



⚠ SUKKOS BREAK The Kollel is on recess from Sunday, October 1 till Tuesday morning, October 17.

DELVING DEEPER

Sukkos, Then and Now

RABBI DOVID SPETNER



TO US, SUKKOS IS DEFINED BY SITTING IN THE *sukkah* and taking the *Arba'a Minim* (the Four Species—"lulav" and *esrog*). But when did the Jews first keep Sukkos in this way?

This is a question that commentators have wrestled with for centuries.

A novel approach was suggested by Rabbi Menachem Tzvi Taksin (a well-respected *darshan*, expositor, of nineteenth century Lithuania—his writings have approbations from the the *Ohr Someach* and the *Beis haLevi*).

In the Torah reading on the first day of Sukkos, taken from Parashas Emor (Vayikra 22:26–23:44), the Torah introduces us to the Jewish holidays. With the description of each Yom Tov, the Torah includes every mitzvah which is specific to it, e.g., matzos on Pesach; the offering of the *Sh'tei haLechem* (Two Loaves) on Shavu'os; shofar on Rosh Hashanah; and fasting on Yom Kippur.

However, when we get to Sukkos we find

an interesting thing. In verses 34–36, we are told to celebrate the holiday of Sukkos for seven days; to refrain from work on the first day; and then to close with an additional holiday on the eighth day, again refraining from work. We seem to have fully addressed the holiday of Sukkos, without any command to sit in a *sukkah* or take a *lulav*!

The Torah then summarizes:

These are Hashem's holidays...
aside from Hashem's Sabbaths...
(23:37–38)

However, after this summary, as a sort of postscript, the Torah describes the mitzvos of *Arba'a Minim* and sitting in the *sukkah*.

How are we to understand this splitting of the holiday of Sukkos into two parts, the primary one being just having a holiday, and the postscript with its mitzvos?

Another interesting observation is that

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A TIMELY HALACHA

RABBI CHAIM HEINEMANN

There is a widely accepted custom to circle the *Bimah* (the lectern where the Torah is read) once on every day of Sukkos, while holding the *Arba'a Minim*. The special prayers that are recited while making the circuit are called *Hoshanos* (derived from the Hebrew words "*Hosha na*—bring us salvation, please").

This unique custom developed as a substitute for another custom during Temple times, when the Kohanim would place willow branches alongside the Altar, sound the shofar, and circle the Altar while praying "*Ana, Hashem, hoshi'a na*—please, G-d, save us..." (T'hilim 118:25). On the final day of Sukkos, the Kohanim would circle the Altar seven times. The later Prophets instituted that this ceremony should be observed elsewhere, as well. Instead of circling the Altar, Jews in synagogues around the world make

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A RIDDLE FOR YOU

What, besides the *mon* (manna), tasted like *mon*?

The answer will appear in the next issue.

LAST WEEK'S RIDDLE:

Q What blessing will never be said on a Sunday, Tuesday, or Friday?

A "*Borei M'orei ha'Aish*," is said over a flame after both Shabbos and Yom Kippur. Yom Kippur never falls on Sunday, Tuesday, or Friday. 🕊

THIS WEEK IN JEWISH HISTORY

RABBI MOSHE TZVI CRYSTAL

On **12 Tishrei, 5547 (1786)**, the town of Aaronsburg, Pennsylvania was founded by Aaron Levy, making it the first settlement in America to be named after a Jew. Aaron Levy was Dutch; he came to America in 1760 at the age of eighteen, eventually becoming an Indian trader and, later, a land speculator in central Pennsylvania. During the Revolutionary War, he helped furnish the Continental Army with supplies and lent significant amounts of money to the Continental Congress, most of it never repaid. Levy was also a founding member of Congregation Mikveh Israel of Philadelphia, one of the oldest congregations in America. Levy himself planned all the streets of Aaronsburg, with the grand hope that it would be the county seat and, possibly, Pennsylvania's capital. Levy named the town after himself, as he had no children to perpetuate his name. Ironically, Jews never settled in Aaronsburg. 🕊

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A TIMELY HALACHA

CONTINUED

a circuit (a *hakkafa*, in Hebrew) around a Torah scroll held near the *Bimah*—for, after the destruction of the Temple, the Torah brings atonement the way the Altar once did. (*P'ri M'gadim* 660:1)

A shul that has no Torah scroll has no reason to circle the *Bimah*! Likewise, an individual praying in his own house would not walk around his table (or any other piece of furniture).

There is a debate over whether or not one fulfills the mitzvah of taking up the *Arba'a Minim* if he holds them all with one hand. However, during these *hakkafos* it's okay to hold the *lulav* and *esrog* with one hand.

If everyone has a set of *Arba'a Minim* to carry, authorities disagree over whether someone should forgo the circuit and instead hold the Torah beside the *Bimah* (*Kovetz Halachos* 11:6), or the Torah should just be placed on the *Bimah* (*Haliachos Shlomo* 12:1).

A mourner, or someone who doesn't have *Arba'a Minim*, does not walk around the *Bimah*. However, he can recite the *Hoshanos*.

There are divergent customs as to whether *Hoshanos* are done after the *Mussaf* service or immediately after *Hallel*, which is also recited with the *Arba'a Minim* in hand. Each shul should follow its custom. 🕒

GREAT ACTS OF ORDINARY PEOPLE

YOSEF WAS SUFFERING. HE WAS A SICK MAN—and on top of it all, his employer could not afford to keep Yosef on the payroll any longer. Yosef knew that he couldn't expect more from his boss; after all, he had been absent for much of the past year, and his employer had graciously continued to pay his salary. But being let go now stung him deeply, especially with the burden of supporting his family.

Yosef's one consolation was that, even in his weakened state, he could still attend the Thursday night class at his shul.

One week, his former boss called to find out how he was feeling, and he mentioned that he would be delivering that week's class. Still smarting from his pain, Yosef called his

friend Nachman, who was also a regular at the shiur, and told him who would be speaking that week.

Nachman, galvanized by his friend's hurt, proceeded to inform everyone in shul that Thursday night that they should show solidarity with Yosef and not attend.

Yosef's boss arrived to deliver the class and waited. He had been told it was regularly attended by thirty to forty men, but before him was only Shimshon, who had organized the class.

Five minutes went by.

Ten minutes went by, and still no one else had shown up.

Yosef's boss, figuring out what happened, was ready to leave, but Shimshon pleaded

with him to wait another five minutes. He ran out the door to look for others.

Downstairs, Shimshon found Yosef. "Yosef, the man is humiliated! Please come." "But he hurt me, too!"

Shimshon looked at Yosef in his suffering, and he told him, "Please, Yosef! *Chazal* (our Sages) tell us that someone who forgives when he is hurt by another gets a tremendous reward from Hashem. Please come upstairs. If you come, others will come, too."

Yosef struggled to his feet and slowly walked up the stairs to the shiur.

His boss was shocked.

The other men slowly trickled in, as well. The shiur began.

And Yosef recovered. 🕒



at Yeshivas
Bein haZ'manim



Schepp
nachas!

...Then and Now CONTINUED

when the Torah first mentions Sukkos, it describes it as beginning

On the fifteenth day of **this** seventh month (*lachodesh hash'vi'i hazeh*)... (23:34)

On the other hand, when it turns to describing the holiday's mitzvos, the Torah simply describes Sukkos as taking place

On the fifteenth day of the seventh month... (23:39)

Rav Taksin suggests that the first group of verses are describing the holiday of Sukkos as it was to be celebrated *in the Wilderness*. In

the Wilderness, they would not sit in *sukkos*!

The whole purpose for which the Torah tells us to sit in a sukkah is to remind the Jewish people of the way they were protected by Hashem in the Wilderness. The *Arba'a Minim*, as well, are introduced as being taken

B'ospechem es t'vu'as ha'Aretz—when you gather the fruits of the Land... (23:39)

This indicates that the mitzvah would only apply after the nation reached the Land of Israel.

Hence the holiday of Sukkos in the Wilderness was more like our *Sh'mini Atzeres*—a Yom Tov without mitzvos! 🕒