



THE AARON EDITION

SUKKOS

תשפ"ו

BY DON JARASHOW



לעז"נ • נח רפאל ז"ל בן ר' יוסף חיים הכהן • ישראל ז"ל בן ר' ישעיה הלוי

Lechteich B'Sukkos

When entering the sukkah, one should have in mind that he is fulfilling the mitzvah stated in the Torah (*Vayikra* 23:42):

בסכת תשבו שבעת ימים כל האורח
בישראל ישבו בסכת. למען ידעו דרתיכם
כי בסכות הושבתי את בני ישראל בהוציא
אותם מארץ מצרים אני ה' אלֵיכם.

You shall live in sukkos for seven days... so that future generations may know that I made the children of Israel live in booths when I brought them out of the land of Mitzrayim. I am Hashem your G-d.

The Gemara (סוכה יא) relates a מחלוקת whether these were ענני ממש or סוכות ממש. Regardless, the mitzvah of סוכה is to remind us of that time in the מדבר when Hashem alone sustained us.

The Tur famously asks: If we left Mitzrayim in Nissan, why then do we celebrate Sukkos in Tishrei, half a year later?

To which he famously answers:

ואע"פ שיצאנו ממצרים בחדש ניסן לא צונו לעשות סוכה באותו הזמן לפי שהוא ימות הקיץ ודרך כל אדם לעשות סוכה לצל ולא היתה ניכרת עשייתנו בהם שהם במצות הבורא יתברך. ולכן צוה אותנו שנעשה בחדש השביעי שהוא זמן הגשמים... ואנחנו יוצאין מן הבית לישב בסוכה בזה יראה לכל שמצות המלך היא עלינו לעשותה.

If we were to sit in sukkos in Nissan,

it would appear as though we were simply building huts for shade, like anyone else in the world. The mitzvah of *yeshivas sukkah* would then lack its element of *pirsum*, the public expression of faith.

But in Tishrei, when the cold begins to set in and people return indoors to the warmth of their homes, we Yidden do the opposite — we leave our homes and enter the Sukkah. It is then that our mitzvah becomes clearly recognizable: We are not sitting in the sukkah for comfort or convenience, but solely because the King has commanded us.

This is the essence of Sukkos: By sitting in the sukkah we proclaim — “I am here not because it is practical or comfortable, but simply because כך גזר מלך.” And in that lies the deepest joy — to spend seven days living only in His command, only in His embrace.

Rav Yerucham Olshin שליט"א, Rosh Yeshiva of BMG, in his *sefer* לירח למועדים suggests another dimension, something which I am very excited about. It's the dimension of Lechteich:

Says Rav Yerucham, the sukkah that was זכר ליציאת מצרים, namely our sojourn through the desert, is about reminding us of what life was like in the מדבר, at a time when we had nothing and no one but Hashem.

It was the time of אחרים במדבר — of blind faith, of following Hashem when all seemed bleak

and uncertain. We did not know where food or drink would come from, how we would survive, how our children would make it. And yet, day after day, He sustained us with מן from the heavens, the באר מרים, and the עגני הכבוד. We just kept going with *dvar Hashem*, על פי ה' יחנו ועל פי ה' יסעו.

Yes, it was difficult. There were the ערב רב and the מתאוננים, there were naysayers, there were those who were brazen enough to complain they even wanted to return to Mitzrayim. But *klal Yisrael* as a whole held on. We followed. And in that following, we were embraced, protected, and carried by Hashem Himself.

That is what the sukkah is about. Not only that we are fulfilling המלך, but that we are stepping back into that state of pure reliance, of being “all alone” yet completely cared for. The sukkah is our journey of Lechteich — the chance to relive the faith of the מדבר, to leave behind the comforts of home and to discover once again that having nothing but Hashem is truly having everything.

As the *pasuk* in Ha'azinu, referring to those times in the Midbar relates: “ה' בדרך יחנו — *Hashem alone guided them.*”

Rashi explains: “נהגם במדבר בדרך ובטח” — He led them in the wilderness, alone and yet in complete security.”

The Kli Yakar adds דברים נפלאים about those times:

ה' בדרך יחנו ר"ל עשה את ישראל חטיבה אחת בעולם כי נהגם בדרך כמי"ש (במדבר כג ט) הן עם לבדד ישכון. Hashem made *klal Yisrael* a singular people, apart from the nations,

bound only to Him. With a caveat: אך בתנאי זה כשאין עמו עם ישראל אל נכר. Only when we attach ourselves exclusively to Hashem does He, in turn, claim us to be His one and only nation.

When we sit in the sukkah, yes, we are fulfilling the mitzvah in a way that is discernible to the עומות העולם — showing that we do it for the King's sake.

Yet there is something even deeper here. Beyond the message for everyone, there's a message on a personal and individual level. Not for the whole world, but for ourselves — for our own personal journeys, our own personal Lechteichs.

We are replaying לכתך אחרי במדבר — vulnerable, wandering, stricken with questions, seeking clarity and direction. מעשה אבות סימן לבנים. Yet the saving grace is that we are held in His embrace — then and now.

This is why, at this time of year — Tishrei, when everyone else goes inside — we step out and enter the sukkah: To relive the journey, to remind ourselves that אין כל חדש תחת השמש. Our forefathers did not know how they would survive from day to day, yet Hashem sustained them. We, too, with our questions and hopes for *yeshuos* and clarity, will be okay.

We enter the sukkah בדרך — to take our feelings of loneliness and forlornness, connect with the past, and realize that we are cared for. A renewal of *bitachon*, a “re-vaccination” of trust in Hashem.

When we go out into the sukkah, we are showing the world — and reminding ourselves — that while others retreat into warm homes, we step outside. Not because it is comfortable, but because we are a Lechteich nation. Just as we once followed Hashem blindly into the wilderness, sustained only by His protection, so too now we proclaim: Our

strength, our identity, our very being rests in Him alone.

It is us and Him, nothing else. That is why, even in the cold and rain, we leave behind our secure houses and enter His sukkah. Because our roots, our journey, and our destiny are one and the same: לכתך אחרי במדבר. We are, and forever will be, the Lechteich nation.

You Can Do Better Than Being A Partner With The Baal Shem

**Story from R' Ephraim Wachsman teshuva derasha 2025*

One bitter, freezing Succos night, the Baal Shem Tov was looking for a partner to accompany him into the sukkah. The cold was unbearable, and everyone turned him away. It was the classic case of מצטער פטור מן המצוה.

Finally, one devout chassid, seeing the opportunity, told the Rebbe, “Rebbe, I’ll accompany you, as long as you agree to allow me to be your partner in the World to Come.”

The Baal Shem Tov replied, “I agree for you to be my partner in Gan Eden, but it comes with a severe condition.”

The chassid could never have imagined the severity of the other side of the deal. When he heard that it would cost him his life — as the Baal Shem said, “After yom tov you will die”—it was not an easy pill to swallow.

The chassid thought about it for some time and made a rational *cheshbon*: If I

am in this world to achieve the greatest *nitzchiyus* possible, I can either wait here in this world for the next 30 or 40 years and then die, or I can take this offer and be with the Baal Shem. With this clarity, he returned to the Baal Shem and said, “Rebbe, I’m ready.”

Sure enough, after yom tov, the chassid began to feel weak and faint, until his *neshamah* departed, as the deal he had committed to spelled out.

The news spread that the chassid had been *niftar*. The Rebbe of the city heard the story and used it as a case study for his chassidim. He asked them, “*Rabbosai*, this chassid is now sitting with the Baal Shem HaKadosh in Gan Eden, but he is no longer in this world. His *cheshbon* was: What better Gan Eden, what greater eternity can I have than to be with one of the greatest tzaddikim of all time? I ask you: Did he make the right decision?”

They all exclaimed, “What we would do to have a moment with the Baal Shem in the next world! Of course he was right!”

In utter frustration and sorrow at their mistake, the Rebbe exclaimed, “He was 100% wrong! Every moment of life in this world is precious. In this world, you can do and accomplish. In the next world, you only receive.”

יפה שעה אחת בתשובה ומעשים טובים
בעולם הזה, מכל חיי העולם הבא.

One hour in repentance and good deeds in this world is more precious than all the life of the World to Come.

Once he is in the next world, he is done. No longer can he do, invest, grow, or become. His greatest mistake was thinking he couldn't ascend higher, greater than the Baal Shem. Now he is in the Olam HaEmes, a *shutaf* with the Baal Shem, but if only he knew how

much more he could have become if he were still down here in this world—the world where we can plan, achieve, and accomplish.

As the Gemara says (Eruvin 54a):

שינא, חטוף ואכול חטוף ואישת; דעלמא
דאולינן מינייה כהלולא דמי.

Grab and eat, grab and drink, for the world from which we are departing is like a wedding feast whose joy is only temporary, and one who does not take pleasure in it now will not be able to do so in the future.

As we sit in the sukkah and reflect on the transient nature of this world, it should not only humble us, but also inspire and empower us. It reminds us to *chap arein*, to make the most of every moment, growing, striving, accomplishing, and soaring ever higher. There are no limits, no caps. As long as we continue to *chap arein*, we are investing where it matters most.



Dog on Crutches

*Based on ספר חובת העבודה תפ"ב

The Gemara in Sukkah 38a refers to the lulav as an arrow:

רב אחא בר יעקב ממטי ליה ומייתי ליה,
אמר: דין גירא בעינייה דסטנא

When Rav Acha bar Yaakov would move the lulav to and fro, he would say: “This is an arrow in the eye of Satan.”

Similarly, the Zohar teaches that the *מיינים* are *ma'anei kirvah* — weapons of war — to demonstrate נצח, that we have emerged victorious in battle.

Likewise, the Gemara (Sukkah 38a) explains that by taking and shaking the *מיינים*, we show our triumph.

But let me ask a question based on a recent encounter I had with my wonderful neighbor.

Recently, as my family was at the park, there was a dog on the loose. My wife told me everyone was pretty helpless — standing on benches, running around — but no one knew how to take proper action to neutralize the dog. So I asked my neighbor, an avid dog lover, what to do in such a situation.

She said, “Well, I would grab it by the back legs until it calms down.”

I asked, “What if you just kicked it?”

She said, “You can’t do that. If you kick it, you have one foot in the air, and at that moment, it can attack you because you’re off balance. And if you’re off balance, you can’t fight.”

Then she neatly summed it up into a life’s *yesod*: If you’re not on two feet, you can’t fight. Profound.

Which segues right into the *daled minim*, Sukkos, and the Satan.

Haven’t we already decimated, eliminated the Satan? On Rosh Hashanah, didn’t we confuse him with the sound of the shofar? And on Yom Kippur, didn’t we knock him out with our *avodah*?

If so, what’s the battle now? Why are we still poking him with the lulav? Isn’t the Satan at this point off balance?

A great question indeed. And the answer is clear: As we discussed on Yom Kippur, we are always at war.

Even though we may have confused and knocked out the Satan over the past few weeks, the reality is that the yetzer

hara is still aflame, scheming to trip a person and as strong as ever. Despite the holy *avodah* of the *yamim norai’im*, he persists, ready to strike at any opening. That is why we need the ארבע מינים — to weaken him, to nullify him, and to remind ourselves that the struggle is never over.

As the *pasuk* says (*Devarim* 20:1):

“כי תצא למלחמה על אויבך...”

The Sifri explains:

“כנגד אויבך אתה נלחם.”

Reb Shealeh Belzer asks: What is the difference between על אויבך, and כנגד אויבך? He answers that there are two kinds of enemies. One hates you but only harms when the opportunity presents itself — that is the enemy of על אויבך.

But the other is relentless — he seeks every moment to surprise and destroy. That, says the Torah, is your true enemy: כנגד אויבך. The yetzer hara never ceases; even in your quiet moments, he is already plotting.

Accordingly, yes, we may have knocked out the Satan, confused him, or even put him on crutches — but the *yesod* is this: he is not a harmless dog in the park. He is the Satan, created by Hashem to challenge us at every second of life. He is the כנגד אויבך, always against us. He is relentless, and even a couple of days after Yom Kippur, he comes right back. Such is his nature — and so must we keep fighting.

On Sukkos, we celebrate and proclaim דידן נצח — the victory is ours

— but at the same moment, we are also preparing for the very next battle.

Wielding the ארבע מינים — the *ma'anei kirvah*, the weapons of war — affirms the reality and severity of the battle. But we must remember: As long

as we are fighting, we are alive. We are living and breathing for a higher, elevated purpose. And that, as long as we are fighting, is ultimately the greatest victory. Keep flexing. Keep fighting. As Yiddish says, the war never ends.

Meet You in the Mud

The Zohar Hakadosh refers to the mitzvah of sukkah as *tzila d'meh-munusa*, the Divine Shade.

Conceptually, this sounds magnificent. What could be more uplifting than to actually sit and bask in Hashem's shade — to dwell, even briefly, in a state of ecstasy?

Yet the yetzer hara has its way. It whispers: “Who are you? What have you done? You're no tzaddik. The Baal Shem Tov, the Chofetz Chaim, Reb Levi Yitzchak, Reb Akiva Eiger — they sat in the Divine Shade. But you? With your shortcomings? It's a joke. You're no tzaddik to start claiming you're sitting in Hashem's shade.”

And slowly these feelings simmer, until they harden into an identity. We think: “With all my *aveiros*, even since Yom Kippur, it can't be me. The Zohar wasn't referring to someone like me, with my *pekel*.”

For this very trap, we turn to the *heilige* Alshich HaKadosh (Parshas Emor). He says: No. Wrong. Absolutely not. Never!

To uproot this misguided “humility”

— this thought of “I am nothing; what does my sitting in the sukkah really amount to?” — the Alshich explains why Hashem specifically commanded that the schach, the essence of the sukkah, must come from “דבר שגידולי” מן הארץ — *things that grow from the ground*” (Mishna Sukkah 11a).

Just when we feel like dirt, like we are nothing, like we are unworthy of the Divine Shade, Hashem proclaims: “ועמך כולם צדיקים — *you are all holy and pure*.” My children, you are all trying your best.

Hashem says: Take the schach — the defining element of the sukkah — from the ground itself, and place it above your heads. Take that feeling of lowliness and transform it. Bring it up. With Me.

All of you — come with Me into the sukkah, into My light, My radiance. Let's be together. Bring the schach from the ground — from where you're coming — and place it where you truly belong: with Me. Not just basking, but creating the Divine Shade. Every single one of you.

A Promise from Eliyahu Hanavi

As we end the Yerach HaEisanim and want to do whatever we can to capitalize on the precious time still at our disposal — while Hashem is in our midst, and we are dancing with His Torah, proclaiming ה' הוא אלהים אין עוד מלבדו, — I don't know if I've ever come across not just a *segulah* but a *havtachah* from Eliyahu HaNavi himself.

And now that I have, I feel it is incumbent upon me to share it with you. This is an exciting opportunity, an absolute gem! And even better — it doesn't require anything extra outside of what we're already doing. It's adding an extra dose of heart and *kavanah*, adding meaning and depth to that which we are already doing.

The Minchas Elazar (ספר שער יששכר) writes that he has a *mesorah* from the Chozeh miLublin, who said in the name of the Baal Shem Tov, who said in the name of Eliyahu HaNavi:

מי שמתפלל בכונה כראוי באלו ג' ימים הושענא רבא שמיני עצרת ושמחת תורה אז מסוגל להתפלל כל השנה בכונה עכ"ל והענין יובן בחינת נפתולי אלקים נפתלי, שהוא לשון פתיל והתחברות, והוא לשון יחיד באלו הימים שעל ידי זה יתחקק היחוד בכל השנה.

Whoever davens with real kavanah and heart on Hoshana Rabbah, Shemini Atzeres, and Simchas Torah is promised special help from Hashem to daven with kavanah all year long...

He explains that these days are times of deep connection between us and Hashem — days when our bond with Him is strengthened. When we use them well, it's like tying a strong knot that keeps us connected throughout the year; the tighter we make the *chibur* during this time, the tighter we are tied with the Eibeshter all year long, giving us strength to *daven* and stay close to Him long after yom tov ends.

Now is the time. The season of Yerech HaEisanim is concluding. Yes, it's a time of joy, happiness, and celebration with family and friends — but it's also an opportunity for ourselves, our families, and all of *klal Yisrael*, near and far.

What an opportunity. To tie the *kesher* with Hashem through our *tefillos*. Now's that time. For the rest of the year. We have a *kabbalah* from Eliyahu HaNavi himself. May Hashem grant us the *hatzlachah*, *yeshuos*, and *nechamos* we all need — and the greatest *yeshuah* of all, the arrival of Mashiach Tzidkeinu, *bimheira b'yameinu*.

CORPORATE SPONSORS



MY GRANDPARENTS נשמת לעילוי

שמואל צבי בן בנימין הכהן וירשוב ע"ה
האשת
חיה בת אברהם יצחק ע"ה



Sponsored by the Aaron Family (Chicago, IL)

L'zchus refuah shleimah for Pinchas Avraham Chaim Ben Yoni and R' Eliezer ben Esther Chana

LECHTEICH.ORG • DON@LECHTEICH.ORG • 845-367-2959

