

AT THE ARTSCROLL YOM TOV TABLE

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RABBI YITZCHOK

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WEEKLY INSPIRATION AND INSIGHT ADAPTED FROM CLASSIC ARTSCROLL TITLES

PROJECT DEDICATED BY MENACHEM AND BINAH BRAUNSTEIN AND FAMILY
L'ILLUI NISHMAS RAV MOSHE BEN RAV YISSOCHOR BERISH AND MARAS YENTA BAS YISROEL CHAIM

SUCCOS

GLIMPSE BETWEEN THE BRANCHES

Around the Year with Reb Meilech from Rav Elimelech Biderman, written by Yisroel Besser

NEW!



The very first *Mishnah* in *Maseches Succah* tells us that a *succah* cannot be higher than twenty *amos*. One of the reasons the *Gemara* gives is that if a *succah* would be higher than twenty *amos*, the person would be sitting in the shade of the *defanos*, the walls of the *succah*, and not the *s'chach*.

The *defanos* cannot be too high, says the *Aruch LaNer*, because the wise person sits in the *succah* and raises his eyes to contemplate the *s'chach*, perceiving that it — symbol of the *Hashgachah* that hovers above each and every person — is the *ikkar*, the primary aspect, of the *mitzvah*. The walls represent the tangible, visible experience of this world, but they are not reality. The goal of the *succah* is to allow us to see the *s'chach* and ponder its message.

Reb Meilech moves his hands, as if tapping the four walls, and then raises his eyes.

“Defanos here, defanos there, this phone call I should have made, that person I should have met... no, look up and see the truth, that the Bashefer says, ‘Ich feer di velt, I run the world’ — there is only Hashgachah, and more Hashgachah. Look up and see the sky, because the more you look up, the more you can see reality,” he says.

And this clarity brings to *simchah*, to true inner joy.

The *Gemara* (*Succah 2a*) states: “Go out of your permanent dwelling.” This means, says the *Sefas Emes*, to let go of your attachment to wealth and possessions, and enter into His embrace. That’s why this *Yom Tov* is *Zeman Simchaseinu*, our time of rejoicing, for there is no joy like the joy of one who truly has faith in Hashem, as the *Chovos HaLevavos* writes.

Therefore, concludes the *Sefas Emes*, we *daven* for the year ahead throughout the days of this *Yom Tov*, the cries of *Hosha na* we express each morning asking for health, sustenance, peace, and blessing, all that a person needs in life. During these days, when people see clearly that the source of their success lies not in the field or

storehouse, but only in the benevolence of the *Ribbono Shel Olam*, they can ask that the *berachah* never cease.

When the moment of redemption arrives, the nations of the world will protest the favor shown to *Klal Yisrael*. They will argue that they had not been given a proper chance, so Hashem will give them the opportunity to prove themselves.

The *Gemara* (*Avodah Zarah 3a*) describes how Hashem will tell them about an easy *mitzvah* called *succah* and command them to fulfill it.

Each one of them will immediately go and build a *succah* on the rooftop, and *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* will turn the full heat of the sun on them, as in the month of *Tammuz*. They will be unable to withstand the heat, and they will kick the *succah* walls and leave.

Why does the *Gemara* mention where these *succos* will be constructed, “on the rooftop” — what difference does it make where they will put those *succos*?

Perhaps it is because Hashem wants to see not just if they can perform the action of the *mitzvah*, but also if they can connect with



Rav Meilech Biderman

continued on page 7

THIS WEEK'S ISSUE IS DEDICATED BY ETHAN AND YAEL GROSS
IN HONOR OF OUR DEAR FRIEND, TEACHER, AND MENTOR MORDECHAI SHIMON (MARTY) GOODMAN SHLITA

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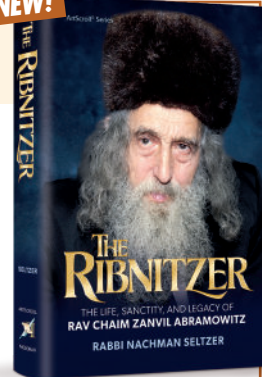
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Va'eschanan- Vezos HaBerachah **JUDITH LOWINGER, LEVI AND NECHAMA LOWINGER AND THEIR CHILDREN**



A *bachur* learning at Beis Midrash Elyon in Monsey had been in *shidduchim* for many years. When someone suggested a girl who seemed right, he was quick to make inquiries, as was the girl's side, and a first date was arranged.

Then disaster struck. On the day before the first meeting, the girl's brother-in-law found out who she was going to meet. The brother-in-law remembered the *bachur* from many years earlier, and he rushed to tell his father-in-law some information that painted the boy in an unflattering light. After hearing a solid dose of *lashon hara*, the girl's father put everything on hold. This was a major disappointment for the *bachur*, made more disappointing since the date had already been arranged.

When the young man's mother heard the news, she developed a plan. Although this story took place in the 1970s, when the Ribnitzer Rebbe lived in Eretz Yisrael and international phone calls were expensive, the boy's mother phoned her nephew in Eretz Yisrael, told him the story, and asked him to go to the Ribnitzer for a *berachah* for his cousin.

The nephew called his aunt back two hours later. "The Rebbe gave me a warm and heartfelt *berachah* for your son. He said, 'Don't worry, it's going to work out.'"

While this was going on, the *bachur*, who was supposed to have been going out with the girl that very evening, was sitting despondently in his room, depressed beyond words. When one of his roommates saw him sitting on his bed with his head in his hands, he sat down next to him and asked what happened. The *bachur* didn't answer.

"I know you were supposed to go out with someone," his friend persisted. "Did something happen that ruined the *shidduch*?"

The dejected *bachur* admitted that this was indeed the case. Seconds later, the dam broke, and he began pouring out his heart to his friend. "The worst part about the whole thing," he said, "is this feeling I have that I'm never going to find the right one and will never get married. Do you know how many times a *shidduch* was derailed? I'm going out of my mind from this whole *shidduch* business."

The roommate listened sympathetically and tried to find some comforting words. Yet, while the conversation continued, neither of the *bachurim* knew that someone else had been in the room the entire time and had over-

heard everything. There was another bed in a corner of the room that couldn't be seen from where they were sitting. The *bachur* who was sitting on that bed happened to be the younger brother of the girl whose father had broken off the *shidduch*.

While he had known that his sister was supposed to have gone on a date that night and that it had been unexpectedly canceled, he hadn't known who she was supposed to meet. Now, though, all the pieces came together, and he grasped what had happened. Though he couldn't leave the room that second — he had to wait until the two other boys finally left — he ran to the nearest pay-phone when the coast was clear. He phoned home.

The *bachur* described to his father what he'd heard about the incident and how he had figured out the identity of the *bachur* who was supposed to meet his sister. He spent a long time on the phone trying to convince his father to give the *shidduch* another chance because, in his opinion, the boy they had turned down was one of the best *bachurim* in the *yeshivah*.

"Here's what I want to know," the father said after hearing his son extolling the boy he had just rejected. "I get that you like him, but what about his *middos*?"

"His *middos* are wonderful! And he's one of the biggest *masmidim* in the *yeshivah*!"

"So there's nothing for me to worry about?"

"Tatty, this *bachur* is fantastic!"

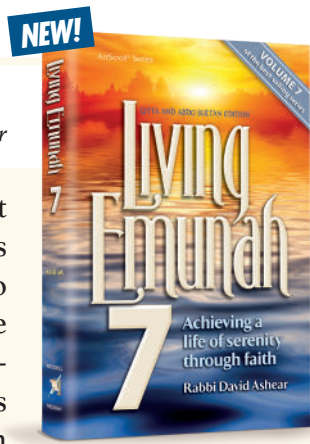
In the end, the father decided to trust his son, who knew the *bachur* well because he was his roommate, rather than his son-in-law, who had known him many years earlier. His son's ardent defense of the boy convinced him to give the *shidduch* another chance. He contacted the *shadchan* and asked him to please convey their apologies to the other family and to ask if they were willing to try again. Before long, the young couple were celebrating their *vort*.

During the engagement period, the *chassan's* family figured out that the Ribnitzer Rebbe had given his *berachah* for the *shidduch* and reassured them that it was going to work out at the *same exact moment* that the prospective *chassan* was having a conversation in his dorm room that was overheard by his future brother-in-law.

And so it was that the Rebbe's words came true. 📖



The Ribnitzer Rebbe



Living Emunah 7 by Rabbi David Ashear

A person might look around and see people in his circle doing great things on behalf of *Klal Yisrael*. One person is running a *chessed* organization, another is teaching Torah to the masses, and yet someone else is running a successful business and giving an abundance of charity to institutions all over the world. This makes him feel as if he, a simple Jew, is merely doing the basics and his *avodah* is not worth much. To this person we say: We have no idea how Hashem measures the greatness of a person. It could be that the acts of a simple Jew overcoming his tests in the situations Hashem puts him in are just as great, if not greater, than what he considers the major deeds of those around him.

Hashem gives different jobs to different people. It does not matter what a person's job is; what matters is that he does it correctly. If he does, he will have achieved his own potential.

A few years ago, Rav Shlomo Zalman Friedman from Lakewood noticed one of his *shul* embers reciting the Mourner's *Kaddish*. He was taken aback, because that man was not in the year of mourning a relative, nor did he have a *yahrtzeit* to commemorate at that time of year.

After *davening*, the man came over to the *rav* and explained him-

self. He said that his father-in-law had passed away a few months earlier and left two children—a son who lives in Israel, and a daughter, his wife. The previous night, his wife dreamed that her father was complaining that no one was saying *Kaddish* for him. She woke up startled, and then went back to sleep. A short time later, she had the same dream.

She became alarmed and immediately called her brother in Israel.

“Are you saying *Kaddish* for



Rav Shlomo Zalman Friedman

THERE IS NO GREATER SEGULAH THAN THE MITZVAH OF GEMILLUS CHASSADIM.

Daddy?” she asked, after first ascertaining that he and his family were well.

“I was,” he replied, “until recently, when I had to start praying at home due to Covid restrictions.”

Rav Friedman's congregant concluded, “I am saying *Kaddish* for my father-in-law until my brother-in-law is able to return to *shul* in Israel.”

A well-known *mechanech* heard this story and did some research

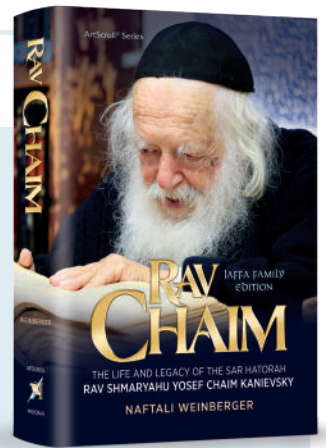
to find out about this man who had the merit to appear to his daughter in a dream to have *Kaddish* said for him. He was described as a very simple Jew who lived most of his life in Russia. Although he was unable to read all the words in the *siddur* and was surely unable to understand them, he had simple *emunah* and prayed to Hashem as best he could. He endured difficulties and sacrificed much to remain religious in Russia for all the years he lived there. When his only daughter grew older, he found himself in a quandary. He felt that Russia was not a place where his daughter could grow spiritually to reach her true potential. At great personal sacrifice, he sent her to a Bais Yaakov in America, where she became a true *bas Yisrael*.

This is the daughter whom he visited in a dream.

Even someone who appears to be a simple Jew can reach the greatest spiritual heights, in his own way. As long as we do the best we can in the circumstances Hashem puts us in, we will be considered completely successful in this world. 📖

THIS YOM TOV'S DAF YOMI SCHEDULE: SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER / תשרי

SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
30	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
יד	טו	טז	יז	יח	יט	כ	כא	כב	כג	כד	כה	כו	כז
Kiddushin 48	Kiddushin 49	Kiddushin 50	Kiddushin 51	Kiddushin 52	Kiddushin 53	Kiddushin 54	Kiddushin 55	Kiddushin 56	Kiddushin 57	Kiddushin 58	Kiddushin 59	Kiddushin 60	Kiddushin 61



On Succos, Rav Chaim Kanievsky was very stringent to spend as much time as possible, day and night, in his *succah*. Following the opinion that one can fulfill the *mitzvah* of going to Yerushalayim even when there is no *Beis HaMikdash*, Rav Chaim used to go to Yerushalayim on Succos. The difficulty with that, he said, was that since he went at night, after a long and tiring day, he would have to resist dozing during the ride so as not to sleep outside the *succah*.

One year, he mentioned to his father-in-law, Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv, how difficult it was not to fall asleep. Rav Elyashiv told him that *holchei derachim* (travelers) are not obligated to sleep in a *succah*; if he falls asleep, he can be lenient. Rav Chaim did not want to rely on this leniency and would do



Rav Chaim Kanievsky

his utmost to remain awake. His son, Rav Yitzchak Shaul, who traveled with Rav Chaim for many years, related that in order to keep him awake, Rav Chaim would ask him interesting questions, such as “How many times does it say ‘kelev’ in *Maseches Berachos*?” Rav Yitzchak Shaul would spend a few minutes going through each *daf*.

“A FEW WEEKS BEFORE YOM TOV, ONE CAN AFFORD TO BE VERY SELECTIVE AND REJECT ANYTHING THAT IS LESS THAN PERFECT.”

One year, after he responded to a question about how often a certain word appears in a *masechta*, Rav Chaim pointed out thirteen additional occurrences, which Rav Yitzchak Shaul had missed!

On *Shabbos Chol HaMoed Succos* 5773/2012, despite his advanced age, Rav Chaim stood for the entire reading of *Koheles* to avoid accidentally dozing off outside the *succah*. Afterward, he jokingly declared, “If I had been alive in the times of *Chazal*, I would have instituted the reading of *Koheles* on *Pesach* instead, and *Rus* or *Shir HaShirim* [which are much shorter] on Succos, so that people shouldn’t end up sleeping for half an hour outside the *succah*!”

• • • • •

Rav Chaim quoted the *Chafetz Chaim* when cautioning older singles not to be as selective as they might have been when *continued on page 15*

A friend of mine recounted the following scene, which occurred in Cleveland a few years ago. He greeted the sanitation workers with his usual “good morning,” and one of them had this to say, from his perch at the bottom of the sanitation truck: “Rabbi, you see that guy?”

He pointed to the other “garbage man” at the top.

“Someday,” he announced proudly, “that’s going to be me!”

Perhaps funny, but very sad as well. His highest *hasagah* — theoretical life achievement — was to rise to the top of the garbage truck.

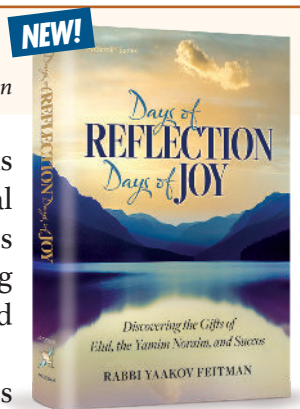
Let’s be much smarter than that sanitation acolyte. Our *Tishrei* opportunities are for absolute transformation. We can

become anything we wish, as long as our purpose and goal are to serve our King. Let us emulate our *gedolim* by looking beyond our comfort zone and small-minded limitations.

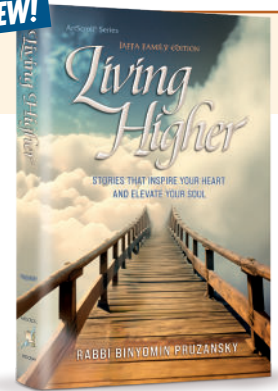


Rav Yitzchok Hutner

The *Midrash* tells us that the word for man — *adam* — also spells *me’od*, which means great. My *rebbe*, Rav Yitzchok Hutner, explains that we are not just very tall or very smart. We are the embodiment of “very,” meaning that our possibilities are infinite. Let us look ahead with both wisdom and the commitment to change completely, as is our power and infinite potential. 📖



NEW!



Living Higher by Rabbi Binyomin Pruzansky

Chesed is not something to do only when it comes our way, but we need to seek out opportunities to do chesed, hoping for a chance to help another Yid. The Chofetz Chaim says that just as one must make sure to learn Torah every day, he must also make sure to perform an act of chesed every day.

In the following story, related by Rav Yitzchak Zilberstein, we learn what it means to look to do chesed and the lasting effect it can have.

Reuven Minzer stood on a busy street in Bnei Brak, his eyes roving the passing cars. Finally, he spotted a taxi and waved it down. After ascertaining that the driver was willing to take him to Cholon, he got into the back seat and noticed something unusual about the driver. This was not your typical-looking Israeli driver, dressed casually in a T-shirt or buttoned-down shirt and khakis. Here was a young man with a trimmed beard, sporting a suit and a tie. He looked like he was on his way to a wedding, not on his way to Cholon with a fare.

“Excuse me for asking...” Reuven couldn’t contain his curiosity. “But why are you all dressed up? Are you coming from a wedding?”

The driver answered, “No, I am not coming from a wedding. Actually, last night I got married, and I am in the middle of my *sheva berachos*.”

“What!? Are you for real? I am not sure if you are aware of this, but according to *halachah* (*Even HaEzer* 64:1), a *chassan* should not go to work during the week of his *sheva berachos*. He is supposed to stay home with his wife.”

The driver said, “I wish I didn’t have to work, but I am over my head in debt. My wife and I both come from poor families. Our parents didn’t have enough

money to pay for the wedding and it was agreed that all of the gifts we received would cover the wedding costs. Now we have no money to our name, so this is what I have to do to get by. I have no choice. I am driving today to earn some money to bring home to my wife.”

Reuven had never heard of such a poor *chassan*, and could not imagine that someone would have to leave his wife the day after their wedding in order to put bread on the table. Determined to do something about it, he wrote out a check for 1,000 shekels and gave it to the driver.

“Here is a wedding present. Promise me that after you drop me off, you will go back home to your wife.”

Overjoyed by the thoughtfulness of his passenger, and most pleased with the gift, the driver assured Reuven he would go straight home to his new wife.

A few days later, Reuven received a letter in the mail. He did not recognize the return address.

Dear Mr. Minzer,

You have no idea what you did for me, a brand-new kallah.

For years, I waited to get married and finally, my dream came true. But the lack of money made me feel so sad inside. It was a struggle to prepare for the wedding, to buy all the clothes and housewares I needed. We borrowed as much money as we could, and I was happy to get married with dignity.

But when my husband left the morning after our wedding, I burst into tears. A kallah is not supposed to be left alone. Then, when he returned with the check that you so

continued on page 8



“I HAVE DECIDED THAT FROM NOW ON, I AM GOING TO LIGHT CANDLES EACH WEEK, AS WELL AS KEEP SHABBAT.”

THIS YOM TOV'S MISHNAH YOMI SCHEDULE:

SEPTEMBER / תשרי

SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
30 טו	1 טז	2 יז	3 יח	4 יט	5 כ	6 בא	7 בב	8 כג	9 כד	10 כה	11 כו	12 כז	13 חג
Megillah 4:10 - Moed Katan 1:1	Moed Katan 1:2-3	Moed Katan 1:4-5	Moed Katan 1:6-7	Moed Katan 1:8-9	Moed Katan 1:10-2:1	Moed Katan 2:2-3	Moed Katan 2:4-5	Moed Katan 3:1-2	Moed Katan 3:3-4	Moed Katan 3:5-6	Moed Katan 3:7-8	Moed Katan 3:9 - Chagigah 1:1	Chagigah 1:2-3

RAV ELYASHIV'S QUESTION DURING THE SHIUR

Rav Chaim Kanievsky on Succos by Rabbi Avraham Yeshayah Shteinman

NEW!



Rav Benzion Kook, a disciple of Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv, related the following.

When Rav Elyashiv returned from *shul* on Succos, he was particular to hold the Four Species in his two hands, to fulfill the *mitzvah* according to the custom of the people of Yerushalayim of old, as the *Gemara* states (*Succah* 41b): “This was the custom of the people of Yerushalayim: A person leaves his home with his *lulav* in his hand. When he goes to the *shul*, his *lulav* is in his hand. He recites the *Shema* and prays with his *lulav* in his hand.” The *Gemara* explains that this custom of the men of Yerushalayim showed how diligent they were in the perfor-

mance of *mitzvos*.

To show love for the *mitzvah* as the people of Yerushalayim of old did, one must carry the *Arba Minim*



Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv

in the same way he holds them in his hands. Carrying the *esrog* in a box, or the *lulav* in a case is not following

this custom, and does not demonstrate that degree of love for the *mitzvah*.

Indeed, the *Rama* writes (652:1), “One who is scrupulous should hold the *lulav* in his hand when he goes from his house into *shul*, and also during the time of *davening*, and he should take it back to his house.” This, he says, is a sign of one’s love for the *mitzvah*. The *Mishnah Berurah* states, however (ibid. 6), that today, holding the *lulav* all day appears arrogant, but the custom is still to carry the *lulav* to and from *shul* in the morning. Rav continued on page 8

GLIMPSE BETWEEN THE BRANCHES continued from page 1

the reason for the *mitzvah*, the expression of *emunah* in Him.

It is an easy *mitzvah*, He assures them, a *mitzvah kalah*. For one who has *emunah*, it makes no difference if he is in a permanent structure or temporary structure, since he is content and tranquil in His shelter.

To the nations of the world, however, it does make a difference if they are comfortable, so the *succos* they erect will be on their rooftops, which symbolizes a place of ease and comfort, with no hindrances or distractions.

Hashem will allow the sun to shine with its full potency and might, suddenly making it difficult for them. In a moment, they will be cursing and complaining, ready to leave the *succah*; it will be too difficult.

**HE IS ALWAYS
OVER US,
WATCHING OUR
EVERY MOVE.**

But we embrace the *mitzvah*, regardless of whether it is easy or not, because in performing it, we perceive the truth of truths — just how sheltered we actually are!

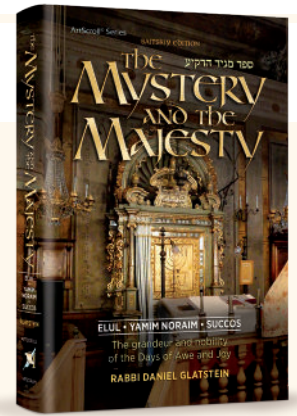
Looking through the *s’chach* and seeing bits of sky, Rav Tzvi Hirsch of Rimanov commented, “From here, we see that *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* looks out for us through the spaces between the *s’chach*.”

The *rebbe* was saying that even in a time of concealment, when it is difficult to see the clear blue sky, we believe that He is watching us just the same. From inside the *succah*, the sky is visible only in fragments, glimpses we catch between the branches and twigs of *s’chach* — and this is truly how it is. He is always over us, watching our every move, but we only get occasional glimpses of His Presence, and that is enough for us to feel it. 📖

This Yom Tov's Yerushalmi Yomi schedule:

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER / תשרי

SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
30 טו	1 טז	2 יז	3 יח	4 יט	5 כ	6 כא	7 כב	8 כג	9 כד	10 כה	11 כו	12 כז	13 כח
Kilayim 77	Kilayim 78	Kilayim 79	Kilayim 80	Kilayim 81	Kilayim 82	Kilayim 83	Kilayim 84	Shevi'is 1	Shevi'is 2	Shevi'is 3	Shevi'is 4	Shevi'is 5	Shevi'is 6



Interestingly, one of the few *simanim* in the *Shulchan Aruch* that has only one *se'if*, subsection, and, uniquely, has no title, quotes the *pasuk* stating that there is an obligation to sit in a *succah* for seven days, because Hashem housed the Jewish people in *succos* when He took them out of Mitzrayim. The *Shulchan Aruch* then adds that the *succos* mentioned in the verse refer to the Clouds of Glory that enveloped the *Bnei Yisrael* and protected them from the heat

and the sun when Hashem took them out of Mitzrayim.

Rav Yosef Caro, the author of the *Shulchan Aruch*, was a *posek*; however, this *siman* merely translates the *pasuk* and does not seem to include any *halachah*. Of what halachic significance is it that the *succos* in the *pasuk* refer to the *Ananei HaKavod*?

The *Bach* explains that the *mitzvah* of *succah* differs from most other *mitzvos*. When it comes to other *mitzvos*, we perform them because Hashem told us to do them,

without our having to be cognizant of the reason. The *mitzvah* of *succah* is one of three unique *mitzvos* where the Torah specifically utilizes the word *lemaan*, so that, indicating the reason for the *mitzvah*. In this case, the *pasuk* states, “*Lemaan yeidu doroseichem ki baSuccos hoshavti es Bnei Yisrael behotzi'i osam mei'Eretz Mitzrayim, So that your generations will know that I caused the Bnei Yisrael to dwell in booths*”

continued on page 9

ONE ALSO HAS THE ADDITIONAL OBLIGATION TO REMEMBER THE REASON BEHIND THE MITZVAH.

RAV ELYASHIV'S QUESTION DURING THE SHIUR

continued from page 7

Elyashiv was very particular to abide by this custom.

Just as a person fulfills the *mitzvah* of *simchas Yom Tov* each time he drinks wine on *Yom Tov*, and the more he drinks the more of a *mitzvah* he does, so, too, the more a person takes his *Arba Minim*, the more he fulfills the *mitzvah*, even though he already fulfilled his obligation by taking them the first time.

After discussing this topic in his *shiur*, Rav Elyashiv turned to those around him and inquired — uncharacteristically — whether they observed this practice. He also related that the previous day, his son-in-law, Rav Chaim Kanievsky, had visited him, and he had asked him how the people of Bnei Brak fulfilled the custom of the people of Yerushalayim of old — were they particular to hold the *lulav*

and *esrog* without a case? Rav Chaim, he said, answered that in Bnei Brak this custom was completely unknown.

(Rav Chaim himself did try to carry his *Arba Minim* to and

RAV ELYASHIV WAS VERY SCRUPULOUS IN THIS REGARD, AND HE ENCOURAGED THE OBSERVANCE OF THIS CUSTOM.

from *shul*, but he was not scrupulous about this, especially in his later years, when he gave his *Arba Minim* to others to hold.)

Yet Rav Elyashiv was very scrupulous in this regard, and he encouraged the observance of this custom. 📌

HEY, TAXI! *continued from page 6*

generously gave, it blew life back into me. You made my marriage.

I got your name and address from the check, so I could personally thank you for giving me life, though I can never thank you enough.

It was signed by the wife of the taxi driver.

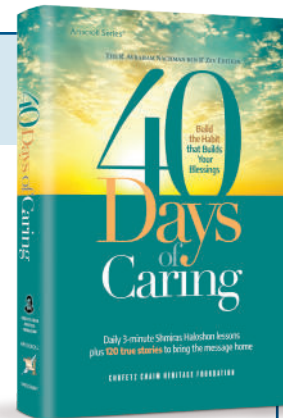
After reading the letter, Reuven was very moved. He said to himself, “Had I known the impact my check would make, I would have given them 3,000 shekels!”

But there was more. Several days later, he received another letter, with the same return address.

After seeing what you did for my husband, and how religious Jews treat others, I have decided that from now on, I am going to light candles each week, as well as keep Shabbat.

Today rabbah.

If we live each day to help another, who knows what difference we can make in their lives? 📌



Rav Yankele of Pshevorsk went to visit an elderly *chassid* during *Chol HaMoed Succos*. The man lived with his wife on a high floor of an assisted living facility, and his declining health made it difficult for him to leave the apartment.

When the *rebbe* arrived at the door, the *chassid's* wife greeted him.

"Please, *rebbe*," she urged, "don't tell him it's *Succos*. If he knows, he'll insist on going downstairs to the *succah*, and it's simply too much for him."

The *rebbe* readily agreed to keep the secret. As he entered the apartment, the *chassid's* face lit up with pleasure. "*Shalom aleichem!*" he said, and then, turning to his wife with the alacrity of Abraham serving the *malachim*, he said, "Please bring the *rebbe* some fruit!"

His wife had expected the request. Soon the *rebbe's* attendant was entering the room with a grand platter laden with beautiful fruit.

"Please make a *brachah* on a fruit as a *zechus* for me," the *chassid* asked of the *rebbe*.

Now the *rebbe* found himself in a dilemma. He had never taken a bite of food or a sip of drink outside the *succah* on *Succos*. Even when he was imprisoned in a Siberian labor camp, he had fasted most of the day and saved his rations for the few moments he was able to sneak

into a tiny *succah* he had constructed-

be's brachah. "Please, *rebbe*, I need the *zechus* of your *brachah!*"

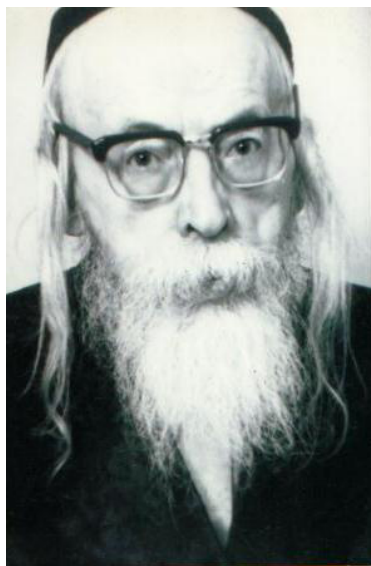
At last, the *rebbe* cut off a tiny piece of apple (*halachically* permissible) and recited a loud *brachah* on it, to which the man answered a resounding "*Amein!*"

Later, the *rebbe's* attendant asked why, if Siberia hadn't broken his determination to eat only in the *succah*, this elderly *chassid's* pleading was able to do so.

"In Siberia, I was willing to sacrifice myself for the *mitzvah* of *succah*," the *rebbe* answered. "But to sacrifice another *Yid*? This I

simply cannot do!"

In the *rebbe's* eyes, he had not abandoned a stringency. Instead, he had chosen to sacrifice one stringency in order to perform another—*ahavas Yisrael* at the highest level. 📖



Rav Yankele of Pshevorsk

"TO SACRIFICE ANOTHER YID? THIS I SIMPLY CANNOT DO!"

ed out of a pit in the frozen earth, topped by some twigs.

The *rebbe* peeled the apple and shifted it from hand to hand, trying to stall and distract the *chassid* with conversation. However, the *chassid* held onto his hope to hear the *reb-*

ONE SE'IF continued from page 8

[*succos*] when I took them out of the land of *Mitzrayim*" (*Vayikra* 23:43).

Thus, the reason is so that all generations will know that when Hashem took us out of *Mitzrayim*, He caused us to dwell in *succos*. The *Bach* further explains: In order to fulfill the *mitzvah* of *succah*, one must have this reason in mind while he is in the *succah*. That is,

if one sits in the *succah* and does not contemplate the fact that he is to recall the *succos* in which Hashem placed us while we were in the *midbar*, then he has not fulfilled the *mitzvah* of *succah* properly. It is not enough to have *kavannah* to perform the *mitzvah* of sitting in the *succah*; one also has the additional obligation to remember

the reason behind the *mitzvah*. Therefore, the *Shulchan Aruch* deviates from its normal practice and explains that the verse refers to the *Ananei HaKavod*, because unless we have this concept in mind while we are sitting in the *succah*, it will compromise our fulfillment of the *mitzvah*. 📖

Ushpizin by Rabbi Shai Graucher

Rav Elazar Menachem Man Shach, in his introduction to his *sefer Avi Ezri*, asked an insightful question on the following *pasuk*: “Bad events (*ra’os*) and sufferings (*tzaros*) will find him (*Klal Yisrael*) and he will say on that day, ‘It is because my Lord is not in my midst that these bad events (*ra’os*) have found me’” (*Devarim* 31:17). The beginning of the *pasuk* mentions both *ra’os* and *tzaros*, but the end mentions only *ra’os*. Asks Rav Shach, why is there a difference?



Rav Elazar Menachem Man Shach

Based on *Onkelos*, he explains that the word *ra’os* refers to physical suffering and punishments, while *tzaros* refers to the emotional pain, constriction,

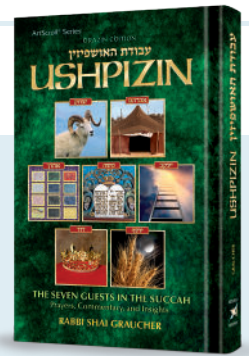
and darkness one feels while enduring the suffering. The amount of emotional pain one experiences when suffering physically is in direct proportion to the amount of *emunah* in Hashem one possesses. When one does not have faith that all that Hashem brings upon him is for the good, he feels forlorn and for-

ONCE KLAL YISRAEL KNEW THAT THEIR SUFFERING WAS ALL FROM HASHEM, THE EMOTIONAL PAIN WAS REMOVED.

saken. However, when one knows that Hashem has his best interests in mind, this limits his emotional pain. This is why

only *ra’os* are mentioned at the end of the *pasuk*, because once *Klal Yisrael* knew that their suffering was all from Hashem, as the *pasuk* states, “My L-rd is not in my midst” due to my sins, the emotional pain was removed.

As David HaMelech writes in Tehilim (23:4): “Even as I walk in the valley overshadowed by death, I will not fear because I know You (Hashem) are with me.” I know the suffering is coming directly from Hashem and that comforts me. 📖



LOVE FOR A MITZVAH

At Any Hour – Harav Shlomo Gissinger by Avrohom Birnbaum

Avi* had been through some turbulence in his youth with countless ups and downs. While still a *bachur*, he could not find his place in *yeshiva* and eventually joined the workforce. After a few years, he settled down, married, and established a *mitzvah*-observant home in Lakewood, NJ.

Succos was coming, and Avi, like all *frum Yidden*, went to buy an *esrog*. He spent time deliberating until he found an *esrog* that he was prepared to buy. The next step was having his *esrog* “approved.” He chose to show his *esrog* to Rabbi Shlomo Gissinger.

Avi didn’t exactly dress in accordance with the unofficial “*frum* dress code,” but he didn’t care. He was absolutely *not* going to put on a show for anyone. He would wait on line as himself! He stood on line at Rabbi Gissinger’s home and finally it was his turn. He was in for a surprise. Avi had never before met Rabbi Gissinger, but when Rabbi Gissinger saw his *esrog*, he exclaimed in excitement, “Wow! This is beautiful! *Mamish* a beau-

tiful *esrog*! Tell me,” he prodded, “how much did you pay for this magnificent *esrog*?”

Avi answered, “\$250.”

Suddenly, with heartfelt enthusiasm, the *rav* sprung up from his chair and made a loud

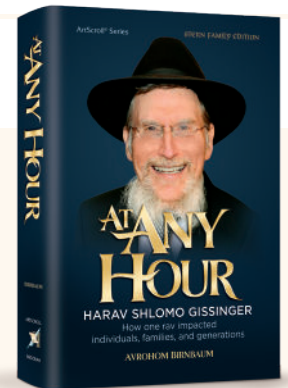


Rabbi Shlomo Gissinger

announcement to the whole line of people snaking out of his house waiting to show him their *esrogim*. “Do you see this man?! Do you see his love for a *mitzvah*! This special man is ready to pay \$250 to buy a beautiful *esrog*!”

Needless to say, it was a day that remained etched in Avi’s memory. He left the *rav*’s house, shoulders straight, head held high, and a spring in his step. He left the *rav*’s house confident that this was one *rav* who loved him — this was one *rav* to whom he would never hesitate to ask a *shailah*!

He left the house with his magnificent *esrog* and a newfound relationship. 📖



Question: A few days before *Succos*, Menashe delivered a truckload of palm tree fronds to the street corner where the biggest *shul* in town was located. He was hoping to sell the branches for use as *s'chach* for five shekels per branch, but it soon became apparent that the residents of that neighborhood used mats that were manufactured especially for *s'chach*, and they had no need to purchase fresh branches. Poor Menashe stood glumly by his pile of *s'chach* for two whole days without selling a single branch.

On the morning of *Erev Succos*, Menashe dejectedly left his pile of *s'chach* in front of the *shul* and departed, leaving the branches to sit in the sun for hours without any supervision. When people realized that the *s'chach* had been abandoned, they jumped at the opportunity. Everyone started taking branches for their *succos*, and within minutes, the sidewalk was bare of its previous foliage.

On the eve of *Succos*, all the men came to *shul*, elated at the start of the *chag*. Upon entering, they faced a large sign in the hallway of the *shul*. The sign read:

Anyone who took my s'chach today without paying is hereby advised that his s'chach is stolen, and he may not make a berachah on a succah with stolen s'chach. I agree to permit the use of my s'chach only to those who commit to paying the five shekels per branch on the first day of Chol HaMoed.

Signed,
Menashe

Many people felt that Menashe had tricked them in order to force them to pay for his *s'chach*. Do they really have to be concerned that their *s'chach* is stolen, or perhaps, since the *s'chach* was abandoned, did they all acquire it from *hefker*?

Answer: It would seem that if someone abandoned his merchandise on the street and left it without any supervision for an extended period of time, it should become *hefker*.


The *Shulchan Aruch* states that one who consciously allows his property to become lost deserves no consideration (as far as returning his lost property to him). For example, one who throws his wallet into the street and leaves it there has knowingly abandoned his property, and someone who witnesses this act is not

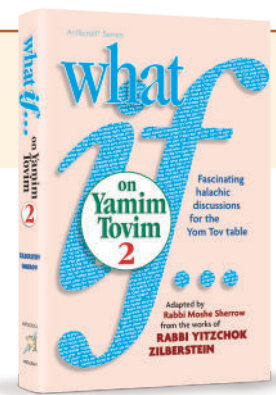
allowed to take the wallet for himself, although he is not obligated to return it, either.

Nevertheless, although the *Shulchan Aruch* maintains that this property does not have to be returned to its owner, at the same time, it has not been rendered ownerless. Although the owner acted recklessly and failed to guard his property, as long as he did not specifically declare it to be *hefker*, no one has a right to take it for himself.

However, the *Rama* argues on the opinion of the *Shulchan Aruch*, citing an opinion that one who consciously abandons his property renders it *hefker*, and whoever gets to it first can acquire it for himself.

It would seem that our question should be dependent on these two opinions: According to the *Rama*, whoever took a palm branch has acquired it from *hefker*, whereas the *Shulchan Aruch* would rule that the branches remained in Menashe's ownership and no one was allowed to make use of them without payment.

However, under these circumstances, everyone would agree that whoever took a branch was allowed to keep it. The entire discussion between the *Shulchan Aruch* and the *Rama* concerns property that has value to its owner, such as a wallet. In our case, where Menashe had no success in selling his *s'chach*, as no one was interested in buying it, it makes sense that when he abandoned his branches on *Erev Succos* without any sign that it was still for sale, he gave up hope of selling it and left it for *hefker*. The fact that he is now asking to be paid is because he regretted the fact that he made them *hefker* once he saw that people were interested in putting fresh branches on their *succos*. Therefore, those who took the branches did so with full right and their *succos* are kosher even without paying for the *s'chach*. [A local *rav* would have to decide in other cases if the circumstances bear out the understanding that the *s'chach* was actually *hefker* or if it was not. If the *rav's* appraisal of the situation is that it is reasonable that the owner of the *s'chach* relinquished his ownership, then those who took the *s'chach* may keep it without having to pay anything for it.] 



Rabbi Chanina Herzberg learned from his *rebbe*, Rav Shlomo Freifeld, that being a *mentch* is the essence of being a *Yid*.

One *Succos*, Rav Shlomo shared with his *talmidim* several stories about Rav Yechiel Mordechai

Gordon, the *rosh yeshiva* of Yeshivas Lomza.

In the 1930s, Rav Yechiel Mordechai came to America to fundraise for his *yeshiva*, but when World War II broke out, he was unable to return to Europe, leaving his family behind. Unfortunately, his children and other family members were murdered by the Nazis, *yimach shemam*. Rav Yechiel Mordechai eventually made his way to Petach Tikvah, where he had years earlier established a branch of Yeshivas Lomza.

In Rav Yitzchok Hutner's words, Rav Yechiel Mordechai was "a *baki b'Shas mamash*," a true expert in all of *Shas*. Yet that was not what Rav Shlomo emphasized in the stories he related about Rav Yechiel Mordechai. Rather, Rav Shlomo wished to teach his *talmidim* about *mentchlichkeit* or, in his words, "the dimensions of a *talmid chacham*...and what a *Yid* has to be." Rav Yechiel Mordechai was the perfect paradigm for those teachings, despite the fact that he was steeped in *tzaros*. Rav Shlomo instructed his *talmidim* to review these stories, remember them, and then retell them to their children; that is how important they are.

Rav Yechiel Mordechai was walking from his house to the *yeshiva* in Petach Tikvah when, as Rav Shlomo expressed it, "you should excuse me, I apologize a thousand times, he saw dog droppings on the sidewalk."

Rav Yechiel Mordechai reached into his pocket, pulled out a handkerchief, bent down to pick up the filth from the floor, and dropped it into a nearby trash can. Here we had, in Rav Shlomo's words, "a *Yid*, a *baki b'Shas*, a big *rosh yeshiva*, who embodied the aristocracy of *Klal Yisrael*," and yet he cared so much about others. He didn't want them to have to step on the filth, so he dealt with it himself.

"Can you imagine the prince of Wales, *l'havdil*, doing such a thing?" Rav Shlomo asked rhetorically. "This was his sensitivity to *kvod habriyos*."

Another story. Every morning, Rav Yechiel Mordechai would stand by a plaque with the name of a certain donor and stare at it. When asked for an explanation,

the *rosh yeshiva* said, "The man whose name is written on this plaque was not a rich man. Yet he loved Torah and he donated a substantial sum to the *yeshiva*. I never want to forget the *tova* this Jew did for me, so every day I look at the plaque to remind myself."

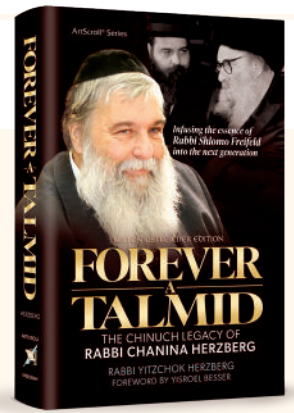
Rav Shlomo concluded this story with, "This is a *Yid*."

Rav Shlomo continued, "I'm not a storyteller, but these stories fall in the category of *shimush talmidei chachamim*. 'Gedolah shimushah shel Torah yoser mi'limudah — One can grow more from serving Torah scholars than from learning Torah from them' (*Berachos 7b*). Do we know what *kvod habriyos* is? We step on people; we step on people as if they're rugs! Do we know what *hakaras hatov* is? We can take and take and take and take and take and take, and then go like this" — here, R' Shlomo put his hand to his mouth with a napkin as if he were wiping his mouth after finishing a meal — "finished, and throw the *baal tova* away."

Rav Shlomo then gave some more background before relating one final vignette about Rav Yechiel Mordechai. Though most of Rav Yechiel Mordechai's children were subsequently slaughtered by the Nazis in Vilna, one son, Shneur, was learning in Eretz Yisrael at the time. In 1938 (5699), he was killed by the Arabs. A *shailah* arose: Would Rav Yechiel Mordechai, who had already endured other colossal losses in his life, be able to handle the news that his child had been taken? The *gedolim* of Eretz Yisrael determined that he would not be able to bear it; it was too dangerous to inform him. And since Rav Yechiel Mordechai was in America at the time, they assumed he would not find out.

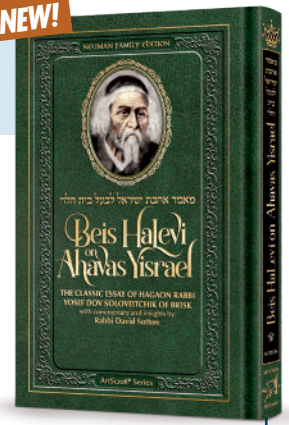
Soon after, an old *Yid* entered the Lomza Yeshiva office on the Lower East Side of Manhattan to give a donation. Not knowing that the *gedolim* had *paskened* to keep Rav Yechiel Mordechai in the dark regarding his son, the man began to console the *rosh yeshiva* on his loss. Upon hearing the man's soothing words, Rav Yechiel Mordechai immediately understood what had happened, yet his face did not betray him; he did not let on that the man had himself just delivered the devastating news. Rav Yechiel Mordechai continued speaking

continued on page 13



Rav Yechiel Mordechai Gordon

"THIS IS A YID."



Chazal teach two well-known lessons about the *Arba Minim* - *esrog*, *lulav*, *hadassim*, and *aravos*. Seemingly, these two lessons are unrelated, but when we delve a little deeper, we not only find the connection, but also a great lesson in *ahavas Yisrael*.

The first concept, from the *Midrash* (*Vayikra Rabbah* 30:12), is that the four species symbolize four different levels of Jews. The *Midrash* compares the qualities of taste and scent in each of these species to Torah and *mitzvos*. The *Etz Yosef* explains that taste symbolizes Torah, for taste is the main aspect of the fruit; *mitzvos* are compared to the aroma, since they are secondary to the Torah. The *esrog* has both a pleasant taste and a pleasing aroma, corresponding to the Jew who has both Torah and *mitzvos*. The fruit of the *lulav* has good taste, as it comes from a date tree. However, the *lulav* does not have an agreeable fragrance. Thus, the *lulav* corresponds to the Jew who has Torah but no *mitzvos*.

The *hadass* has a pleasant scent but no taste, corresponding to the Jew who has *mitzvos* but no Torah. Lastly, the *aravah* has neither taste nor smell, and therefore it corresponds to the Jew who is devoid of both Torah and *mitzvos*.

When we put all four species together, we are unifying the Jewish

people. The *Etz Yosef* notes that the Jew who is compared to the *aravah* is one who, despite his deficits, considers himself a part of the Jewish people. As mentioned, one who separates himself from the Jewish



THESE FOUR DIFFERENT TYPES OF JEWS ARE ALL PART OF ONE LARGE BODY CALLED KLAL YISRAEL.

people cannot join with us.

The second lesson from the *Midrash* (*ibid.* 30:14) is that the four species correspond to four body parts. The *esrog* corresponds to the heart, the *lulav* to the spine, the *hadass* to the eye, and the *aravah* to the lips. When we hold these four species together to shake them, we symbolize that we must praise Hashem with all of our being.

The *Yerushalmi* (*Nedarim* 9:4) teaches that the antidote for argument and hatred is the realization

that the Jewish people are like one body. If someone mistakenly hurts himself with his hand, for instance, by cutting his finger as he slices food, he won't become angry at the hand that misguided the knife and therefore hit it in retribution. He will only cause himself more pain.

Likewise, if one Jew causes another Jew pain, he should not be upset and seek vengeance, because he essentially would be seeking vengeance against his own body, as we are one entity.

Based on this concept, these two *Midrashim* are inherently connected. The lesson of the *Arba Minim* is that we must take all four types of Jews and unite them, but how do we do so? How can we really feel connected to someone who is so different - from a different culture, from a different type of community, from a different level of observance? For the solution, we look to the second *Midrash* - the four species correspond to four body parts. These four different types of Jews are all part of one large body called *Klal Yisrael*. When we internalize this message, we are on the path to true *ahavas Yisrael*. 📖

THE ESSENCE OF A YID continued from page 12

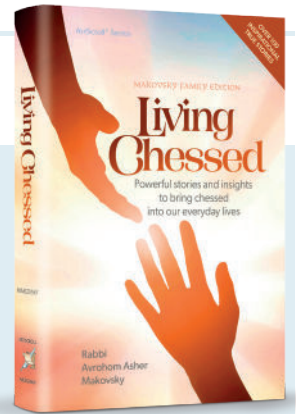
to him for 15 minutes, the visitor none the wiser.

Only after the man left did Rav Yechiel Mordechai fall down in a faint. It had obviously been too much for him to bear.

When he came to, another *rav* asked Rav Yechiel Mordechai, "Why did you spend another 15 minutes speaking to that *Yid* when it was so difficult for you?"

Rav Yechiel Mordechai was incredulous. "I should make a *Yid* feel that he made such a mistake? Can you imagine the pain that Jew would have felt had he found out that he was the one who told me the bad news?"

"This is another dimension of what a *Yid* is," Rav Shlomo declared, "what a *talmid chacham* is... *Nebach, ba'avonoseinu harabbim*, there aren't too many princes like that walking around today. 📖



The Tepliker Rav was one of the notable *poskim* of Yerushalayim. It was to him that Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach turned many times for clarification when Rav Shlomo Zalman was writing his *sefer*, *Meorei Eish*, in which he discusses the subject of electricity — at the time, a new and complex topic of *halachah*.

With the Tepliker Rav's reputation for the highest levels of Torah knowledge, it was no surprise that from *Yom Kippur* to *Erev Succos*, long lines of people formed at his door wishing to show him their *esrogim*. The Tepliker Rav not only knew *esrogim*, but treasured the *mitzvah* and always purchased for himself the most beautiful *Arba Minim* available.

Therefore, shockwaves were set off when on the first day of *Succos*, the Tepliker Rav asked someone, "Could you please give me your *esrog* as a present?" He phrased his request this way, because *halachah* dictates that on the first day of *Yom Tov*, a person may only fulfill the *mitzvah* with *Arba Minim* that he owns. The man understood the request, but was incredulous that the Tepliker Rav didn't have an *esrog*.

How could that be?

He gave the *rav* his *Arba Minim* and later set out to discover the story behind the strange request. Here is what he found out:

On *Erev Succos*, the Tepliker Rav's apartment had quieted down. The lines were gone and the *rav* sat quietly learning. Suddenly, he heard shrieking coming from somewhere in the apartment building. It sounded like someone was in trouble. He leaped out of his seat and ran out the door into the hallway. There, he saw an open door and could per-

ceive that the screaming was coming from within that apartment.

He knocked on the door. "Is everything okay? Is anyone hurt?" he asked.

The woman of the house was hysterical. "It's so important to my husband to get a good *esrog*," the woman explained "He bought the most expensive one the dealer was selling, and he warned all the children to stay away from it. He just left the house to do a few last-minute *Yom Tov* errands. My son took the *esrog* and began to play with it and it fell. A piece broke off. The *es-*



The Tepliker Rav

"TELL HIM THAT I CAME TO SEE HIS ESROG BECAUSE I HEARD IT WAS SO BEAUTIFUL."

rog is ruined, and I can only imagine what my husband is going to do when he finds out!"

"There's nothing to worry about," the *rav* told the woman. "Wait right here."

He ran to his own apartment and came back with his own *esrog*.

"Listen to me well," he told the woman. "Here's a beautiful *esrog*, but your husband obviously is not going to be misled into thinking it's his. Give me the broken *esrog*. I'll dispose of it. Take this new *esrog* and tell him as follows: Tell him that I came to see his *esrog* because I heard it was so beautiful. I looked at it carefully and I admired it, but I found a *shailah* that might have made it invalid. So, I took an extra *esrog* that some-

one gave me as a gift — a very special *esrog* — and gave it to him as a gift."

That is how the Tepliker Rav found himself without an *esrog* on *Succos*, and from this we learn what our priorities should be. Having a beautiful *esrog* is a worthy goal, but it's not the only *mitzvah* in the Torah. It doesn't supersede everything else. When faced with the choice between having a magnificent *esrog* or doing an exquisite act of *chessed*, the *rav* knew which to choose.

Along the same lines, there is a story of the *Chofetz Chaim* that took place while he was temporarily living in Russia during World War I. The community there needed *Arba Minim*, but they were impossible to obtain. Finally, one set was procured for the *Chofetz Chaim*, and on the first day of *Succos*, he used his *Arba Minim* and then gave everyone in *shul* a chance to do so as well. They were then returned to the *Chofetz Chaim* for use during *Hallel*, but he did not perform the customary shaking of the *lulav* during the *Hallel*.

Later, the *Chofetz Chaim* was asked why he did not take the opportunity to use the *Arba Minim* during *Hallel*, since everyone had already fulfilled the *mitzvah* with it. He answered that while shaking the *lulav* and *esrog* during *Hallel* is a beloved and important *minhag*, it is still a *minhag*. If some of the men in *shul* would have felt bereft watching the *Chofetz Chaim* do what they could not, he ex-

continued on page 15

THE MOST BEAUTIFUL FRUIT *continued from page 14*

plained, he would be transgressing a Torah prohibition against causing another pain. A *minhag* does not have the status of something for which a person can transgress a Torah *mitzva*; therefore, he refrained.

A similar story is told about Rav Eliyahu Eliezer Dessler: When his wife passed away, he began making *Kiddush* with a different *becher*. One of his children asked why he made this change. He explained that as a wedding gift, his father-in-law had given him the original *becher*, which fulfilled the *halachic shiur* of most *poskim*, but was not the *shiur* of the *Chazon Ish*. Rav Dessler used that *becher* throughout the years of his marriage. Eventually, he became the *mashgiach* of the Ponovezh Yeshivah in Bnei Brak, which was the domain of the *Chazon Ish*. At that point, he felt that he should rightfully change to the *Chazon Ish's shiur*, but he did not wish to risk hurting his wife's feelings by putting aside the *becher* that her father bought him. Once she was no longer living, he switched to a larger *becher*.



Rav Eliyahu Eliezer Dessler

Minhagim and *chumros* are pre-

ciuous, wonderful ways to elevate our *avodas Hashem*, and we must take them seriously. However, unlike *mitzvos*, if there is a pressing need, we are allowed to be lenient, and the greatest, most pressing need a Jew has is to avoid hurting someone's feelings. It was pressing enough for the Tepliker Rav to give away his beautiful *esrog* and not have one of his own, ensuring peace in a family.

To be sure, putting aside a *minhag* is not something to be taken lightly. We have to determine that our situation meets the criteria for a pressing need that allows us to be lenient. This is not something we should decide for ourselves, but rather, it is a question for a *rav*. Our part is to develop the *seichel* to know that the question should be asked; we should not just plow ahead with our way of doing things, numb to the fact that someone else will suffer as a result.

May we all find the sensitivity and *seichel* (common sense) to serve Hashem in a way that pleases Him most — by protecting the feelings of others. 📖

YOM TOV WITH RAV CHAIM *continued from page 5*

they first began the *shidduch* process.

Avraham's* daughter was no longer very young. A *shidduch* had been suggested for her, a *bachur* with a good reputation, but he was not the type of *metzuyan* (outstanding student) her father had hoped she would marry. Should they proceed with this less-than-stellar suggestion?

The *Chafetz Chaim* responded by noting the difference between searching for an *esrog* a few weeks before *Succos* and searching for one on *Erev Yom Tov*. A few weeks before *Yom Tov*, one can afford to

be very selective and reject anything that is less than perfect. However, on *Erev Succos*, with time running out, one's goal is to obtain an *esrog* that is *halachically* acceptable and, if possible, beautiful—but it does not have to be perfect.

“So, too, with *shidduchim*,” said the *Chafetz Chaim*. “Your daughter has already been in *shidduchim* for many years. Therefore, she and you should be prepared to consider a *shidduch* that is good for her, although it may not be exactly what you had originally been seeking.” 📖

Mazel tov on the forthcoming completion of *Seder Moed!*

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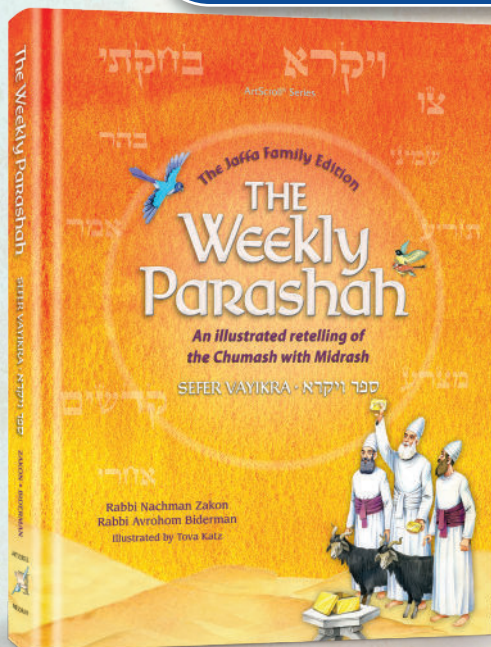
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סוכות



Arba Minim Messages

▶ The Arba Minim teaches Jews to unite. Each of the Four Species symbolizes a different kind of Jew.

The **ESROG** has both a good taste and a lovely fragrance: this symbolizes the tzaddik, who is both learned in Torah and does good deeds.

Jews who study Torah but don't do good deeds are like the **LULAV**. It has no fragrance, but it comes from a tree that grows dates, which have a good taste.

A Jew who does good deeds but doesn't learn Torah is like the **HADASSIM**. They have a pleasant smell but don't taste good.

Finally, there are Jews who don't study Torah and don't do good deeds, like the **ARAVAH**, which has no taste and no smell.

The message is: To do the mitzvah, we need all Arba Minim. In the same way, all kinds of Jews are important. We must all get along with each other. This means everyone in your class should work together.

▶ The shapes of the Arba Minim are similar to parts of the body. The lulav is like the backbone. Hadas leaves are eye-shaped, aravos leaves are shaped like lips, and the esrog has the shape of a heart. The message is: Remember to use our whole body and all our senses to do what Hashem wants.

▶ The Arba Minim symbolize the Avos and Imahos.

Avraham and Sarah, who were blessed with long lives and wealth, are like the esrog, which grows on the tree, even for years!

Yitzchak, who was tied down (in Hebrew, the word "kafus") as a korban, is symbolized by the lulav, which the Torah calls kapos temarim. Rivkah, his wife, gave birth to both a tzaddik (Yaakov) and a rasha (Eisav). She was like the date palm, which produces luscious fruit, but also has leaves with sharp points that can hurt.

Yaakov had 13 children, seven of them with his wife Leah. They are represented by the hadas branch, which is covered with many leaves.

Yosef, the first of Yaakov's sons to die, and his mother, Rachel, who also died young, are symbolized by the aravah, which is the first of the Arba Minim to wither and die.



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THE WEEKLY QUESTION

Question for Succos:

The plant of one of the Arba Minim is burnt during the planting process. Which is it and why?

Kids, please ask your parents to email the answer to shabbosquestion@artscroll.com by this Wednesday to be entered into a weekly raffle to win a \$36 ARTSCROLL GIFT CARD! Be sure to include your full name, city, and contact info. Names of winners will appear in a future edition. HINT: The answer can be found in *The Jaffa Family Edition Weekly Parashah*.

The winner of the Nitzavim-Vayeilech question is: MENDY MORGENSTERN, Lakewood, NJ



The question was: What is the shortest parashah in the Torah? The answer is: Vayeilech, which has only 30 pesukim.

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