

# Succos Kinder Torah

Dedicated in Loving Memory of Ralph and Anita Siegel ob"m.

## Going Up

"E veryone, please settle down. I am about to make Kiddush."

"I am so excited, Abba. The first night of Succos is so special. We worked so hard to prepare for this Yom Tov. Now we can enjoy ourselves in our beautiful Succah."

"Will you feel the same way tomorrow night, Avi? Or will you be happier? Perhaps some of the excitement will wear off, and you will be less happy."

"I don't know, Abba."

"This is actually a fundamental difference in one's outlook on life."

"That sounds pretty deep, Abba."

"It is Avi. If you look into the *korbonos* (sacrifices) that were brought in the Beis HaMikdash during the seven days of Succos, you see an unusual thing."

"Yes, the first day, thirteen bulls were brought as an *olah* offering. The next day, only twelve bulls were sacrificed. The number went down every day until the last day, only seven bulls were brought."

"I see that you know parashas Pinchas very well, Avi. Now let us see if you are equally good in math. What was the total number of bulls brought the entire seven days of Succos?"

"Seventy. Rashi relates that they represent the seventy nations of the world."

"E xcellent. Rav Dessler has a deep insight on this subject. The nations of the world have a superficial relationship with Hashem. If they serve Him at all, their interest diminishes with time. They may be excited at the beginning of the holiday, but they soon become accustomed to the festive meals, and quickly lose interest. Therefore, the sacrifices brought on their behalf diminish as the holiday progresses, just as their shallow *avodah* (service) peters out."

"What about our Avodas Hashem during the Chag, Abba?"

"Rav Dessler continues to explain that we are the opposite. We let Hashem come into the depths of our souls. Seven consecutive days of Succos, filled with mitzvos and holiness, make a deep impression upon us. Our *avodah* improves from day to day, as we climb the ladder of *ruchnius* (spirituality)."

"Can you give an example, Abba?"

"Yes, Avi. The *ushpizin*, Avraham, Yitzchak, Yaakov, Yosef, Moshe, Aharon, and Dovid are our holy guests in the Succah. The particular guest of each day reflects the special *ruchnius* of that day. Dovid HaMelech is our guest on Hoshana Rabba, the last day of Succos. This day is truly the climax of the chag, with its all-night learning, pre-dawn immersion in the *mikveh*, lengthy prayer at sunrise (including seven *hakafos* and the beating of the *hoshanos* at the end), and emotional farewell to the Succah at the end of the day. Our *ushpizi*, Dovid HaMelech,

represents *malchus* - completion. The *melech* is the pinnacle of the nation. He brings out the *kochos* (strengths) of the individual citizens, unites them, and focuses them on the goal. This unification is the highest level of *avodah*. So you see that our *avodah* comes to a climax at the end of the chag, Avi."

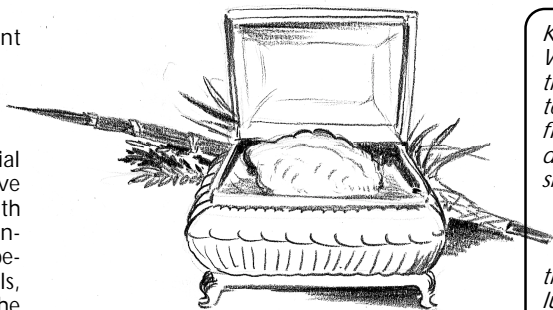
"Now I have the answer to your first question, Abba. B'ezrat Hashem I will be more excited with each coming day. During this *Z'man Simchaseinu* (time of our happiness) I will try to be happier and happier each day."

"May this be your happiest Succos ever, Avi."

"Amen."

### Kinderlach . . .

*Succos is just beginning. We are all very excited. Don't let that excitement wear off. Let each day build on the previous one. Learn about the ushpizin, and the special character of the day. Let Hashem's Holiness fill your soul as you sit in the "shade of the Shechina" in the Succah. Rejoice at night at the Simchas Beis HaShoeva. Shake the lulav, enjoy the seudos. Join Avi and make this your best Succos ever.*



## Shake Away the Bad

"... V etzivanu al netilas lulav."

*The father rotated his esrog so the pittam pointed up, held it next to his lulav, and proceeded to shake it slowly and deliberately. Forward and back, three times, he shook it. He pointed toward each of the four points of the compass, then up and down.*

"Abba, may I ask you something?"

"Sure, Chaim."

"You fulfilled the mitzvah as soon as you held the *lulav* with the *esrog* pointing up."

"Correct."

"Why did you shake it in six directions afterward?"

"Excellent question, Chaim. The Gemara (Succah 37b) explains that shaking it in four directions stops damaging winds. And shaking it up and down stops harmful dew."

"How can the lulav do that, Abba?"

"Another excellent question, Chaim. Rav

Eliyahu Kitov relates that during the festival of Succos, the world is judged for water."

"Really?"

"Yes. All the rain and dew that will fall all over the world during the upcoming year is decreed on Succos."

"That water is crucial to all life on earth."

"Exactly, Chaim. A lot is at stake here. That is why we take our *arba minim* — *lulav*, *esrog*, *hadassim*, and *aravos* — all of which need large amounts of water to grow. We wave them and say to Hashem, "Just as it is impossible for these *arba minim* to live without water, so too is it impossible for the world to live without water. Just as You provided these *arba minim* with water, so too provide the whole world with water. But do not let bad winds or dew cause damage. Rather, let the water bring only blessing to the world."

"I see, Abba. Water can bring blessing or destruction, depending upon how it comes. We gently shake our *lulav*, in order that Hashem should gently shake the water down to earth."

"Now you've got the hang of it, Chaim."

"May we have just *gishmei bracha* (rain which brings blessing), Abba."

"Amen."

### Kinderlach . . .

*Water can take many forms. A gentle rain that waters the crops and fills up the cisterns is a blessing. Hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, blizzards, and hailstorms are all damaging. When they strike, they can shake crops, trees, and even homes. Also people are sometimes shaken with fear. Therefore we gently shake the lulav, to prevent big shakeups in the weather. Kinderlach, shake your lulavim deliberately and with good kavannah (intention). You can make the world a nicer, safer, wealthier place to live in.*

### Parasha Questions

- What is the maximum height of a Succah? (ibid 733:1) Minimum height? (ibid 733:9)
- How do we shake the lulav? (ibid 751:9,10)
- How many *hakafos* do we make each day? On Hoshana Rabba? (ibid 760:1)

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