



PIRCHEI Weekly

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סוכות ב' ימי יום טוב: וידבר ה'... שור או כבש... שבת: קהלת... ויאמר משה אל ה'...
הפטרה יום א: הנה יום בא... (זכריה יד:א-כד) יום ב: ויקהלו אל המלך שלמה... (מלאכים א ח:ב-כא)
שבת: והיה ביום ההוא... (יחזקאל לח:יח-לט:טז)
דף יומי: בבא בתרא קי"ד-קט"ז ערוב תבשילין ביום ה הלל שלם לדוד ה' אורי...
חג סוכות שמח!

Torah Thoughts

צא מדיירת קבע ושב בדירת עראי (סוכה ב.)
Leave the permanent dwelling and settle in a temporary dwelling.

There is much symbolism in the requirement for a **סוכה** to be a temporary dwelling. **סוכות** follows the forty-day period of **תשובה** that begins on **ראש חודש אלול** and ends with the conclusion of **יום כיפור** — it is an opportune time to absorb a fundamental lesson of the **סוכה** — to consider one's time on this earth as temporary. Although a person needs a place to live, clothing to wear and food to eat, this should not be the focus of his existence. He should realize that this world is a temporary dwelling.

There is another way to explain these words. Occasionally one meets a person whose entire life revolves around himself. His "permanent dwelling" is his own mind. From time to time, he thinks of other people and even gives up some of his own desires to fulfill their needs. This is his "temporary dwelling."

The **נְמָנָא** is telling us that the underlying theme of **סוכות** is, **שְׂמֵחָתֵינוּ**, the season of our rejoicing, is to leave one's permanent dwelling and settle in a temporary dwelling. This means that if a person truly desires to attain happiness and satisfaction in life, he must spend more time thinking about the needs of other people, and not be self-centered. By trying to bring **שְׂמֵחָה** into the lives of those around him, especially the unfortunate and forsaken, he will bring joy into his own life as well.

The **מְדַרְשׁ** (לד) **מְדַרְשׁ** says: A person does not leave this world with even half his desires fulfilled. This is perhaps an

overstatement; many people go through life without attaining even a tenth of what they want. Life is a continuous string of hardships, disappointments, frustration and misery — if their lives revolve around themselves. However, if a person concentrates on helping others overcome their problems and lightening their "peckel," he himself will feel a sense of joy in his own life.

It is human nature for a person to be self-centered. A baby thinks only of itself. It is not in the least concerned that its crying at night will deprive its tired, overworked parents of their sleep. As a child develops physically, his mind also matures, and he is taught to think about others, not only about himself.

Yet for many people this trait remains underdeveloped. The **גְּמָרָא** (**סוכה יד.**) says that a Jew is required to emulate the ways of His Creator. **ד'** created His world in order to bestow kindness on His creations. He obviously considers the continuing existence of the world to be worthwhile, as we say, *In His goodness, He renews daily, uninterrupted, the work of creation* (**תְּפִלַּת שְׁחִירִית**). Thus, a Jew should strive to ease the burdens that lie so heavily upon the shoulders of those around him.

Helping others is the formula for a life of **שְׂמֵחָה**. The theme of **סוכות** is that one must leave his permanent dwelling — his own mind — and settle in a temporary dwelling — thinking of others. In doing so, he will find contentment in his own life and will enjoy a year-round **שְׂמֵחָתֵינוּ**.

Adapted from: Rav Pam on the Festivals (with kind permission from ArtScroll)



Yahrzeits of Gedolim

י"ט תשרי 5480 - 5558 1720 - 1797
גרי"א/א (known as the Vilna Gaon), born in Vilnius, Lithuania, to **ר' שלמה זלמן** and **טרפנא**, displayed extraordinary talent while still a young child. He married his first wife **חנה** at age 17. By age 20, **רבנים** were submitting their difficult **הלכה** problems to the **גרי"א**. His writings are on **תניין** (**אדְרַת אֵלֶיָּהוּ**) **תניין** and many more **אחרונים** (**באור הגר"א**) **שְׁלַחַן ערוך**, **תלמוד ירושלמי**, **בבלי** including **הלכות התורה**. None of his writings were published during his lifetime. Though he lived during the period known as the **אחרונים**, he is held by many to have the authority of the **ראשונים**. One of his most famous **תלמידים** was **ר' Chaim Volozhin**, who established the learning method used in many of today's **ישיבות**.

לעיני ה' ישעיהו דוב ע"ה בן יבלחטי"א יצחק צבי ניי

Gedolim Glimpses

When he was lying on his deathbed, the Vilna Gaon **זצ"ל**'s family called for the local doctor, **ד"ר Yaakov Lubashitz ז"ל**. The Vilna doctor checked him over. As he bent down to listen to the **גאון**'s heartbeat, he heard the **גאון** quietly mumbling to himself. After the doctor straightened up, one of those present asked him nervously, "וּוּו האלט ער? — Where is he holding [health-wise]?" The doctor smiled and said, "ער האלט אין מסַקַת כְּלִים!" — He is holding in **מסַקַת כְּלִים**!"



לעיני ר' ישראל בן אברהם ז"ל

אחינו כל בית ישראל, הגתונים בערה ובשביה, העומדים בין בים ובין ביבשה, המקום ירחם עליהם ויציאם מערה לרנחה, ומאפלה לאורה, ומשעבוד לגאולה, השתא בעגלא ובזמן קריב, ונאמר אמנו:

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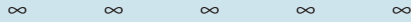


Sukkah Protection

... כי בסכות הושבתי את בני ישראל ...

... because I caused Israel to dwell in sukkot (Maggid Shimon) (ויקרא כג:מוג)

The Gemara (Sukkah 11a:) explains that in the opinion of Rav, the Clouds of Glory, the protective clouds were the protective clouds of glory. The Gemara (Rashbi 11a:) relates how when King Arrod died, these clouds of protection left them. At that moment the king of Arrod was first able to notice the Israelites, for until that time they were totally hidden by the protective clouds and were invisible.



The Potaker, Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Horowitz - a descendent of the Baal Shem Tov—lived for many years on the Lower East Side of New York. Living in the vicinity of the great sage Rav Moshe Feinstein, gave him the opportunity to form a close relationship with the Gdolei Hador and the two came to admire and respect one another. There was one thing that had a special meaning to both of them.

Every year, on the third day of the festival of Sukkot, R' Horowitz celebrated the Vilna Gaon's Yahrzeit with a large, festive banquet. He began this unusual custom as a rabbi in Europe before WWII, since one of his favored areas of study was gaining an understanding of the Gaon's commentaries.

One year during the feast, R' Horowitz remarked, "I truly feel as if I know the Vilna Gaon personally." It had been more than 180 years since the Gaon's passing, yet as R' Horowitz explained, "The Gaon, like all the sages before and after him, lives on through his teachings. Because I have spent so many years delving into the Gaon's works, I truly feel as if I have come to know him."

R' Horowitz then went on to relate a remarkable episode that had occurred toward the beginning of World War II.

It was almost Sukkot. The Jewish community in Potak had received word that the Nazis were approaching their town and were

ready to storm the city. The rabbi made an unusual announcement to his close family: "It is almost Sukkot. We must build a sukkah."

Some of the family were in shock and confusion. How could they put up a sukkah? Their lives were at stake. Building a sukkah would surely attract the Nazis' attention and wrath.

But the rabbi insisted. "Our sages say that the sukkah provides protection, and therefore it is clear that we must build one. Especially now, in our state of grave danger, a sukkah is vital to our survival." The rabbi left the bunker and searched for an opening in the trees under which to erect a sukkah. Finally he found a small break in the trees and erected a small sukkah, just the minimum size to fulfill the mitzvah. He took out the loaf of bread he had saved for this purpose and ate it quickly in his sukkah.

In the darkness, he did not realize that the "opening in the trees" was a path the Nazis had bulldozed into the forest. Before he knew what was happening columns of jeeps and soldiers were passing inches from where he sat frozen in his place, davening silently that the mitzvah of his sukkah protect him. He could see the troops walking right beside his small sukkah and was seized with fear. At any moment, he would be noticed. At any moment, a Nazi soldier would spray him with bullets from his gun. The next moment might be his last.

The moment never came. The long, agonizing minutes felt like an eternity. Yet they passed, and still he sat in the sukkah, unable to understand how the troops could have ignored his presence right there in the forest. The sounds of the passing soldiers diminished and finally faded away. He had witnessed the words in (115:5), "they have eyes but they do not see."

Rabbi Horowitz then asked his audience, "And do you know what day it was when this miracle happened to us? It was the third day of the festival of Sukkot—the Yahrzeit of the Vilna Gaon."

Story adapted from: *Visions of Greatness* (with kind permission of CIS)

An Ahavas Chesed Moment

ספר אהבת חסד - חלק ב' פרק כב

*The Chofetz Chaim explains that the mitzvah of lending items is part of the mitzvah of ahavas chesed. The Gemara (Sukkah 11a:) teaches that צדקה is only with money and גמילות חסדים is both with using your money or body (i.e. help carrying a package). The Chofetz Chaim explains that גמילות חסדים also includes lending items. There are times when lending also includes the mitzvah of ahavas chesed, for instance lending a daily laborer an item to assist in his work. The Chofetz Chaim enumerates daily examples of lending items, e.g. lending a comb, towel, etc. Each time you fulfill a mitzvah of ahavas chesed.

*This is intended only as a synopsis. Review of the ספר אהבת חסד is far more extensive and appropriate. The Chofetz Chaim continues that the mitzvah of ahavas chesed of lending is applicable to any person, even the poorest of the poor. True, an ahavas chesed may be unable to contribute financially, but which ahavas chesed cannot help a yid with a small חסד that requires little cost (e.g. lending a pen, carrying change in case someone needs).

Questions on קהלת

1. דברי קהלת starts with the words קהלת קהלת. What is the general rule when a נבואה starts with the word קהלת?
2. What was the reason why שלמה המלך was referred to by the title of קהלת?



א:א אגבט אגבט (א:א)

1: Whenever a נבואה starts with the words קהלת קהלת it means that what will follow will be an admonition (a warning) (א:א אגבט אגבט).
2: The root קהלת is from the root קהל - gathering - either because he amassed many types of wisdom or these words were said in public.

- The לולב should be tied in 3 places, with the last binding at least 3-4 inches from the top of the שדרה, spine from which all the leaves grow out, NOT the top of the לולב.
- For סכך made from bamboo poles, some poles should be at right angles to the rest to break up any long, uninterrupted air space.

Reviewed by R' Gedalyahu Eckstein

*Since we only discuss a few הלכות, it is important to consider these הלכות in the context of the bigger picture. Use them as a starting point for further in-depth study.



Focus on Middos



Dear תלמיד,

In 5551 (1791), the Vilna Gaon זצ"ל sent a message to R' Yaakov Kranz זצ"ל, the Dubno Maggid (5500-5564/1740-1804), to please come and revive his הַנֶּפֶשׁ, *tired soul*. The two shared an unusually close relationship. It is said that the מגיד originally met the גאון many years before, in 5518 (1758), when he was 18 years old. At that time, the גאון gave him special instructions and set him on his path to become a successful מגיד.

The only letters that were ever found in which the Vilna Gaon wrote terms of endearment and longing were the ones written to the Dubno Maggid. The Maggid's warm, outgoing personality and בין אדם בין אדם were matched by his ראת תורת שמים. He was a גאון in both תורה ונסתר, *the revealed and secret parts of Torah*, and he refrained from any worldly pleasures or honors.

There is a well-known episode about an unusual debate that is said to have taken place between the Vilna Gaon and the Dubno Maggid. On one occasion,

the גאון asked him, "You give מוסר everywhere you go; why don't you give me מוסר as well?" The מגיד grew ill at ease. How could he rebuke the גאון? But the גאון was insistent. Finally, the מגיד spoke: "רבי ומורי, you sit at home with your doors closed. Is it any real קונץ, *wonder* (literally, trick) that you are a צדיק? Perhaps if you went out into world you would be a different person!"

The Vilna Gaon is said to have cried for a few moments. He then responded that the basic imperative for a Jew is to become a תלמיד חכם. It is not written anywhere that a person has any obligation to produce קונצן, *magic*, in order to become a תלמיד חכם.

My תלמיד, the גאון and the מגיד both left their legacy in תורה ומסורה that only a few people in the centuries after them ever left. Both of these men served ד' to the best of their ability and were successful accordingly. ד' is only asking you to be the best you!

הי זכרו ברוד!

בְּיָדֵינוּ, Your רבי
A letter from a Rebbi, based on interviews

Understanding Davening

... הושע נא — Please save...

These two words are usually printed as a single word; however, they really are 2 separate words. The word נא = 51. The 51st day after the beginning of אלוּל is הושענא רבה. On that day we add many extra תפלות and have many מנהגים similar to יום כפור and ראש השנה. We are also judged for מים, water, which means our פְּרָקָה, at this time. Therefore, we are asking ה' to save us on this 51st day. The word הושענא usually refers to the bundle of willow branches which we קלאפ with on הושענא רבה. The גימטריה of the word הושענא = 432, which is the same as הושענא כי לא = 432, עזבונו חסדיך ד' אלקינו will never forsake us ד' [when You show us Your mercy] אלקינו [even if You appear as ד'].

The learning never ends ...

שיבת חול המועד

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Come one, come all! Bring your friends!

For the times and location nearest you please contact your local Pirchei branch coordinator. Special prizes for boys who attend all 4 days!

Sage Sayings



The Vilna Gaon's life was totally dedicated to תורה and עבודה. He inspired his תלמידים to do the same. His תלמיד, R' Chaim Volozhin זצ"ל opened the Volozhin ישיבה which became the model for ישיבות to the present day. It is said that he would offer words of encouragement when he heard the term "Vilna Gaon": "דער וואָס וויל נאָך, וועט זיין אַ גאון!" — If you only have the will, you too will become a גאון!

Source: 2,000 Years of Jewish History (ArtScroll)

LEARNING FROM OUR LEADERS

ONE YEAR, RAV YAKOV WAS PRIVILEGED TO HAVE A SON OF RAV MICHEL YEHUDAH LEFKOWITZ IN HIS CLASS.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF AN ESROG OVER A LEMON?

REBBI, ONCE I SAW MY FATHER CUT OPEN AN ESROG FROM THE ESROG TREE IN HIS YARD. HE SHOWED SOMEONE FIVE DIFFERENCES...

THAT YEAR, BEFORE SUCCOS, THERE WAS A KNOCK AT THE DOOR.

MOREINU HORAV MICHEL YEHUDAH! ...WHAT AN HONOR!... PLEASE COME INSIDE. IS EVERYTHING OK?

B"H EVERYTHING IS FINE. I JUST CAME TODAY TO SHOW MY GRATITUDE TO YOU FOR TEACHING TORAH TO MY SON THIS YEAR.

WOW! THIS IS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL ESROG!... WHAT DID I DO TO GET SUCH APPRECIATION SO EARLY IN THE YEAR, YOUR SON IS SUCH AN ASSET AND HE SHARES HIS KNOWLEDGE WITH SUCH HUMILITY!...

TAKE IT, THIS IS OUR HAKORAS HATOV FOR BEING SUCH A SPECIAL REBBE. CHAS SAMEACH...

THE NEXT YEAR, A FEW WEEKS BEFORE SUCCOS, THERE WAS ONCE AGAIN A KNOCK AT RAV YAKOV'S DOOR...

HI! WE WOULD LIKE EXPRESS OUR GRATITUDE ONCE MORE...PLEASE TAKE THIS. IT'S ONE OF MY BEST ESROGIM!

BUT MOREINU HORAV, I'M NOT EVEN YOUR SON'S REBBI THIS YEAR!

LAST YEAR, MY SON BECAME A BETTER PERSON IN YOUR CLASS. THAT DIDN'T CHANGE JUST BECAUSE YOU DON'T TEACH HIM ANYMORE. YOU HAVE PROVEN YOURSELF TO BE A WONDERFUL MELAMED! CHAS SAMEACH!

THE SAME SCENE REPEATED THE FOLLOWING YEAR AND RAV MICHEL YEHUDAH LEFKOWITZ CONTINUED TO DELIVER FINE ESROGIM TO RAV YAKOV FOR MANY YEARS AFTER.

I CANNOT THANK YOU ENOUGH FOR BEING SUCH A WONDERFUL MELAMED TO MY SON. PLEASE TAKE THIS. I CHOSE IT MYSELF...JUST FOR YOU!

MOREINU HORAV MICHEL YEHUDAH, YOUR KIND ACT OF HAKORAS HATOV CARRIES ME ALL THROUGHOUT THE YEAR... THANK YOU!

LEFKOWITZ WAS BORN IN VOLOZHYN, BELARUS TO (NEARLY 80) AND (IT WAS A SECOND MARRIAGE FOR BOTH). HIS FATHER BEFORE HIS DEATH. AS A CHILD, HE LEARNED IN RAMÉILLES UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF HEIMAN. IN 1939, HE EMIGRATED TO ISRAEL WITH HIS MOTHER. HE LEARNED IN AND WAS CLOSE TO THE SON OF RAV YAKOV LEFKOWITZ, RAV YAKOV LEFKOWITZ'S DAUGHTER OF RAMÉILLES. IN 1940, HE MARRIED THE DAUGHTER OF RAV YAKOV LEFKOWITZ, RAV YAKOV LEFKOWITZ'S DAUGHTER OF RAMÉILLES. HE THEN BEGAN GIVING ESROGIM TO RAV YAKOV LEFKOWITZ. ALONG WITH RAV YAKOV LEFKOWITZ, HE BECAME ONE OF THE LEADING ESROGIM (PONEVEZH) IN 1954. HIS SON, RAV YAKOV LEFKOWITZ, VISITED HIS FATHER EVERY YEAR. HE WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN SAVING THE LINEAGE OF THE LEFKOWITZ, WHICH WAS CERTIFIED AS A LEFKOWITZ BY THE LEFKOWITZ HIMSELF. A MEMBER OF THE LEFKOWITZ, AND A MEMBER OF THE LEFKOWITZ ORGANIZATION, HE PLAYED A LEADING ROLE IN THE FIGHT FOR TRUE EDUCATION IN ISRAEL AND TALMUDIC TORAH IN ISRAEL. HE WAS A LEADER FOR THOUSANDS OF ISRAELI TORAH STUDENTS AND A LEADER FOR THOUSANDS OF ISRAELI TORAH STUDENTS.



כ"ו סיון 1913-2011 5673-5771