succah (32).

FOOTNOTES 1 Succah 27a. 2 Mishnah Berurah 639:27. 3 Beiur Halachah 639:3. 4 Rama O.C. 639:3. 5 This is the generally accepted time for "night". Under extenuating circumstances, there are those who permit eating the bread a few minutes earlier. Since this is a Biblical mitzvah, it is proper - weather permitting - to wait for 72 minutes after sundown, to satisfy the views of the Rishonim who hold that before that time it is not definitely night. 6 Mishnah Berurah 639:25. If, mistakenly, one ate the bread even earlier than sundown, not only must he eat another k'zayis but he must also repeat the blessing of leishev basukah. 7 Rama 639:3. 8 Mishnah Berurah 639:26. In that case, though, at least a k'beitzah of bread should be eaten. 9 Mateh Efrayim 625:42, 44. 10 Quoted by the Ritva and Ran in Succah 27b. 11 O.C. 639:3. 12 Mateh Efrayim 625:51; Mishnah Berurah 639:22. 13 The amount of a beitzah according to the Chazon Ish. 14 Mateh Efrayim 625:52 and Eleff le-Mateh 87. 15 Mishnah Berurah 639:22. Children under bar mitzvah may take up to 9 minutes for the amount to be eaten--Harav S.Z. Auerbach (Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasah 54 note 130). 16 Kaf ha-Chayim 639:50. 17 Mateh Efrayim 625:52. Mishnah Berurah, though, does not mention this. 18 Beiur Halachah 639:3. 19 Bikurei Yaakov 639:6,24; Aruch ha-Shulchan 639:17. 20 Mateh Efrayim 625:51; Mishnah Berurah 625:1. In addition to this, one should bear in mind the reasons behind the mitzvah of succah. According to some poskim (Bikurei Yaakov 625:3 based on Bach), failure to have this intent invalidates the mitzvah. Mishnah Berurah, however, rules, that b'dieved one fulfills his obligation even if he does not have in mind the reasons for the mitzvah. 21 See Chidah (Simchas ha-Regel, quoted in Mo'adim U'zmanim 6:69) who questions if one has fulfilled his obligation in this case. See, however, Mishnah Berurah 60:10, quoting the Chayei Adam. 22 Mateh Efrayim 625:53. 23 Mishnah Berurah 639:21. 24 Sefaradic women, though should not recite the blessing on this mitzvah or on any mitzvah which they are not obligated to perform, such as lulav, shofar, etc. 25 See Yechaveh Da'as 4:37 for the various views. 26 Harav

S.Z. Auerbach (quoted in Nishmas Avraham O.C. pg. 320 and Harav O. Yosef (ibid. pg. 337). Tzitz Eliezer (15:32-14) maintains that one should be stringent. See also Mo'adim U'zmanim 1:86. 27 Based on rulings of Mateh Efrayim and Mishnah Berurah. 28 Mateh Efrayim 625:51, 62 and Elef le-Mateh 84. See, however, Ktzei ha-Mateh who holds that when raining all agree that a k'zayis is sufficient. 29 When reciting Hamotzi, one should have in mind that he will recite Birkas ha-Mazon inside the house. 30 Some poskim are more stringent and recommend waiting until midnight. 31 In this case, a k'zayis is not enough. 32 There is a minority opinion (Mo'adim U'zmanim 1:86, based on his understanding of the Gr"a; Harav M. Soloveitchik, quoted in Reshimos Shiurim (Succah, pg. 92) and in Mesorah Torah Journal, vol. 14, pg. 57) which maintains that even after going to sleep one is obligated to get out of bed in order to eat in the succah.

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### Rabbi Benjamin Yudin

#### Resolving the Sukkah Paradox

Every yom tov has its own unique character. Regarding the holiday of Sukkos there appears to be a basic contradiction between two conflicting themes. On the one hand, the Maharil explains the reason that Sukkos comes following Yom Kippur is that if it was decreed that an individual or community go into golus - exile, as result of the judgment of Yom Kippur, they can serve this sentence by exiting their homes for a seven day period, and reside in a temporary abode, the sukkah. This teaching is found earlier in the medrash Yalkut Shimoni, (Vayikra 653), in the name of Rebbe Eliezer bar Marnus, that if the Jewish nation were judged to be exiled, their going into their Sukkos, is considered On High as if they went to Bavel.

Moreover, this concept of uprooting oneself and moving into a temporary dwelling as found in halacha. The Talmud (Sukkah 8b) teaches that if one lives in a kosher sukkah all year long, they cannot fulfill their mitzvah of sukkah by remaining in that sukkah, but must leave their permanent sukkah and like all Israel, experience the phenomena of relocation and enter another sukkah. This is codified in Orach Chaim (636:2). It is not sufficient that one resides in a kosher sukkah; one has to experience literally the move.

Yet, paradoxically, we find that Sukkos is defined as a most happy, joyous festive holiday. The Yalkut (654) notes that the charge to be in a state of simcha - happiness is found three times in the torah regarding the yom tov of Sukkos. Interestingly, regarding Pesach there is no biblical directive for simcha, and the holiday of Shavuos has simcha incorporated but once. The Zohar (Parshas Emor) ascribes some of the special simcha of Sukkos, to the seven ushpizin - privileged guests who join us daily in the sukkah. What is perhaps most fascinating is the exception to the rule that exists regarding the mitzvah of sukkah, namely that mitztaer - one who is uncomfortable and pained by fulfilling the mitzvah of residing in the sukkah - is exempt thereof. Regarding the observance of Jewish law we are generally governed by (Avos 5:26) lefum tzarah agrah, i.e. the reward is in proportion to the difficulty and exertion. If one does not enjoy eating matzah, or when we had, and please G-d in the future will have, the korban Pesach, their lack of enjoyment is not an exemption.

The Yerushalmi relates how some rabbis endured a headache from Pesach to Shavuot as a result of drinking wine and not grape juice for the mitzvah of daled kosos. Sitting in the sukkah is radically different. If one is troubled by extreme weather conditions under which they would not remain even in their own home, or if they are troubled by unpleasant odors or disturbing insects, the Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 640:4) rules that they are exempt from the sukkah [except the first night that even under those conditions one is to eat a kezayis in the sukkah].

At first glance there appears to be a startling inconsistency whereby exile and leaving one's comfortable home usually denotes hardships and sufferings bereft of the conveniences of home. Yet in the sukkah we are mandated to merge these divergent motifs.

The Torah (Vayikra 23:43) teaches that we are to reside in Sukkos "L'ma'an yeid'uh doroseichem ki ba'sukkos hoshafu es Bnai Yisroel b'hotzi'ih osam mei'Eretz Mitzrayim - so that your generations will know that I caused the Children of Israel to dwell in booths when I took them from the land of Egypt". Rav Yosef Salant zt"l, in his Bear Yosef, notes that we are told to relive and reenact, not simply remember the manner in which Hashem provided for us in our forty year trek through the desert. The ananei haKovod - Clouds of Glory provided millions of travelers in the desert with perfect climate control - air conditioning by day to protect them from the beating sun, and heat by night to dispel the chill. Moreover, these clouds worked overtime at night by providing fresh laundering and dry cleaning for their clothes. They were provided miraculously with manna from heaven satisfying their individual tastes and diets, and fresh drinking water was supplied in abundance despite their location being far from any oasis. In their travels and exile from Egypt to the land of Israel, Hashem provided them with all the comforts of home. It is for this reason, explains the Bear Yosef, that if one is mitztaer - uncomfortable in the sukkah, that they are exempt thereof as this would negate the positive characteristic of sukkah of reliving His abundant kindnesses. This understanding of our stay in the desert, after which our mitzvas sukkah is modeled, puts to rest the sukkahparadox: through the mitzvah of sukkah we reenact our desert experience, which included being in a form of galus but also included Hashem's infinite kindness in making that galus very comfortable.

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From: **Chanan Morrison** Sent: Monday, October 10, 2011 9:17 AM To: **Rav Kook List** Subject: [Rav Kook List] Succoth and the Land of Israel

Succoth and the Land of Israel

In 1907, Rav Kook wrote a Halachic treatise entitled Eitz Hadar, discussing the etrogim grown in Eretz Yisrael and the importance of avoiding grafted etrogim. He advocated the use of etrogim in Eretz Yisrael as a way for world Jewry to strengthen its connection to the land of Israel and support its fledgling communities.

Underlying Connections

Our world is an alma d'peruda, a reality split into conflicting realms: physical and spiritual, secular and holy, that of compassion and that of strict justice. Yet there always exists a hidden connection that unites these divisions, some intermediary stage or shared level that combines both aspects. This principle is set down by the Torah's esoteric teachings and is confirmed by our own examination of the world around us.

This fundamental truth provides a comprehensive view of the world and gives us insight into the universe's underlying unity.

Two Categories of Mitzvot

For example, the Sages noted in Kiddushin 36b that all mitzvot fall into two categories. The first category consists of mitzvot hatluyot ba'aretz, mitzvot that can only be fulfilled in the land of Israel, such as Shemittah (the Sabbatical year) and ma'aserot (tithing of fruits and vegetables). The second category consists of those mitzvot that are

incumbent even outside of Israel, such as prayer and Torah study. What binds and unites these two types of mitzvot?

We may discern the inner connection between them from the words of the Ramban in his commentary to Gen. 26:5 and Deut. 11:18. The Ramban explained that the root of all mitzvot - even those that are incumbent outside of Israel - is in the land of Israel. Performance of mitzvot outside the Land does not fulfill their inner purpose, but rather is a means to enable the Jewish people to return to their land. These mitzvot guard over the holiness of the Jewish people, so that when they return to Eretz Yisrael they will not need to re-invent their culture and spiritual path. They will not return to the land of Israel as a young nation, newly arrived on the stage of history, but will continue their ancient traditions. This bold idea is already found in the Sifre on Deut. 11:18:

"Even though I exile you from the Land, distinguish yourself with mitzvot. Then they will not be new to you when you return [to the land of Israel]." From here we see that both categories of mitzvot share a common dimension, one that is connected to the land of Israel.

In the material world, the most basic form of wealth is real estate. "One who does not possess land is not a person" (Yevamot 63a). This is even more evident with regard to nations. Even if a nation expresses itself in higher realms - culture, arts and sciences, and so on - it still requires a fundamental basis in land and agriculture. Land may be compared to the roots of a great tree. Without the beauty of its branches and fruit, the tree is just an ugly stump. "Agriculture," the Sages noted, "is the lowliest form of work" (ibid.). Nonetheless, these roots give life to the entire tree; they are the foundation for all of its produce and beauty.

This idea also holds true in the spiritual realm. All mitzvot share a common denominator - mitzvah-performance in the land of Israel. Thus even our spiritual riches are rooted in the dimension of land.

The Four Species

But is there a specific mitzvah that combines and unites aspects of both categories of mitzvot? To find a mitzvah that bridges these two categories, we will need a mitzvah that, on one hand, is a personal obligation, incumbent also on those not living in Israel; on the other hand, it should be clearly connected to the land of Israel, so that the special qualities of Eretz Yisrael are recognizable in it.

The mitzvah of the Four Species - arba'ah minim - is a perfect match for these criteria. It is obligatory on every individual, even outside of Israel. At the same time, the Four Species remind us of Eretz Yisrael and the harvest, its foliage and beautiful fruit. 'Take for yourself a fruit of the citron tree, a palm frond, myrtle branches, and willows of the brook' (Lev. 23:40).

Succoth and the Land of Israel

In fact, the holiday of Succoth as a whole is integrally connected to the sanctity of the land of Israel and our joy in its fruit. The Sages ruled that an extra month may be added to the year to ensure that Succoth will fall out during the harvest season (Sifre 192).

The connection of the Succoth holiday to Eretz Yisrael is especially strong in the etrog fruit. In the land of Israel it is easy to fulfill this holy mitzvah with joy and beauty. Maimonides suggested that one reason that the Torah chose this particular fruit was its wide availability in Eretz Yisrael (Guide to the Perplexed 3:43).

In the Diaspora, however, this mitzvah can be difficult and costly. The great effort and expense to attain etrogim in the cold and distant lands of our exile reminds us of the desirability of our beloved homeland, a land that suits the special qualities of our soul. When Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai instituted special decrees to commemorate the Temple after its destruction, he specifically chose the mitzvah of the Four Species, extending its performance from one day to seven to emulate the way it was performed in the Temple (Rosh Hashanah 30a). It is due to this special connection to Eretz Yisrael that great scholars throughout the

generations went to great lengths to acquire an etrog grown in the land of Israel.

#### Etrogim and Settling the Land

In recent years it has been exposed that the vast majority of etrogim grown outside of Israel come from lemon trees grafted with etrog branches. These grafted etrogim, despite their superficial beauty, are not fit for fulfilling the mitzvah of arba'ah minim.

In our days, the kosher etrog has become another way for us to express our love for the land of Israel. The agricultural settlements in Israel now provide etrogim that are supervised to ensure they do not come from grafted trees. It is providential that we should be best able to fulfill this precious mitzvah, connected to the holiday closely bound to the land of Israel, by favoring the produce of the Holy Land. Additionally, as more etrogim of Eretz Yisrael are purchased, our fellow Jews working the land will be able to plant new orchards. Thus, by buying etrogim from Israel, we can all share in the mitzvah of building and settling the land of Israel - a mitzvah on par with the entire Torah (Sifre Re'eih, Tosefta Avodah Zarah 5:2).

(Silver from the Land of Israel. Adapted from the introduction to Eitz Hadar.)

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#### The Requirement to Sleep in the Sukkah

##### Rabbi Zvi Sobolofsky

Rosh Yeshiva, RIETS

We are commanded during the week of Sukkot to dwell in the Sukkah just as we dwell in our homes during the course of the year.

You shall dwell in booths [sukkot] seven days; all that are home-born in Israel shall dwell in booths. Vayikra 23:42

“You shall dwell” similar to your living-dwelling. Hence, all seven days one should make the Sukkah a permanent dwelling and the home a temporary one. How is this done? If one has nice utensils...nice bedding, they should be brought to the Sukkah. One should eat, drink, walk around, and learn in the Sukkah. Sukkah 28b

Included in this requirement to dwell in the Sukkah as if it were our year-round home are the acts of eating and sleeping. Just as all year one eats and sleeps in one's house, during Sukkot these activities must take place in the Sukkah.

Sleeping in the Sukkah has a dimension of stringency that even eating does not have:

One can eat a snack (achilat arai) outside the Sukkah, but not take a quick nap outside the Sukkah. Why is this? Rav Ashi says: because one may fall into a deep sleep. Sukkah 26a

Chazal distinguish between achilat kevah, a significant meal, in contrast to achilat arai, an insignificant snack. Only achilat kevah must absolutely be performed in the Sukkah. Concerning sleep, there is no distinction between kevah and arai. One is obligated to sleep in the Sukkah regardless of the length of the sleep.

Nevertheless, there are many people who do not sleep in the Sukkah. Let us carefully analyze the obligation to sleep in the Sukkah in order to understand why so many people do not fulfill what appears to be an absolute requirement:

Regarding the contemporary leniency regarding sleep, i.e. that people do not sleep in the Sukkah except those that are careful about mitzvos:

- Some say it is because of the extreme cold, since it is uncomfortable to sleep in cold places.
- I say it is because the mitzvah is for a man to sleep together with his wife the way he does the rest of the year, and in a situation where that is not possible, since they do not have a private Sukkah, he is exempt. Rama OC 639:2

The Rama suggests that a married man is only obligated to sleep in the Sukkah if it is feasible for his wife to join him. Historically, it was not practical for men and their wives to sleep in sukkot because Sukkot were built in public areas and hence generated tzniut concerns; therefore, many married men did not sleep in the Sukkah. The Rama bases his suggestion that married men must only sleep in the Sukkah if their wives can join them on the phrase “teshvu k'ein taduru,” that Sukkah-dwelling should be the same as year-round dwelling. A married man who always sleeps in the same room as his wife is not obligated to sleep alone in the Sukkah. Although the Rama was referring to a specific situation in which it wasn't practical for a woman to sleep in the Sukkah for reasons of modesty, presumably the reasoning of the Rama would apply if there are other reasons one's wife will not join him in the Sukkah.

The Vilna Gaon and the Magen Avraham, (ibid.) however, question the Rama's assumption that the halachic principle of teshvu k'ein taduru exempts one who cannot fulfill yeshiva b'Sukkah with his wife. They claim that this innovative application of teshvu k'ein taduru has no source in Chazal.

Although the Magen Avraham disagrees with the reasoning of the Rama, he concedes that sometime a married man may be exempt based on another consideration. A mitztaer, one who is uncomfortable, is exempt from the mitzvah of Sukkah. Tosafot (Sukkah 26a s.v. holchei) explain that the exemption of mitztaer is derived from teshvu k'ein taduru, since during the year one does not live in a place where one is uncomfortable. For married men, sleeping alone is uncomfortable, and hence married men are exempt from sleeping in the Sukkah because they are mitztaer. In contrast to the reasoning of the Rama, which would exempt a married man at all times, the suggestion of the Magen Avraham would only apply when one's wife is muteret, and the issue of mitztaer is relevant.

The Rama suggests a second reason to exempt one from sleeping in the Sukkah. If one lives in a cold climate, one will be mitztaer, physically uncomfortable, sleeping outside.

This leniency could potentially cause another problem concerning the fulfillment of the mitzvah of Sukkah. • If one made [the Sukkah] in a place that one would be uncomfortable to eat, drink or sleep; • or where he cannot perform one of the above acts because of the fear of robbers, one does not fulfill [the mitzvah] with that Sukkah at all, even with those actions that are not uncomfortable, because it is not similar to living-dwelling [in a house] where one can perform all his needs. Rama O"C 660:4

Only a Sukkah which is fit for all aspects of living can qualify as a place of living. If the Sukkah is not fit for one aspect of living, halacha disqualifies it. Thus, if the Sukkah is too cold to sleep in, and hence is disqualified, how can one fulfill the mitzvah of eating in such a Sukkah?

The Mishna Brurah quotes two reasons to distinguish between a Sukkah that is too cold to comfortably sleep in and a Sukkah that is too dangerous to sleep in.

In the cold places, one fulfills his obligation with eating even though he is unable to sleep there: • since it is impossible [to sleep warmly] anyhow; • and also since [a Sukkah in a cold place] is considered fit for sleeping if one has sufficient blankets and sheets. Mishna Brurah 640:18

A Sukkah that is specifically built in an area that is dangerous but an option existed to build it in a safe location cannot be considered a place of dwelling. Nobody would build a house in a way that it cannot be slept in if an alternative exists. A Sukkah in a cold climate is still

considered fit for living (at least concerning eating) since any Sukkah built in such a climate will be unfit for sleeping. If one has no other option, one would construct a home in a way that enables him at least to eat in comfort.

Moreover, a Sukkah that is too dangerous to sleep in cannot be rectified. In contrast, a Sukkah that is too cold could theoretically be made comfortable if one had sufficient blankets. Because the discomfort due to cold can be rectified, the Sukkah itself is still considered a place of dwelling. The person is exempt from sleeping in such a Sukkah because of his discomfort, yet he still can fulfill the mitzvah of eating in such a Sukkah. In contrast, a Sukkah that is too dangerous is no longer considered a place fit for living and as such is disqualified entirely for use as a Sukkah.

One must assess in each situation whether the two exemptions of the Rama apply. If it is not uncomfortable because of cold, and one's wife can join him in the Sukkah, and safety is not a concern, according to all opinions one would be obligated to sleep in the Sukkah. Similarly, if one wants to take a nap during the day, these reasons often don't apply. The dissimilarity to living-dwelling and the discomfort of sleeping alone presumably don't apply during the day. The issues of cold and safety have to be evaluated in each case.

Many of the halachot of Sukkah revolve around the halacha of teshvu k'ein taduru. The correct application of this principle will determine practically how we may and must perform the mitzvah of yeshiva b'Sukkah

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YESHIVA UNIVERSITY • SUKKOT TO-GO • TISHREI 5772

### **The Reconciliation of Sukkos**

**Rabbi Yaakov Neuburger**

Rosh Yeshiva, RIETS • Rabbi, Congregation Beth Abraham, Bergenfield, NJ

You selected us from amongst all the nations, you loved us, and you wanted us, and you raised us above all tongues, and you sanctified us with your commandments, and you brought us close to your service and you have conferred your great name on us. Tefilla of Shalosh Regalim

With these descriptions of Hashem's singular relationship with Klal Yisroel, we begin the berocho of the yom tov Shemona Esrei that addresses the sanctity of the day. That the sacredness of every yom tov and the holiness of the Jewish people are inextricably connected, is powerfully underscored by the closing line of this berocho, "mekadesh yisrael vehazemanim", which Chazal teach us to read as "[Hashem] who sanctified the Jewish people who in turn confer holiness on the Holidays."

However it would seem to me that the third phrase בְּנוּ וְרָצִיתָ – and you wanted us – is severely anticlimactic and certainly does not fit the pattern of otherwise ascending order of Divine blessings showered upon our people. Needless to say, would we have penned this text, would we not record "you wanted us" before writing "you chose us" and certainly before "you love us"? Surely Chazal are not suggesting that Hashem was unreasonably infatuated with us and fell into a romantic relationship with us, that which is the stuff of many a human saga. Therefore, how are we to understand the order of the words in the tefilla?

#### **The Approach of the Gaon of Vilna**

I believe that once understood, this text becomes a powerful support for the innovative interpretation that the Gaon of Vilna lends to the yom tov of Sukkos.

In fact, Sukkos is one of those parts of the Torah that will forever carry the imprint of the G"ra. No doubt that it serves as but an example of how this towering 17th century genius, of legendary diligence, renowned scholarly scope and precision, and of unparalleled breadth, shaped our view of many a "parsha."

The tradition of the Gr"a points out that the very first fifteenth of Tishrei that followed Matan Torah was the day that we as a people became fully licensed to build the mishkan. Consider that Moshe brought the final and enduring luchos to us on the eleventh of Tishrei, and announced then that they were to build the mishkan. What must have ensued next would be three days of a frenzied and certainly an unprecedented outpouring of gift giving for all the needs of the mishkan. By the time the sun set on the fourteenth of Tishrei, Moshe had announced that Klal Yisrael had successfully responded to Hashem's challenge and had provided all the materials and more!

Thus Klal Yisrael ushered in the eve of the fifteenth of Tishrei with the absolutely uplifting knowledge that the sin of the Golden Calf was behind them. Hashem had recommitted Himself to the mishkan, to living amongst His people, just as He had announced before the sin of the Eigel. Torah would continue to be taught from the mishkan through Moshe Rabeinu, concomitant with the great gift of tzimtzum,<sup>53</sup> which, as Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik zt"l was wont to explain, was the greatest sign of love for our people.

What a sense of accomplishment we should have experienced on that night! We had enthusiastically expressed our yearning for the mishkan, a dream that was part of our tradition from Yaakov Avinu and one about which we sang as we celebrated our salvation on the shores of the Yam Suf.<sup>54</sup>

Accordingly, Sukkos commemorates the rapprochement of Hashem and His children after what may have been the most threatening event to our covenant and to the entire enterprise of "bechiras Yisrael." Looking forward, it celebrates the unbreakable bond that we have with the Ribono Shel Olam and it amplifies the protection that we venerate as we recall the Sukkos of the desert.<sup>55</sup>

Consequently the holiday of Sukkos is associated in Chumash and in our practices with simcha more than any other yom tov, for is there greater simcha than rediscovering an endangered love, reestablishing a passionate relationship that was cast in jeopardy?

#### **The Climax of Verotziso**

With this new understanding of Sukkos in mind, we can appreciate a comment of the Siach Yitzchak, a commentary on Siddur written by a student of the Gr"a. He quotes his teacher as translating "verotziso" ( וְרָצִיתָ ) not as 'You wanted us,' but rather as "you have taken us back even after we betrayed or aggravated You." Thus, when reciting the birchas kedushas hayom of Shemone Esrei, one should have in mind that Hashem chose us, loved us and welcomed us back even after we had profoundly disappointed Him and His mission. Thus the varied descriptions of our chosenness certainly ascend and the phrase "verotziso" is hardly anticlimactic.

The Gr"a further teaches us that when we recite the opening line of the berocho of kedushas hayom we should have the following intention: On Pesach ( אַתָּה בְּחַרְתָּנוּ ) You chose us to be Your partner in a covenant; on Shavuos ( אֶהְיֶה אִתְּכֶם ) You showed Your love for us as You revealed to us the content of the covenant and the promise that we can aspire to; on Sukkos ( וְרָצִיתָ בְּנוּ ) You reconciled with us and announced a covenant that can weather our terrible weaknesses and frailties.

#### **The Source of Verotziso**

Where is the first time that verotziso appears in Chumash? This question is predicated on an oft quoted teaching of the Gr"a: the nuanced understanding of any word can be interpolated from the context of the word's first appearance in Tanach. We first find this term when Yaakov meets his brother Eisav after returning from the house of Lavan.

And Yaakov said, "please, if I have found favor in your eyes, that you shall take my mincha offering from my hands, for I have seen your face like I would see the face of the Lord, and we have been reconciled." Bereishit 33:10

This is the moment of reconciliation after years of enmity. Estranged from each other for decades, understandably, after Eisav commits himself to kill Yaakov for robbing Eisav of his future, they share a soft and brotherly moment. Yaakov characterizes this moment as vatirzeini. Thus, following the Gr"as rule the context supports that verotziso would mean you have made peace and we have been reconciled.

One should not be surprised that our entire discussion is found in the understudied comment of Rashi on the pasuk marking the reconciliation of Eisav and Yaakov:

Vatirzeini: you have become reconciled to me. Similarly every term of ratzon in Scripture [means] appeasement, [apeiement in Old French], as in "It shall not be acceptable for you" [because] sacrifices serve to appease and to conciliate. Similarly, "The lips of the righteous know ratzon," [meaning:] they know how to appease and conciliate. Rashi Bereishit 33:10

Rashi marshals further support as he demonstrates that the seeking ratzon is the goal of many a sacrifice, a korban.

The Verotziso of Shabbos

And, you may ask what should we have in mind every Shabbos during Kiddush when we say "rotziso bonu". Perhaps we are to recall that even the Shabbos had a "rocky" start with Klal Yisrael. Both the blessings of Shabbos and its blessed restrictions were revealed through the manna (מַן), that is memorialized through the double challos on the table. We may well recall that there were those who questioned the blessings of the double portion of man as well as the restrictions against collecting it on Shabbos. Nevertheless, the blessings of Shabbos and the blessings of the manna continued seamlessly. Shabbos too gives us reason to say "רצית בני!!"

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The htm version of this shiur for easy printing is available at: <http://vbm-torah.org/archive/chag72/sukkot72.htm> This Package contains: The Dual Mitzva of Lulav, based on a sicha by Harav Yehuda Amital zt"l The "Festival of Sukkot" and the "Festival of the Ingathering", by Rav Yoel Bin-Nun The Dimensions of the Sukka, by Rav David Brofsky For more Sukkot articles, see <http://vbm-torah.org/sukkot.htm> Chag sameach! In memory of our beloved talmid Yoni Jesner HY"D In memory of Mr. Carl Yosef Freyer z"l, beloved husband, father and grandfather, and champion of Klal Yisrael.

### **The Dual Mitzva of Lulav**

**Based on a shiur by Harav Yehuda Amital zt"l**

**Translated by David Strauss**

The obligation to take the lulav in the Temple differs from the obligation to take it in "the provinces" (according to some, this means outside the Temple; according to others, outside Jerusalem). In the Temple the mitzva of lulav extends for all seven days of Sukkot, as it is stated: "And you shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days" (Vayikra 23:40; Yerushalmi and Rashi on the Mishna in Sukka 41a). In the provinces, the obligation is limited to the first day of Sukkot, as it says: "And you shall take for yourselves on the first day the fruit of the hadar tree, etc." (ibid.). According to some Rishonim, the difference between the first day and the rest of the days is not restricted to this point. The Rambam, for example, maintains that all the disqualifications of a lulav listed at the beginning of chapter 8 apply only on the first day, but not on the rest of the days.

What is the meaning of the distinction between the mitzva of lulav on first day of Sukkot and the rest of the festival? Rabbi Yosef Dov Soloveitchik, in his Kovetz Chiddushei Torah, asserts that these are two separate fulfillments (kiyyumim). When one takes the lulav on the first day, one fulfills the mitzva of taking the four species, whereas when one takes it on the other six days, one fulfills the mitzva of rejoicing. This distinction is supported

by the source of the two obligations. The verse that is the source of both mitzvot is divided into two parts: the first part states, "And you shall take for yourselves on the first day the fruit of the hadar tree," while the second part teaches, "And you shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days" (that is to say, by taking the lulav, you shall rejoice before the Lord). According to Rabbi Soloveitchik, this explains why the Rambam distinguishes between the first day and the rest of the days with respect to the disqualifications of a lulav. On the first day, the mitzva is to take the four species, and therefore the disqualification of "hadar" and all the other disqualifications apply. On the other days, these things do not disqualify the lulav, as the mitzva is one of rejoicing. R. Yerucham Fischel Perlow (in his edition of Rav Sa'adya Gaon's Sefer ha-Mitzvot) states this point somewhat differently. He maintains that one who takes the lulav on the first day in the provinces, and then comes to the Temple, must take the lulav a second time, for the mitzva of lulav in the Temple is different from the mitzva of lulav in the provinces. The former is a mitzva of rejoicing which extends for seven days, whereas the latter is a mitzva of rejoicing which is limited to the first day.

A difficulty may, however, be raised against this understanding from what is stated in the Mishna: How was the mitzva of lulav carried out? If the first day of the festival fell on Shabbat, they brought their lulavs to the Temple mount [before Shabbat], and the attendants received them and arranged them in order upon the portico, while the elders laid theirs in a chamber. And the people were instructed to say, "Whosoever gets my lulav in his hand, let it be his as a gift." On the morrow [i.e., on Shabbat] they arose early, and came [to the Temple mount] and the attendants threw down [their lulavs] before them, and they snatched at them, and so they used to come to blows with one another. When the court saw that they reached a state of danger, they instituted that each man should take [his lulav] in his own home. (Sukka 4:4)

Now, if indeed there is an essential difference between taking the lulav in the Temple and taking it in the provinces, how was it possible to cancel the practice of taking the lulav in the Temple, and institute that each person should take the lulav in his own home (on the assumption that Jerusalem itself is considered as "the provinces" and not as "the Temple")? From here it follows that we cannot say that there is a difference regarding the mitzva on the first day between the Temple and the provinces. Indeed, Rabbi Soloveitchik makes his distinction only with respect to the other days, but on the first day, the mitzva in the provinces and the mitzva in the Temple are identical. An objection may, however, be raised against this understanding that divides the mitzva of lulav in the Temple and in the provinces into separate mitzvot. The Rambam himself, in his Sefer ha-Mitzvot, principle 13, asserts that there are certain obligations, whose times of fulfillment are different, but nevertheless they are counted as a single mitzva. The Rambam offers the mitzva of lulav as an example, and from this we see that according to him, taking the lulav in the Temple and taking it in the provinces are not two separate mitzvot. Similarly, in the count of the mitzvot at the beginning of Hilkhos Shofar, the Rambam lists taking the lulav as one mitzva and makes no distinction between the mitzva in the Temple and the mitzva in the provinces.

From here it follows that there is one mitzva of taking the lulav, but that it involves two fulfillments: the first – the taking itself; and the second – a fulfillment of rejoicing. On the first day, there is a fulfillment of taking the lulav, and in the Temple, there is the additional fulfillment of rejoicing. On the rest of the days, in the Temple, there is a fulfillment of rejoicing without a fulfillment of taking. In any case, these are both fulfillments within the mitzva of taking the four species. The Mishna at the beginning of the third chapter of Sukkat establishes the minimum measure of a lulav: "A lulav which is three handbreadths in length, long enough to wave, is valid." The implication is that the obligation to wave the lulav is by Torah law. This poses a difficulty for the Ittur, who rules that the blessing is recited on the taking of the lulav,

while the waving is merely a Rabbinic obligation. According to what we have said, it may be suggested that waving the lulav is an expression of rejoicing. Accordingly, in the Temple, where there is an obligation of rejoicing, there is a Torah obligation to wave the lulav. But in the provinces, where the mitzva is to take the lulav, waving the lulav is merely a Rabbinic obligation. Hence, the blessing is recited over the taking and not over the waving.

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### **The “Festival of Sukkot” and the “Festival of the Ingathering”**

**By Rav Yoel Bin-Nun**

**Translated by Kaeren Fish**

**Adapted by Meira Mintz**

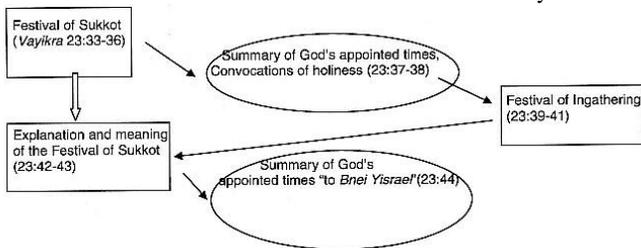
[Note: This is an abridgement of an article that can be found here:  
<http://www.ybn.co.il/mamrim/PDF/The%20Festival%20of%20Sukkot.pdf> ]

**Dual Significance – Nes and Nature** The Torah associates the three pilgrim festivals with two distinct concepts. First, the Torah relates them to the idea of nes, signs and indications that God, Who created the world, continues to function in it and control history. Thus, these festivals commemorate the Exodus from Egypt, the nes that molded Jewish history for all generations. The Torah also associates the pilgrim festivals with the natural aspect of Eretz Yisrael, its agricultural cycles. Thus, they are connected to the ingathering, the spring harvest, and the first-fruit offering sanctified to God from the produce of the land. The entry into Eretz Yisrael is the return of the Israelite nation to the naturalness of its land: soil, agriculture, roots, and – arising from these – the manifestation of sanctity and the Temple.[1] A natural nation is born and is formed in the land of its birth and celebrates natural and national festivals, marking agricultural and religious ritual dates and seasons. If it is exiled from its land or becomes assimilated in its own land among those it conquerors or those who conquer it, such a nation ceases to exist. Am Yisrael, however, is unique among the nations, as it was born and formed through the nes of the Exodus from the Egyptian exile. For Am Yisrael, Eretz Yisrael represents not a “natural homeland,” but rather an aspiration, a goal, a prayer, and a destiny; it represents the vision and longing to connect heaven and earth, the miraculous and the natural, history and agriculture. Thus, if Am Yisrael, Heaven forefend, is exiled from its land or remains under the rule of its conquerors in its land for a long period, it nevertheless lives on, surviving and praying for a new Exodus from Egypt and for the nes of the ingathering of the exiles.

Had Am Yisrael been a natural (territorial) nation, the natural festivals would have preceded the festivals pertaining to the historical nes; agriculture and religious worship would have come before the historical sign and event, both chronologically and in terms of the natural order. But, as noted, if Am Yisrael were a natural nation, it would not have survived its history. The Torah therefore introduces the festivals as associated with the Exodus from Egypt – the historical nes – rather than the natural, agricultural season of spring, which is in the background. In exile, Am Yisrael observes festivals commemorating the nes aspect, the defining events of the Israelite history for all generations: Pesach of the Exodus, Shavuot of the Giving of the Torah, and Sukkot of the wandering in the wilderness of Sinai and in the wilderness of the nations. In exile, Am Yisrael cannot celebrate the festivals of the spring, the harvest, and the ingathering – the festivals of nature and of the Mikdash. These latter festivals belong to a natural, agricultural cycle, and they are especially related to the Temple, where their respective offerings are brought “before the Lord God.”[2] Throughout the period of the Destruction and the exile, there was no possibility of celebrating the natural, agricultural festivals – not even in Eretz Yisrael – since in the absence of the Mikdash, God’s servants have

nowhere to bring the omer, the bikkurim, or the produce of the ingathering. In exile, the nation was left with only token memorials of these agricultural, natural festivals – the counting of the omer (a period which came to be characterized by customs of mourning), Megillat Ruth on Shavuot, and the four species on Sukkot. A Dual Calendar The dual significance of the festivals is connected to the dual yearly calendar of the Torah – a calendar of lunar months adjusted to the seasonal calendar of the solar, agricultural year.[3] It is no coincidence that the Torah introduces the calendar of lunar months as the first commandment given to Israel:[4] “This month shall be for you the first month (rosh chodashim)” (Shemot 12:2). Only the moon renews itself from one month to the next; only the lunar cycle has a new beginning (molad), such that one may point to it and say, “this month.” Thus, Rashi explains, “[God] showed [Moshe] the new moon and said to him: ‘When the moon is renewed, it will be Rosh Chodesh for you.’”[5] Only the moon offers a real monthly cycle, such that there can be a “Rosh Chodesh” and so that one of these beginnings can be designated as the “first month” (rosh chodashim). The Egyptians, in contrast, lived according to a fixed and orderly solar calendar, adapted to the pace of life in Egypt and to the regular overflowing of the Nile – they had 12 months of 30 days and a 5-day celebration of the new year. The sun has no renewal; it has no 30-day cycle, neither precisely nor approximately, and its cycle measures only years. Similarly, nothing was renewed in Egypt; everything was fixed and cyclical. Hence, the Exodus from Egypt had to begin with the lunar month as the basis for the calendar; only then could the revolution of renewal begin. The two calendars are not entirely independent, however. The expression “chodshei hashana,” “months (i.e., ‘moons’) of the year,” already hints at the dual calendar. In nature, there is no “lunar year” and there is no “solar month” – a month is lunar and a year is solar. The end of the verse – “It is for you the first of the months of the year” – similarly connects the lunar month with the solar year. It is, in fact, no coincidence that the Egyptian calendar was entirely solar, as the sun was awarded the most important place in the Egyptian pagan pantheon.[6] In contrast, a solely lunar calendar was maintained by desert tribes, who were not concerned with sowing, reaping, and gathering. Many of them also worshipped the moon (until the appearance of Islam). At the same time, most Arabian tribes, who were also engaged in agriculture, added leap months to the year. This continued until Muhammad prohibited the practice.[7] thereby creating a barrier between Judaism and Islam in the realm of the calendar. Only the Babylonians and the Greeks (until the Roman conquest) on the one hand, and the Jewish nation on the other, maintained a dual lunar/solar calendar, but they did so for opposite reasons. The Babylonians and Greeks, who were able to carry out astronomical calculations with great accuracy, worshipped both the sun and the moon (especially the Babylonians). Bnei Yisrael, in contrast, learned from the Torah not to attribute any reign or power of will to either the sun or moon, rather viewing both as “luminaries” and as “signs for appointed times,” “for days and for years” (Bereishit 1:15).[8] They were commanded to follow a calendar that reflects all these phenomena insofar as the One Creator uttered His word by which both sun and moon were formed and commanded that no natural force should be worshipped. The Exodus from Egypt would not have been possible without Bnei Yisrael turning their backs on the Egyptian solar calendar and accepting the lunar calendar. On the other hand, they could not have entered Eretz Yisrael and engaged in agriculture in the land, without adapting the lunar months to the seasons of the solar year. This explains the fundamental difference between the mitzva concerning the calendar as it was first given preceding the Exodus (Shemot 12:1) and the second iteration of the commandment, which addresses the future generations living in the Promised Land: “Remember this day that you left Egypt, from the house of slavery... This day you are leaving, in the month of spring” (Shemot 13:4-5). The first focuses exclusively on the

lunar renewal, the revolutionary concept that is to separate Bnei Yisrael from the Egyptian solar calendar. The second identifies the month of the Exodus with the agricultural season of spring, the time that the produce of Eretz Yisrael ripens, thereby preparing the nation for entry into the land of the forefathers.[9] This confluence must be maintained through the concentrated effort of establishing the dual calendar and maintaining it: “And you shall observe this statute at its appointed time, from year to year” (Shemot 13:10). Two Holidays on the Same Date The first place in the Torah where the three pilgrim festivals are mentioned (Shemot 23:14-19) already notes the dual significance of Pesach and the festival of Matzot: “You shall observe the Festival of Matzot: seven days shall you eat matzot, as I have commanded you, at the time of the month of spring, for then you came out of Egypt...” The other two festivals appear there only in their agricultural, “Eretz Yisrael” form, with no connection to the Exodus: “And the Festival of the Harvest, the first fruits of your labor which you have sown in the field, and the Festival of the Ingathering at the end of the year, when you have gathered your labor from the field.” These are agricultural, religious festivals of the field, their essence being the bringing of the crops from the field in Eretz Yisrael “before the Lord God.” Similarly, not a word about any historical memory of the Exodus and the giving of the Torah is mentioned in relation to either the “Festival of the Harvest” (Shavuot) or the “Festival of the Ingathering” (Sukkot) in Parashat Ki Tisa, with the giving of the second Tablets: “And the Festival of Shavuot shall you observe, with the first fruits of the wheat harvest, and the Festival of the Ingathering at the end of the year” (Shemot 34:22). Indeed, had the Torah concluded with Sefer Shemot, we would have had little way of knowing how to observe the “Festival of the Ingathering” – or even when to observe it. However, the section on the festivals in Sefer Vayikra (chapter 23) clarifies that Sukkot is celebrated in the seventh month, joining it to the Festival of the Ingathering. In fact, the principal innovation of this section is that the “Festival of the Ingathering” is also the “Festival of Sukkot.” First, the Torah details that the Festival of Sukkot is observed on the 15th day of the seventh month as one of the “convocations of holiness” (mikra’ei kodesh), which are a “commemoration of the Exodus from Egypt” (Vayikra 23:35-36). The text then presents a summary of the “convocations of holiness:” “These are God’s appointed times...” (23:37-38). Only then does the Festival of Ingathering, known to us from Sefer Shemot, make its appearance: “Indeed, on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you harvest the crops of the land, you shall celebrate a festival to God for seven days...” This “parenthetical unit” explains the significance of the sukkot mentioned earlier. The following diagram of the closing section of the unit on the festivals describes this structure accurately:



It is apparent that the “Festival of Sukkot” and the “Festival of the Ingathering” are in fact two festivals on the same date. Lest we think that the historical “Festival of Sukkot” supersedes or pushes aside the agricultural “Festival of the Ingathering,” the Torah begins its description of the Festival of the Ingathering with the word “akh,” “indeed.” The agricultural Festival of the Ingathering of Eretz Yisrael is not uprooted, nor in any way diminished, by the historical Festival of Sukkot of the Exodus that has been joined to it. It remains valid and relevant, and both aspects together mold the “festival” that concludes the year.[10] The mitzva of the Festival of Sukkot is the sukka, while the

four species are the focus and the mitzva of the Festival of the Ingathering; these two mitzvot express the double festival on the 15th day of the 7th month.[11] It is important to note that we are not speaking of a dual significance of a single festival, as in “the Festival of Matzot... at the time of the month of spring” (Shemot 23:14; 34:18), but rather two distinct festivals that occur simultaneously. Each festival – the Festival of Sukkot and the Festival of the Ingathering – is established at its proper time (for 7 days, starting on the 15th day of the seventh month), sanctified (“God’s appointed times, mikraei kodesh”), requires rest (“On the first day, a shabbaton, and on the eighth day, a shabbaton”), and has its own particular commandment (sukka/the four species). The Mussaf Offering The fact that these are in fact two separate festivals and not one single festival is attested to by the list of Mussaf sacrifices in Bamidbar 28-29. On all the festivals, a single ram and seven lambs are offered; only the number of bullocks varies (one or two). On the festival that occurs on the 15th day of the 7th month, however, two rams and fourteen lambs are offered on each day of the festival. This doubling shows that the sacrifices are for two festivals, not one.[12] A further consideration arising from this analysis concerns the “riddle of the bullocks” – on this seven day holiday, unlike any other, the number of bullocks offered each day in the Mussaf sacrifice descends in order from 13 to 7, totaling 70 (Bamidbar 29:13-32). In light of the above, we must take into consideration that the bullocks are meant for two festivals, and any explanation that fails to take this into account cannot represent a complete solution. I would like to suggest a possible explanation. The offering for the first day of the Festival of Sukkot is seven bullocks, along with one ram and seven lambs (as customary on the other festivals). These seven bullocks are brought to mark the judgment of the seventh month of Tishrei; as the mishna explains it, “On the festival [of Sukkot] we are judged regarding water.” On the first day, we offer one bullock for each of the days of Sukkot; on each subsequent day, one less bullock is offered, corresponding to the remaining days, just as Beit Shammai argues regarding the descending number of lights to be lit on Chanuka (Shabbat 21b). At the same time, however, we must offer the sacrifices of the Festival of Ingathering: six bullocks each day, together with one ram and seven lambs. These six bullocks are derived from the two bullocks offered on each of the three pilgrimage festivals, which conclude with the Festival of Ingathering. Thus, the thirteen bullocks on the first day of the festival are actually 6+7; the twelve offered on the second day are 6+6; the eleven offered on the third day are 6+5, and so on, until the 7 offered on the last day of the festival are 6+1, as this is the last day of judgment of the Festival of Sukkot, in the seventh month. Seven Days An important point of distinction between the two festivals is the meaning of the concept of “seven days.” The gemara teaches that the mitzva of taking the four species applies for seven days based on the verse, “And you shall rejoice before the Lord your God for seven days,” concluding that this refers only to days, not nights. The mitzva of sukka also applies for seven days based on the verse, “You shall dwell in sukka for seven days,” but this mitzva applies at night as well.[13] The reason for this is clear. The Festival of Ingathering, associated with the mitzva of taking the four species, is characterized by “rejoicing before God” in the Temple, as it is there that the omer, bikkurim, and ingathered produce are offered. Since the sacrificial service in the Temple is performed almost exclusively by day, the verse “You shall rejoice before the Lord your God for seven days” must mean “by day and not by night.” On the other hand, the commandment concerning the sukka lasts for “seven days” – day and night – because the Festival of Sukkot is a “civilian,” general festival that applies in all places and times, independent of the Temple: “Every member of Israel shall dwell in sukka... in order that your generations will know that I caused the children of Israel to dwell in sukka when I brought them out of the land of Egypt” (Vayikra 23:43). We must dwell in our sukka day and night just as Bnei Yisrael dwelled in sukka when

they left Egypt, and in the same way that a person dwells in his house during the year. According to the Torah, the commandment to take the four species applies for all seven days only in the Temple. Chazal deduce the obligation to take the four species elsewhere from the verse, “And you shall take for yourselves on the first day the fruit of the beautiful tree, palm branches, and boughs of the thick-leaved tree, and willows of the brook, and you shall rejoice before the Lord your God for seven days” (Vayikra 23:40) – but this applies only on the first day (Sukka 43a). Today, by rabbinic decree, we take the four species all seven days in memory of the Temple, but we do so specifically in the synagogue during the recitation of Hallel and we “wave” them. Thus, this “taking” resembles the omer, which is brought to the Temple and waved, and the bikkurim, which are taken from throughout the land, are brought to the Temple, and are rejoiced with for seven days. Unity and Disparity Despite our conclusion from Vayikra 23 that there are two different holidays that fall out on the same date, the impression from other sources is that we are, in fact, dealing with one festival with a dual nature. Thus, in Devarim we are told, “The Festival of Sukkot shall you make for yourself, for seven days, when you have gathered in your corn and your wine” (Devarim 16:13). In this sense, Sukkot is little different from Pesach, about which we read, “Observe the month of spring, and you shall make a Pesach unto the Lord your God, for in the month of spring the Lord your God brought you out of Egypt, at night” (Devarim 16:1). This trend in understanding the festival is similarly expressed in halakhic formulations and historical events. For example, the midrash halakha interprets the verse in Devarim as a directive to create the sukka itself from the leftovers from the winnowing floor and the winery (Sukka 12a). Thus, the Ingathering and Sukkot join together to form a single unity, expressed in the agricultural produce of Eretz Yisrael; that which remains from the ingathering is used to cover the sukka, in commemoration of the Exodus from Egypt.[14] It appears from the literal reading of the text that up until the time of Ezra and Nechemia, Bnei Yisrael did not, in fact, dwell in sukkot: “And all the congregation, those who returned from the captivity, made sukkot, and they dwelled in sukkot, for since the days of Yeshua bin Nun Bnei Yisrael had not made them, until that day” (Nechemia 8:17). However, the sukkot of the returnees from Babylon were not the regular sukkot of Am Yisrael “in all of their dwelling places,” “in memory of the Exodus from Egypt.” Rather, they were the sukkot of the people of Jerusalem and of the pilgrims: “They made themselves sukkot – each man upon his roof, and in their courtyards, and in the courtyards of God’s House, and in the broad place of the water gate, and in the broad place of the gate of Efrayim” (Nechemia 8:16). I believe that until then, a certain separation had existed between the Festival of Sukkot celebrated “in the provinces” and the Festival of the Ingathering, which was celebrated in the Temple and its environs. Whoever observed the pilgrim festival celebrated the Festival of Ingathering in Jerusalem, with praise and thanksgiving, with “palm branches, and boughs of the thick-leaved tree, and willows of the brook” and “fruit of the beautiful tree.” The Festival of Sukkot of the Exodus from Egypt fell, in effect, to those who remained at home – “every native-born” – just as the sekhakh of the sukka fell to whatever was left from the produce of the ingathering. The Festival of Sukkot therefore went almost unnoticed in the Temple; the pilgrims (who were not very numerous, as long as most of the nation offered sacrifices at the bamot near to their dwelling places, as testified to in Sefer Melakhim), even if they did erect temporary sukkot around the Temple, were theoretically exempt from this festival based on the principle of the exemption extended to emissaries for a matter of mitzva or those who are on a journey.[15] Thus, even though the Torah juxtaposes the two festivals in terms of time and thematic parallels, they were celebrated distinctly and separately to a considerable extent; the tension between the physical act of pilgrimage to Jerusalem and dwelling

in sukkot “in memory of the Exodus from Egypt” was simply too great to be bridged.

The de facto separation between the pilgrims to Jerusalem and the householders who dwelled in sukkot led, according to the testimony of the text, to a significant weakening of both festivals. There was no situation of a common national celebration of the festival – neither the Festival of Sukkot, nor the Festival of the Ingathering. A minority took part in the pilgrimage, and not many dwelled in sukkot.

At this point, Ezra the Scribe aimed at realizing the words of the Torah to turn the Festival of Sukkot into a festival of the pilgrims, and this solved the problem.[16] The returnees from exile built sukkot for the Festival of the Ingathering together with the residents of Jerusalem. Thus, Jerusalem was full of sukkot on the rooftops, in the courtyards and the open spaces, and “olive branches and branches of the oil tree (wild olive), and myrtle branches and palm branches and branches of the thick tree” (Nechemia 8:15) – the four species and the sekhakh of the sukkot – were joined together. This binding together by Ezra saved and reestablished the Festival of Sukkot, which now included also the Festival of the Ingathering – and so it is celebrated to this day.

The Simchat Beit ha-Shoeva celebrated in Jerusalem during the nights of Sukkot[17] further cemented the unification of the two festivals, turning the rejoicing “before the Lord your God for seven days” (Vayikra 23:40) into a rejoicing day and night, as in the sacrifice of miluim and the sukka. This ongoing rejoicing of seven full days was so great that in many sources, the joy of the Festival of Ingathering is transformed from a day-service and praise-giving in the Temple to a celebration with dancing and performances at night. Since the destruction of the Second Temple, we no longer experience the tension between the sukka as a temporary, festive home, and the pilgrimage to the Temple. The joy of the ingathering has fused with the memory of the Beit ha-Shoeva, and the sukka and the four species have become the two mitzvot that characterize the festival, instead of each characterizing one of two concurrent festivals. The Development of Sukkot According to what we have argued, the seventh month originally included only the agricultural celebration of ingathering; thereafter, two conjoined festivals were established, and only at the end was the agricultural celebration merged into the historical one. Why does the Torah choose to present this “developmental” composition of the Festival of Sukkot instead of setting down at the outset, in Sefer Shemot, the formulation in Devarim: “The Festival of Sukkot... when you have gathered in your grain and your wine” (Devarim 16:1), just as it describes the “Festival of Matzot... at the time of the month of spring” (Shemot 23:14, 34:18)? Indeed, “Sukkot” in Sefer Shemot (and in Parashat Masei) is the name of a place – the first station where Bnei Yisrael encamped after the Exodus and the place where they ate their matzot. Accordingly, we should celebrate “Sukkot” along with Pesach. Why was the holiday moved to coincide with the Festival of the ingathering? The apparent reason for this unique phenomenon is the significance of the “sukkot” of the Exodus. According to the literal reading of the text, these sukkot, in which Bnei Yisrael dwelled in the desert, represent and recall the entire journey in the desert, “all the way which the Lord your God has led you for these forty years in the wilderness” (Devarim 8:2). As the Rashbam correctly explains (in his unusually long commentary on Vayikra 23:43): “In order that your generations will know [that I caused Bnei Yisrael to dwell in sukkot when I brought them out of Egypt]” – This should be interpreted simply, in accordance with those who maintain in Massekhet Sukka (11b) – a literal sukka. And this is the explanation of the matter: “The Festival of Sukkot shall you make for yourself [for seven days], when you have gathered in your grain and your wine” (Devarim 16:13) – when you have gathered in the produce of the land and your houses are full of every sort of goodness – grain and oil and wine – in order that you will remember that I caused Bnei Yisrael to dwell in sukkot in the desert for forty years, with no place of habitation and with no portion of

inheritance – and for this you shall give thanks to Him Who gave you an inheritance, and houses full of goodness, and do not say to yourselves, “My power and the strength of my hand have achieved this valor for me.”... And therefore we come out of homes full of all sorts of goodness at the time of the ingathering and dwell in sukkot, to remember that Bnei Yisrael had no inheritance in the wilderness and no houses to inhabit. And it was for this reason that the Holy One, blessed be He, established the Festival of Sukkot at the time of the ingathering of grain and wine, “Lest your heart grow haughty over your houses full of all sorts of goodness;” “Lest you say, ‘Our hand has performed this valor for us.’” Rashbam, as usual, addresses the literal text and notes that the ingathering is the first, agricultural date of the festival in the seventh month, while the historical Festival of Sukkot was joined to it, with a new significance, at the end of the section on the festivals in Sefer Vayikra. This joining contains a moral, educational message of supreme importance, which is made explicit in Sefer Devarim.[18] This joining represents the Torah’s strategy for preparing for the abundant blessing expected in Eretz Yisrael by recalling the tribulations of the way after the Exodus from Egypt and throughout the forty year journey in the desert.

Observing the Festival of Sukkot alongside Pesach would aptly commemorate the Exodus, but this would not be sufficient to counter the dangers of the abundance and the pride expected in Eretz Yisrael. The moment the Torah moved the “sukkot” to the seventh month, transforming the concept of the “Sukkot” of the Exodus to the dwelling in “sukkot” for forty years with no houses and no inheritance, the concept of “sukkot” assumed a new significance that is truly connected, educationally and morally, to the Festival of the Ingathering. However, this move took place only after the stay in the wilderness was lengthened, such that Bnei Yisrael would not proceed directly to Eretz Yisrael. In Sefer Shemot (23:20-33), there is still the possibility of a speedy entry into the land – until the sin of the golden calf and the sins of the wilderness, leading to the decree of forty years of wandering. Therefore, the new aspect of the Sukkot appears for the first time in the section on the festivals in Vayikra (which was given at the Tent of Meeting, after the sin of the golden calf), and it assumes its full significance only in Sefer Devarim, in the encounter with the abundance of the land flowing with milk and honey.

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**YESHIVA UNIVERSITY • SUKKOT TO-GO • TISHREI 5771**  
**Zman Simchateinu: Understanding the Happiness of Sukkot**  
**Mrs. Chaya Batya Neugroschl**

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While the common rabbinic names associated with the Shalosh Regalim are usually clearly connected to the events they commemorate, with regard to the common name of Sukkot, referred to as Zman Simchateinu, the connection is less apparent. In addition to the practical mitzvot which are unique to Sukkot we have an additional command of Visamachta “and you shall rejoice.” When it comes to Sukkot we need to wonder, what are the particular roots of this simcha? How is simcha linked to the events of Sukkot? What joy are we commemorating and revisiting in our observance of Sukkot? And in turn, how is it that we are able to achieve this component of the Chag – what does it look like?

Indeed the peshat of the pesukim (Devarim 16:13-16) indicates a very reasonable and natural explanation for the emphasis on joy during Sukkot. Visamachta can be understood as an expression of our gratitude for the abundance of our crops and harvest. Although the agricultural cycle is often connected to the commemorations of the Shalosh Regalim, alone, this does not characterize the chag and must not be the sole source of Visamachta. An examination of the meaning of zman simchateinu should, however, include an historical and philosophical foundation for this aspect of Chag HaSukkot.

The holiday of Sukkot is also characterized by a number of unique commandments, commemorating the experiences of Klal Yisrael in the midbar. The primary mitzvah is that of dwelling in Sukkot - temporary dwellings, as mentioned in Vayikra (23: 42-43) "In booths you are to dwell for seven days ...so that your generations will know that I caused the children of Israel to dwell in booths when I took them from the land of Egypt..." The two components of the mitzvah are significant to note. Sukkot have a particular form and the chag has a unique teleological purpose. The Sukkot we build and move into each year are intended to connect us to a specific period in our nation’s history, when in the desert as a newly liberated nation we lived in Sukkot.

What these “booths” are referring to is, however, debated in the tractate of Sukkah (11b). According to Rabbi Eliezer these booths are a reference to the miraculous "Ananei HaKavod," the "Clouds of Glory," with which God surrounded the Israelites throughout their forty year journey in the desert after having left Egypt. These clouds represent the miraculous shield that protected the Israelites from the elements and guided them through the desert. Rabbi Akiva maintains, however, that these "booths" refer to the actual booths or temporary houses that the Israelites built while in the desert.

The Aruch HaShulchan (Orech Chayim 625) wonders about the vast difference in these interpretations and its significance for our understanding of the Chag. Since Rabbi Eliezer’s booths were manifestations of God’s protection and the miracles performed for the Jews in the desert, they certainly merit commemoration. However, Rabbi Akiva’s interpretation is most puzzling in light of the commandment to dwell in the Sukkah. What is the significance of the huts that the Jews lived in while in the desert?

The Aruch HaShulchan suggests that the differing opinions are actually united in the way they understand the significance of commemorating the “booths.” While Rabbi Eliezer focuses on the greatness of God and his miraculous protection of Am Yisrael, according to Rabbi Akiva, the Sukkah commemorates the greatness of the Jewish people and their enduring faith. Although beset with struggles, they traveled into the uninhabitable desert following God’s command. The booths of Sukkot represent the faithful efforts of Am Yisrael in the face of great vulnerability and physical deprivation. Under these conditions, their dependence upon God was complete and their commitment was immeasurable. In this light, both Rabbi Eliezer’s and Rabbi Akiva’s interpretation of the "booths" whether physical or metaphorical, point us towards the impermanence of our dwelling in this world and the dependence upon our relationship with God. Thus, our observance of the commandment of Sukkot is connected to God’s miraculous protection of the Jews during their forty year sojourn through the desert on route to the land of Israel. Is this the source of Zman Simchateinu? Wouldn’t Hoda’a (gratitude) be just as appropriate an association to commemorate the miracles of God and the faith of the Am?

According to Maimonides, in Hilkhot Yom Tov, the simcha of simkhat Yom Tov is not about an individual’s emotions. Instead, what emerges from the Rambam’s directives is that simcha shel mitzvah is a state of being; a mindset that emerges when there is an alignment of the individual’s performance of a mitzva and divine command. The requirement of this form of simcha is fulfilled when the experience of simcha is essentially a transformative occurrence. In the fulfillment of a mitzvah with intentionality, a sense of purpose, and a clarity of priorities, the individual becomes more than the sum total of himself and his actions; he joins a divine collectivity. Therefore, according to Rambam, simcha shel mitzvah is only possible as a community based experience. Simcha shel mitzvah is achieved only when a family rejoices together and extends their celebration of the chag to include others in need. (Hilkhot Yom Tov 10:16-18)

Consider how this understanding of simcha impacts our appreciation of the events we are commemorating on Sukkot. It isn’t merely celebrating

our individual relationship with God, our heightened appreciation of God's protection, guidance and blessings that we are commemorating. Instead it is a simcha that is rooted in the covenantal community. Our simcha is fulfilled only as an expression of our connection to the destiny of Knesset Yisrael.

The Vilna Gaon supports this understanding of the significance of simcha on Sukkot. He suggests that the simcha of Sukkot is not only connected to the dependence of Knesset Yisrael on Hashem. Instead, Sukkot has an enhanced element of Simcha because the Ananei Hakavod were actually returned, for the first time since the sin of the Golden Calf, precisely on the 15th of Tishrei. On this date, when the construction of the Mishkan began, we have an added degree of simcha. The Gaon concludes that this is why the 15th of Tishrei was designated for Sukkot, Zman Simchateinu. Only then did the community recognize that they had returned to a status deserving the divine presence of the Ananei Hakavod. That confirmation of their identity as a covenantal community is the source of the Visamachta of Sukkot.

As we construct our Sukkot and commemorate our continual dependence on God let our celebrations center around the bounty and blessings of belonging to a covenantal community that is guided and protected by the "Clouds of Glory."

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Rabbi Yitz Etshalom rebyitz@torah.org to mikra show details 7:05 PM (6 hours ago)

### **Mikra by Rabbi Yitzchak Etshalom** Sukkos

#### **Commemorating the Desert Experience**

An Analysis of Parashat Hamo'adot (Ch. 23) I  
PARASHAT HAMO'ADOT

The only complete treatment of the holiday calendar found in the Torah is the centerpiece of our Parashah. Although reading it in the original (to which we will refer throughout the shiur) is preferable, here is a translation which may be used for reference.. Paragraph breaks represent separation of Parashiot and those few terms which are in bold-faced print will be explained in the shiur:

1 Hashem spoke to Mosheh, saying:

2 Speak to the people of Yisra'el and say to them: These are the appointed festivals of Hashem that you shall proclaim as Mikra'ei Kodesh, my appointed festivals.

3 Six days shall work be done; but the seventh day is a Shabbat Shabbaton, a Mikra Kodesh; you shall do no work: it is a Shabbat to Hashem throughout your settlements.

4 These are the appointed festivals of Hashem, the Mikra'ei Kodesh, which you shall celebrate at the time appointed for them.

5 In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, at twilight, there shall be a passover offering to Hashem,

6 and on the fifteenth day of the same month is the festival of unleavened bread to Hashem; seven days you shall eat unleavened bread.

7 On the first day you shall have a Mikra Kodesh; you shall not work at your occupations.

8 For seven days you shall present Hashem's offerings by fire; on the seventh day there shall be a Mikra Kodesh: you shall not work at your occupations.

9 Hashem spoke to Mosheh:

10 Speak to the people of Yisra'el and say to them: When you enter the land that I am giving you and you reap its harvest, you shall bring the omer of the first fruits of your harvest to the priest.

11 He shall raise the omer before Hashem, that you may find acceptance; on the day after the Shabbat the priest shall raise it.

12 On the day when you raise the omer, you shall offer a lamb a year old, without blemish, as a burnt offering to Hashem.

13 And the grain offering with it shall be two-tenths of an ephah of choice flour mixed with oil, an offering by fire of pleasing odor to Hashem; and the drink offering with it shall be of wine, one-fourth of a hin.

14 You shall eat no bread or parched grain or fresh ears until that very day, until you have brought the offering of your God: it is a statute forever throughout your generations in all your settlements.

15 And from the day after the Shabbat, from the day on which you bring the omer of the elevation offering, you shall count off seven weeks; they shall be complete.

16 You shall count until the day after the seventh Shabbat, fifty days; then you shall present an offering of new grain to Hashem.

17 You shall bring from your settlements two loaves of bread as an elevation offering, each made of two-tenths of an ephah; they shall be of choice flour, baked with leaven, as first fruits to Hashem..

18 You shall present with the bread seven lambs a year old without blemish, one young bull, and two rams; they shall be a burnt offering to Hashem, along with their grain offering and their drink offerings, an offering by fire of pleasing odor to Hashem.

19 You shall also offer one male goat for a sin offering, and two male lambs a year old as a sacrifice of well-being.

20 The priest shall raise them with the bread of the first fruits as an elevation offering before Hashem, together with the two lambs; they shall be holy to Hashem for the priest.

21 On that same day you shall make proclamation; you shall hold a Mikra Kodesh; you shall not work at your occupations. This is a statute forever in all your settlements throughout your generations.

22 When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap to the very edges of your field, or gather the gleanings of your harvest; you shall leave them for the poor and for the alien: I am Hashem your God.

23 Hashem spoke to Mosheh, saying:

24 Speak to the people of Yisra'el, saying: In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall observe a Shabbaton, a commemoration of T'ruah, a Mikra Kodesh.

25 You shall not work at your occupations; and you shall present Hashem's offering by fire.

26 Hashem spoke to Mosheh, saying:

27 Now, the tenth day of this seventh month is the day of atonement; it shall be a Mikra Kodesh for you: you shall deny yourselves and present Hashem's offering by fire;

28 and you shall do no work during that entire day; for it is a day of atonement, to make atonement on your behalf before Hashem your God.

29 For anyone who does not practice self-denial during that entire day shall be cut off from the people.

30 And anyone who does any work during that entire day, such as one I will destroy from the midst of the people.

31 You shall do no work: it is a statute forever throughout your generations in all your settlements.

32 It shall be to you a Shabbat Shabbaton, and you shall deny yourselves; on the ninth day of the month at evening, from evening to evening you shall keep your Shabbat.

33 Hashem spoke to Mosheh, saying:

34 Speak to the people of Yisra'el, saying: On the fifteenth day of this seventh month, and lasting seven days, there shall be the festival of booths to Hashem.

35 The first day shall be a Mikra Kodesh; you shall not work at your occupations.

36 Seven days you shall present Hashem's offerings by fire; on the eighth day you shall observe a Mikra Kodesh and present Hashem's offerings by fire; it is a solemn assembly; you shall not work at your occupations.

37 These are the appointed festivals of Hashem, which you shall celebrate as times of Mikra Kodesh, for presenting to Hashem offerings by fire - burnt offerings and grain offerings, sacrifices and drink offerings, each on its proper day - apart from the Shabbats of Hashem, and apart from your gifts, and apart from all your votive offerings, and apart from all your freewill offerings, which you give to Hashem.

39 Now, the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the produce of the land, you shall keep the festival of Hashem, lasting seven days; a Shabbaton on the first day, and a Shabbaton on the eighth day.

40 On the first day you shall take the fruit of majestic trees, branches of palm trees, boughs of leafy trees, and willows of the brook; and you shall rejoice before Hashem your God for seven days.

41 You shall keep it as a festival to Hashem seven days in the year; you shall keep it in the seventh month as a statute forever throughout your generations.

42 You shall live in booths for seven days; all that are citizens in Yisra'el shall live in booths,

43 so that your generations may know that I made the people of Yisra'el live in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am Hashem your God.

44 Thus Mosheh declared to the people of Yisra'el the appointed festivals of Hashem.

## II SEVEN QUESTIONS ON THE PARASHAH

Since every subsection within our selection utilizes and highlights the number seven (which is a topic for a separate shiur), I would like to pose seven questions on the text:

1) Five of the holidays mentioned are also described as a Shabbaton - and two of them, [the weekly] Shabbat and Yom haKippurim are called Shabbat Shabbaton. What is the meaning of this word (which is clearly related to Shabbat)?

2) The listing presented is "the appointed times of Hashem which you (the B'nei Yisra'el) shall declare". Those holidays which fall on a given day of the month (e.g. Pesach on Nisan 15) are clearly declared by the B'nei Yisra'el, when the court announces the new month (under those circumstances when the calendar was fixed on a monthly basis by the testimony of witnesses who had seen the new moon); this is the Gemara's explanation for the liturgical phrase M'kadesh Yisra'el v'haZ'manim (He who sanctifies Yisra'el and the seasons) - it is Yisra'el who sanctify the seasons (BT Berakhot 49a). It is, therefore, understandable why Pesach, Shavu'ot etc. are listed in a group headed by "which you shall declare in their time". Shabbat, on the other hand, exists independently of our declaration or observance of that holy day (which is why the signature form in the Shabbat liturgy is M'kadesh haShabbat, with no mention of Yisra'el (see, however, JT Berakhot 8:1 for a variant version). Why then is Shabbat included in our list? This question is a bit stronger when viewed against the backdrop of the Gemara in Arakhin (11b), which notes that the reason we don't say Hallel on Shabbat is because Shabbat is not considered a Mo'ed (appointed time).

3) In the section (vv. 9-14) relating to the beginning-of-the-harvest offering (brought on the second day of Hag haMatzot), the Torah describes this offering as an omer - which is the amount of the offering. Not only is it odd to refer to an offering by its volume, this term is repeated four times within a space of 6 verses. What is the significance of the omer as an appellation for this offering?

4) At the end of the section detailing the festival of Shavu'ot (vv. 15-22), the Torah interjects the laws of Pe'ah (leaving the corner of the field unharvested for the poor) and Leket (leaving the gleanings of the harvest - again for the poor). What is the rationale behind the inclusion of these "non-holiday" laws in our list?

5) In v. 24, the holiday of the first day of the seventh month (which we commonly call "Rosh haShanah") is denoted not only as a Shabbaton, but also as a Zikhron Truah - meaning "commemoration of a [Shofar's] blast". Although Rashi explains that this refers to the obligation to recite the various theme-driven verses during Musaf of Rosh haShanah, this only works if we read Zikhron Truah as "a mention of a Shofar blast"; however, a simpler read is "a commemoration of a Shofar blast". What is being commemorated by the blasting of the Shofar?

6) In v. 32, Yom haKippurim is called a Shabbat Shabbaton (just as it is earlier in Vayyikra - 16:31). Why is Yom haKippurim given this title - which is otherwise only accorded to Shabbat?

7) A careful look at the "parashah" of Sukkot / Sh'mini Atzeret (vv. 33-44) reveals that there are really two distinct sections within this one parashah. Note that v. 37 begins with Ele Mo'adei Hashem, a perfect conclusion to the opening Ele Mo'adei Hashem (v. 4). Once that "conclusion" is finished (v. 38), the Torah adds another perspective of Sukkot / Sh'mini Atzeret. Note the differences between the two sections:

a) In the first section, the holiday is called Hag haSukkot, but does not explain the meaning for this title; the second refers to it as Hag l'Hashem - but associates the timing with the end of the harvest season.

b) In the first section, both the first and eighth days are called Mikra'ei Kodesh; in the second section both are called Shabbaton.

c) The first section only includes the commands regarding not working and bringing the proper offerings; the second includes the two Mitzvot unique to the holiday - the four species (Lulav, Etrog, Hadas, Aravah) and residing in the Sukkah.

Our final question: Why are there two independent texts of Sukkot / Sh'mini Atzeret?

## III THE VILNA GA'ON'S EXPLANATION

R. Eliyahu Kramer z"l, known as the Ga'on miVilna (d. 1799), suggests a brilliant and innovative approach to understanding the first section which answers our second question - and a bit of the first.

[Introductory note: as the Torah instructs us in Sh'mot 12:16, we are not allowed to do M'lakhah on a Yom Tov, with the exception of Okhel Nephesh (M'lakhah needed for eating purposes for that day; this is permitted only when Yom Tov falls on a weekday). This is not true regarding Shabbat, on which all M'lakhah is

forbidden - nor is it true for Yom haKippurim, where there is no permit for any food-related M'lakhah].

The Ga'on maintains that the first section (vv. 1-3) is not addressing [the weekly] Shabbat; rather, it operates as a header for the rest of the Parashah:

Six days shall work be done - this refers to the six holidays (first day of Pesach, last day of Pesach, Shavu'ot, Rosh haShanah [remember that from the Torah's perspective, even Rosh haShanah is only one day], first day of Sukkot and Sh'mini 'Atzeret) when some type of M'lakhah (Okhel Nephesh) may be done;

But the seventh day is a Shabbat Shabbaton - this refers to the seventh of these days, Yom haKippurim;

You shall do no work - on Yom haKippurim, all types of M'lakhah are forbidden.

In this fashion, the Ga'on explains the inclusion of Shabbat on our list - it isn't there at all! It also explains the use of the phrase Shabbat Shabbaton in v. 3 - it is referring to Yom haKippurim, which has already been titled Shabbat Shabbaton in Ch. 16.

Although there is much to recommend this approach, I would like to suggest one that not only responds to all of our questions, but also addresses this "Shabbat" section from a "p'shat" perspective.

## IV

### WHAT IS A "MIKRA KODESH"?

Before addressing the overall theme of this parashah, I would like to pose two questions of a general nature:

a) What is the meaning of the phrase Mikra Kodesh, which is the description of each one of these special days (along with a general name for all of them: v. 2,4,37)?

b) What is the rationale behind the placement of this list? Why is it set towards the end of Sefer Vayyikra? (Of course, this question could be posed no matter where it is placed; nevertheless, if we can find a solid reason why this parashah "belongs" here, that is a path we should pursue.)

### REEXPERIENCING THE EVOLUTION OF THE GOY KADOSH

Every one of the days under discussion is liturgically referred to as a Zekher liY'tziat Mitzrayim - a "commemoration of the Exodus". Although it is abundantly clear why Pesach serves this purpose - and both Shabbat (D'varim 5:15) and Sukkot (Vayyikra 23:43) are connected with the Exodus in the Torah - the rest of the holidays don't have an apparent connection with the Exodus. Even the Sukkot association is weak if we understand Y'tzi'at Mitzrayim as the plagues and the crossing of the Reed Sea. Why is each of these holy days considered a Zekher liY'tziat Mitzrayim?

I would like to suggest that the entire system of the Jewish calendar - including both Shabbat and all of the Yamim Tovim - is designed to help us reexperience and internalize the "highlights" of our travels through the desert. In other words, we must adopt a more complete and inclusive understanding of Y'tzi'at Mitzrayim. As we examine the salient features of each of these holy days, specifically as they are outlined - and alluded to - in our text, we will find that each of them reinforces a component of that experience which the Torah desires us to maintain. We will also find that the order of the holy days can be viewed as deliberate and sequentially significant.

When we stood at the foot of Har Sinai - which was the intermediary goal of the Exodus (Sh'mot 3:12) - God assured us that if we keep His covenant, we will become a Goy Kadosh (a holy nation). There are two distinct elements in this formula: A nation, implying a unified purpose, common concern and pervasive sense of mutual responsibility. The second element is holiness, wherein that unified group is directed towards a sanctified purpose. This order is significant and indispensable; we must first achieve a sense of unity and fellowship before moving that group into the realm of the holy. It is only after this dual goal has been achieved that we can construct the Mishkan and allow God's Presence to rest among us - which is the pinnacle of the Goy Kadosh. The system of the Jewish calendar can best be understood through the prism of the evolution of the B'nei Yisra'el towards their destiny as a Goy Kadosh.

This explains why each of these holy days is considered a Mikra Kodesh. The word Mikra is used in only one other context (besides Sh'mot 12 - Pesach; our parashah and the other "listing" at Bamidbar 28) - in Bamidbar 10:2. God commanded Mosheh to fashion two trumpets of silver, which were to be used l'Mikra ha'Edah - to assemble the people. A Mikra is, therefore, a call of assembly. What then is a Mikra Kodesh? Simply an assembly for a holy purpose. In other words, a Mikra Kodesh is an actualization of the ideal of the Goy Kadosh - the group coming together for a holy purpose.

This also explains the placement of this parashah at this juncture in Vayyikra. After detailing the parameters of "public" Kedushah (the Mishkan and those impurities which cause defilement) and "private" Kedushah (see last week's shiur), along with the special Kedushah of the Kohanim (Chapters 21-22), the Torah

brings these together as the private/individual Kedushah is manifested in the public domain, chiefly through the offices of the Kohanim.

After this introduction, we can re-examine the parashah, note the underlying theme and answer our questions..

V

#### ANALYZING THE PARASHAH SHABBAT

Even though we are accustomed to thinking of Shabbat as a commemoration of - and testimony to - God's creation (see Sh'mot 20:12), Shabbat also has an explicit Zekher liY'tziat Mitzrayim dimension, as mentioned above. Besides the explicit verse (D'varim 5:15) cited previously, there is a direct Shabbat association with the desert experience which is uniquely tied up with the notion of national unity.

One introductory note: As we have mentioned in earlier shiurim, when studying Tanakh, we must simultaneously view the text as outsiders while experiencing it as participants. As outsiders, we are enriched with the global view of the entire canonized text and the interpretations and comments of our sages. As participants, we only know what the original target audience (be it Mosheh, Aharon or the B'nei Yisra'el) knew; we must try to understand (to whatever extent possible) the impact of these particular words and phrases on the ears of this original audience.

When Shabbaton - a relatively rare word - is used, it certainly must evoke in the listener the original context in which it was used. A quick search of the Tanakh reveals that the earliest appearance of this word is in the Chapter 16 of Sh'mot - in the story of the Mahn (Manna).

The story of the Mahn is, (as we indicated in this year's shiur on Parashat Beshalach), the central turning point in the preparation of the B'nei Yisra'el for their arrival at Sinai.

A quick review of the story will help us understand the relevance of the story of the Mahn to our goal of building a holy nation.

There are two central features of how the B'nei Yisra'el were to respond to the Mahn.

\* They were to only take the proper amount per person in the household.

\* They were to take double on Friday and take none on Shabbat.

Each of these commands (which, for the most part, the whole nation followed) carries a critical step in the development of the holy nation.

R. Yaakov Medan, in a wonderful article (Megadim 17:61-90), points out that the command for each person to restrict himself to a daily portion for each member of the household represented not only a good deal of faith in God - but also tremendous self-restraint and concern for one's fellow. This is how he explains the "test" of the Mahn (16:4) - that we were tested to see how much concern each of us could demonstrate for our fellow, knowing that if we took more than our portion, someone else would go hungry. Indeed, the B'nei Yisra'el passed this test with flying colors! (v. 18) For a slave people, wandering in a desert to exercise this much self-restraint was a demonstration of their readiness to stand as a unified nation and to enter into a covenant which includes mutual responsibility.

This self-restraint was the first building block in the process of turning a multitude of slaves into a unified nation. The ability to maintain concern for one's fellow in the face of such temptation was the first indication that we would indeed be able to become a Goy Kadosh.

By beginning the parashah of Mikra'ei Kodesh with Shabbat - and by specifically referring to that day as a Shabbat Shabbaton, we are immediately reminded of - and brought back to - that wonderful demonstration of mutual concern with the Mahn. Indeed, Shabbat carries a powerful "social-justice" component (see Ramban at D'varim 5:15); by stepping back from our daily attempt to conquer the world and amass more for ourselves, we are given the golden opportunity to allow others in to our lives and to develop our own empathy for those less fortunate. In addition, the cessation from M'lakhah heightens our awareness of Who is really in charge and of our obligation to look out for all of His creatures.

#### HAG HAMATZOT

This one is pretty straightforward. In order to keep the experience of the Exodus at the forefront of our consciousness, the Torah commanded us to relive it (therefore calling it Hag haMatzot, underscoring the method by which we reexperience it) every year. Note that these holy days are also called Mikra'ei Kodesh, in that they remind us of our holy ingathering. Besides the overarching thematic Mikra Kodesh, this one is a bit special - if we think back to the various guidelines and restrictions given us in the context of the Korban Pesach (e.g. to be eaten as a household - see our shiur on Parashat Bo).

One question about this section which we must address is the repeated introduction in v. 4. Once the Torah already captioned this chapter (in v. 2) with the phrase "These are the appointed times..." why repeat it two verses later?

We will only get to this question near the end of the shiur in our discussion about the two sections of Sukkot / Sh'mini Atzeret.

#### OMER HAT'NUFAH

On the day after Hag haPesach (the second day of Hag haMatzot), we are commanded to offer up an Omer's worth of grain (barley). Why this amount - and why mention it so often?

When we look back at the Mahn story, we note that each portion of Mahn that fell was 1/10th of an Ephah - or 1 Omer's worth! It is not surprising that the Torah commands us to "lift up" (symbolically returning the Mahn to its rightful Owner) exactly that amount of grain the day after Pesach. The lesson is clear: Liberation must carry with it a renewed sense of concern for social welfare and a mutual responsibility. As soon as we have celebrated our freedom, the Torah commands us to remember the miracle of the Mahn - and our miraculous response to the test.

#### PE'AH AND LEKET

The exact middle verse of our parashah is the "interjected" command to leave Pe'ah (the corner of the field) and Leket (gleanings) for the poor. Now we can understand the significance of this addition