

# LAMPLIGHTER

12 Tishrei  
Parshas  
Ha'azinu

1366

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## LIVING WITH THE TIMES

The festival of Sukkot, which follows Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, marks the beginning of the true days of rejoicing of the month of Tishrei, coming as it does after the solemnity of the High Holidays. Although Sukkot has many similarities and characteristics in common with Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, it is actually the culmination and fulfillment of the first two holidays. The difference between the two lies in the fact that the holiness that was in a more hidden state on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur is revealed for all to see on "the day of our rejoicing (Sukkot)."

One of the fundamental themes of Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur is that of the unity of the Jewish People. But it is on Sukkot that this motif finds its highest expression.

The Jew's worship on the High Holidays lies in his uncovering of the "pintele Yid," the Jewish spark that can never be extinguished, that he shares in common with every other Jew. All of us stand as equals before G-d in prayer on Rosh Hashana, accepting His sovereignty and crowning Him King over us all; on Yom Kippur we are equally aroused to do teshuva (repent) and return to G-d. When a Jew does teshuva, he is merely uncovering and revealing his innate belief in G-d and love of Him. The unity of the Jewish People during the High Holidays is a unity based on the common denominator inherent in every Jew. It does not take into consideration the many differences of temperament, intelligence, or any other marks which distinguish one person from another.

On Sukkot, however, we reach an even higher level of unity than before, further developing the theme of High Holidays. One of the most important mitzvot of Sukkot is the taking of the Four Kinds. These four species symbolize the four different types of people which exist within the Jewish nation. The etrog (citron) symbolizes one who possesses Torah learning and also does good deeds; the lulav (palm) stands for one who possesses only Torah learning. The hadas (myrtle) symbolizes one who performs commandments and does good deeds, but does not have Torah learning, and the arava (willow) symbolizes the Jew who possesses neither Torah nor learning.

On Sukkot we take these four disparate species and bring them together to perform a mitzva. Our unity does not lie in our ignoring the external differences which divide us; rather, we go out of our way to include all types of Jews, even those in the category of arava, who would seem to have no positive contribution to make. Despite all our differences we are all bound together.

This is the highest degree of unity we can achieve. It is far easier to concentrate only on that which we have in common than to acknowledge that we differ as individuals and still remain together.

On Sukkot we verify and confirm the unity which was achieved during the High Holidays. This realization sustains us throughout the year and gives us the strength to live in harmony and solidarity with one another.

## Sing, My Children, Sing!

By Levi Avtzon

According to a popular saying, every major Jewish experience is somehow connected to food. If I may add, where there is food, there is song . . . Thus, every Jewish experience is full of song.

From the High Holiday cantorial pieces to the zemirot sung at the Shabbat table, from the teary-eyed chupah music to the energetic dancing music that follows, from the Mah Nishtanah at the Passover Seder to nighttime lullabies, the Jewish year is indeed a musical one.

Why is song such a major player in the Jewish arena? A song is the pen of the heart. It expresses to ourselves and to others the deepest parts of our hearts and souls, that which cannot be expressed through the medium of finite syllables.

Song brings emotion and depth wherever it enters. Song creates a marriage between who we are and who we ought to be. It is a journey inward, to one's self, bringing our truest self to the forefront of our consciousness. It's the marriage between who we are and who we ought to be.

You don't have to be musically wired to appreciate the power of a melody. You don't have to hold the title of a singer in order to sing. All you need is a heart.

The greater part of the Torah reading of Haazinu consists of a 70-line "song" delivered by Moses to the people of Israel on the last day of his earthly life.

Why is Moses singing on the last day of his life? Why was the longest piece of poetry in the Torah chanted on one of the seemingly saddest days of Jewish history, the day that the greatest Jewish leader of all time passed on?

Perhaps Moses wanted to leave us with the power of song. He was leaving his flock, and until the end of times there wouldn't be anyone like him to guide the nation. So he gave us a tool that would allow us to find G-d within ourselves, to create leadership even in the absence of true leaders. He taught us how to maintain the flame of Judaism whether in the gas chambers — where Jews sang the Ani Maamin ("I believe!") on the way to their deaths — or sitting at the Shabbat table with family and friends.

On his last day of leadership, Moses gave us the means to persevere: song.

And very soon, when Moshiach comes, we will merit to hear the greatest song of all, when we will sing and dance with G-d Himself in the most magnificent dance of all time . . .

# Slice of LIFE

## Celebrating Sukkot from Nairobi to Israel

By Rhona Lewis

The entire congregation of about thirty people crowded into the tiny sukkah built against the side of the Nairobi synagogue.

The walls were made of some sort of matting, probably the same reed mats that are today popularly used as roofing for sukkahs all over the world. Palm branches, shaven from the stately Washington palms that dot the synagogue's exquisite gardens, constituted the roof.

Every year, on the first night of Sukkot, I sat wedged between my parents on one of the hard, narrow benches that lined the flimsy sukkah walls and listened to the blessing over the wine. I gazed at the yellow reed walls, at the stars peeking through the palm branches and I wondered what Sukkot was all about.

My father explained that we sit in the sukkah to commemorate the Clouds of Glory that accompanied the Jews through the desert.

I couldn't imagine what Clouds of Glory looked like, but I was sure that deep inside the soft clouds, the Jews in the desert must have felt like I felt in the sukkah outside the synagogue in Nairobi: safe, cozy and aware, very aware, that I was part of something holy. Over the years, I learnt more and formed a fuller picture.

High school behind me, I came to Israel. Here, on a bridge braced with supports from my childhood, I crossed the chasm between my old life and the new life I wanted to live. As I learnt about my heritage, my childhood perception of the sukkah gained depth and breadth, while retaining its initial aura of protection and holiness.

Throughout Torah literature there is the concept that the sukkah is a

temporary residence that reminds us that the whole of this world is nothing but a temporary abode and that everything material is ephemeral. I spent many hours sitting in sukkahs all over Jerusalem during my initial years here. The first thing I learnt was that people don't just bless the wine in the sukkah on the first night of the festival; they actually spend the majority of their time in the sukkah for a week.

So the sukkah was indeed a "residence."

I noticed that the structure of the sukkah generally fell into one of two categories: some consisted of a metal frame around which white cloth was wrapped to form four walls; some were built of light-brown flimsy wooden boards that rattled in the wind. All of them were very, very "temporary." I naturally connected to the concept of transience, the devitalization of the material.

It fitted in with my psyche neatly: I was the girl who never noticed the fashion, who never visited the malls. I was the girl who meditated instead of watching Dallason TV. In addition, my studies were helping me to understand more about the spiritual world that exists above this physical one.

A few years later, I was newly-wed and living a street away from a neighborhood that forms part of the heart of Jerusalem - Mattesdorf. I was in love with creation, in love with my husband, in love with the new life that was beginning to stir within me.

One night, during the week of Sukkot, when it seemed that all of Mattesdorf had stayed up to celebrate, my husband and I went for a walk. We stopped outside a large, rectangular sukkah that was shrouded in darkness, but pulsating with soft song.

Opposite the open door of the sukkah sat the rabbi. He was playing the keyboard and singing. Rows of tables crowded with young men lined the walls of the sukkah; they were singing in accompaniment. The rabbi's eyes were shut tightly and his impressive beard swept across his chest as he moved his head from side to side in rhythm with the song.

I had learnt that Sukkot, coming after the cleansing of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, is a time of intense closeness to our Creator. It is, in fact, the marriage between the Jewish people and G-d. Many aspects of Sukkot help us to experience this marriage.

The sukkah is symbolic of a chuppah, the canopy under which a marriage takes place.

Just as a bride encircles the groom, we encircle Torah scrolls during the prayer services. In Israel, the festival lasts seven days, like wedding celebrations. Reminding us of marriage, Sukkot is therefore a time of intense joy. To underscore this, the Torah tells us three different times that we should be joyous on Sukkot. The image of the rabbi and his intense, spiritual joy, coming so close after my own marriage, inspired me tremendously and I found that my own delight in the festival increased.

A few years later still, we are raising our family in Beit Shemesh, not far from Jerusalem. Sukkot, replete with a sukkah that becomes our "temporary residence" and the joy that characterizes the festival, has become a highlight in our lives. The Torah describes Sukkot as "the festival of ingathering, when the year comes full cycle..."

On a physical level, the crops have been harvested and threshed; the bounty is about to enter our homes. Even those of us who are not farmers, are aware that the cycle of the year is coming to a close.

But, there is also a spiritual level to remember. Sometimes, because the physical world is so obviously present, we may forget that the spiritual level is also coming to a close. Every year, when we host a simchat beit hashoeva, a sukkah party, for the members of our synagogue, I feel the spiritual cycle of my life coming full circle.

Our large sukkah is built from boards that my husband varnished a warming brown color. It is full of people sitting at tables laden with cakes and salads that we prepared. Soft singing, accompanied by the drumming of my sons on a darbuka, goblet drum, rises up into the warm night. A feeling of joy and peace hovers over the sukkah: I am back in the Clouds of Glory. The clouds which indicate the presence of my Creator and the peace that will one day reign over Israel and over the entire world.

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# INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

## 13 Tishrei, 5704 [1943]

Greetings and blessings,

...As our Sages comment in the Midrash (Vayikra Rabbah, ch. 30), the festival of Sukkos is the first day of the reckoning between the Holy One, blessed be He, and the Jewish people after the atonement granted on Yom Kippur. On that day, we are commanded (Lev. 23:40): "You shall take for yourselves the fruit of a beautiful tree (the esrog - citron), palm branches, a bough of a thick-leaved tree (the myrtle), and willows of the brook."

Our Sages comment in the Midrash:

These are the Jewish people. The esrog alludes to people who possess the advantages of both Torah study and good deeds. The lulav - palm alludes to people who possess the advantages of Torah study, but not those of good deeds. The myrtle alludes to people who possess the advantages of good deeds, but not those of Torah study. The willow alludes to people who possess neither the advantages of Torah study, nor good deeds. The Holy One, blessed be He, says: "Bind them together as a single collective. At that moment, I am upraised."

Fortunate is the man who is named Shlomo - for that name reflects the concept of Shalom, "peace" - who can establish peace among the four categories of individuals within the Jewish people mentioned above. And when they are all joined together as one, they will be granted, as we request in the blessing Sim Shalom - "blessing, mercy, and life."

With wishes for a happy holiday and [with the blessing,] "Immediately to teshuvah [repentance], immediately to Redemption,"

Rabbi Menachem Schneerson

## QUESTIONS FOR THE RABBI

With Rabbi Aron Moss

### Services Every Week?!

**Question:** I go jogging every Friday afternoon and often pass your synagogue. I see you are getting some nice crowds. To be honest I don't see why people go to services every single Shabbat. I go once or twice a year and that seems quite enough!

**Answer:** I am glad to hear that you have taken up jogging. But do you really have to jog every week? Isn't once a year enough? Of course not, you will say. To stay fit you have to keep a regular schedule. If you don't exercise enough the body becomes sluggish and lazy. People who don't exercise may say they feel fine, as if they really don't need to exercise at all. But really they're fooling themselves - they are so lazy that they can't face the fact that they're out of shape.

At the same time, if you exercise too much you may overdo it and injure yourself; then not only can't you exercise - you collapse! You have to challenge your body and stretch it to its limits, but not beyond its limits. If you hit the right balance between overdoing and underperforming, then your fitness gradually improves, and in time you find that you can do much more and it gets much easier.

The health of the soul is similar to the health of the body. If we don't challenge ourselves spiritually, we can easily become complacent and settle for a life of monotony and mediocrity. We become so desensitized that we don't even feel we are missing anything. But if we try to change our lives too fast and jump into spirituality, we can burn out and fall lower than we were before.

Each person has to realistically assess what they need to do to keep their souls in shape. Where am I getting my inspiration from? When was the last time I made internal changes and grew as a person? Am I pushing myself to my soul's limits or just coasting? How can I challenge myself to advance my spiritual fitness?

Going to synagogue is one form of spiritual exercise. It is a time to flex the muscles of the soul through prayer, contemplation and study. For some it would be overdoing it to go every week; perhaps once a month would be challenging enough. For others, once a week is just the right balance. Then there are those for whom once a week is not enough - they need to be there every day to keep their souls fit.

Sometimes you need a "trainer" to advise you where to start and what to do next. I think I know just the rabbi you need...

## A WORD

from the Director

*During the holiday of Sukkot we fulfill the mitzva of lulav and etrog by blessing and holding together the lulav (date palm), the hadas (myrtle), aravot (willow), and the etrog (citron). The mitzva is only considered fulfilled if all of the objects have been held together. From this mitzva we can learn about the importance of the unity of the Jewish people.*

*Why is it so important for these four species to be united? They represent different "categories" of Jews, one who learns Torah and does mitzvot, one who only learns Torah, one who only does mitzvot, and one who does neither.*

*And yet, all of these different "kinds" of Jews must be united.*

*All Jews are united. We are all members of the Jewish people, bound together by our Torah. Just as when the four species are separate they are incapable of being used to perform a mitzva, so too are we dependent on each other, on our unity, to fulfill our mission in this world.*

*Being united does not mean eradicating all differences so that we all think and act in the exact same way. Rather, G-d created each individual with his or her own specific character traits, strengths and weaknesses. True unity is revealed people not only accept and tolerate each other's differences, but learn to find the goodness that is a part of every Jew, and uncover the lesson that can be learned from that person. This is the message of the lulav, etrog, hadasim and aravot, of all four species that we hold together and bless together. And just as we bless the species when they are held together, so too are we blessed by G-d when we, too, hold ourselves together and stand before Him as one.*

*As we celebrate the holiday of Sukkot, a holiday that is known as "the festival of our rejoicing," we ask G-d to grant us the greatest joy of all, with the arrival of Moshiach and the rebuilding of our Holy Temple, where we shall surely be able to fulfill the mitzva of "serving G-d with joy."*

J. I. Gutterman

IT HAPPENED



Over the Shoulder

By Yerachmiel Tilles

Young Yaakov Yitzchak (later to be famous as "the Holy Jew of Peshischa") seemed to be like any other boy his own age. His teachers and his friends in the cheder (elementary yeshiva) where he learned saw nothing in him that was different from most of the other boys. He had as much "fear of Heaven" as any other Jewish child in those days. His desire to learn Torah was no less than that of the others, and so was his success in learning.

Except for one thing - once he learned something, he never forgot it, even after a long time, even if he had learned something else in between. Moreover, once he learned and understood something, he knew it clearly and perfectly - so well, in fact, that he could explain it to others better than anyone else could. Still, Yaakov Yitzchak was no better than a good student; he wasn't even among the top three in his class.

Yaakov Yitzchak also was a healthy boy and much stronger than any of his friends. Whenever they played "King, Soldiers and Peasants," the other boys wanted to make him king and the leader of all of them. To be sure, one didn't become King among the children unless one was very strong, strong enough not to be afraid of anyone, even the gentile boys. And although Yaakov Yitzchak refused to be King and the boys had already appointed another boy to be the king over them, they all knew his strength and were afraid of him. Not that Yaakov Yitzchak tried to frighten the boys with this strength; it is doubtful if he ever raised a hand against another child. But if one boy would start a fight with a weaker boy, Yaakov Yitzchak would just have to say "leave him alone!" and there would be no fight.

Once, on the first day of Chol Hamoed Sukkot, his father sent Yaakov Yitzchak to take the etrog and lulav to a widow, a relative of theirs, for her to make the blessings over them. The widow lived on the other side of town, and Yaakov Yitzchak had to walk through a street where many gentile boys often made trouble for any Jew they chanced to meet. When Yaakov Yitzchak reached that street with the etrog and lulav in his hand, the gentile boys decided to make fun of the Jewish boy and what he carried. One of them - Ivan, their leader - jumped on him from behind and grabbed the lulav from his hand. The other gentile boys laughed at this fine sport.

Yaakov Yitzchak became very angry. He put the etrog in his pocket and chased Ivan until he grabbed him. Ivan also became very angry - what nerve this Jewish boy had to chase him and take hold of him! Ivan raised the lulav which he held in his hand, as if to strike Yaakov Yitzchak on the head with it.

Yaakov Yitzchak's quickly realized, "If he hits me with the lulav, he'll break it and we won't be able to use it anymore. And if we fight, the pitam (protruding tip) of the etrog in my pocket will break, too. I must think of something..."

"Hey Ivan!" Yaakov Yitzchak shouted to the gentile boy. "Is that

how you show how strong you are - you with a stick against me with my bare hands?! I'll tell you what: you put the stick near that wall over there and I'll put what I have in my pocket over there, and then we'll see who is stronger than whom!"

This challenge touched Ivan's pride and he agreed to the terms.

As soon as the lulav and etrog were safe near the wall, Yaakov Yitzchak bent his head low and rushed at Ivan's knees. Ivan was a tall boy and as Yaakov Yitzchak hit his knees and quickly straightened up, he sent Ivan flying over his back, landing with his face in the mud. Ivan lay there, dazed, unable to get up right away.

Ivan's friends, who watched from a distance, thought that their leader was dead and they decided to avenge themselves on this Jewish "murderer." When Yaakov Yitzchak saw them rushing toward him, he picked up Ivan by his feet and began swinging him around in a circle, like someone who swings a bolero, a rope with a rock tied to the end of it. Nothing happened to Ivan, except that he became more dizzy and disoriented, and also frightened by the cries of his friends, who now fled in all directions. Yaakov Yitzchak then put Ivan down. The dizzy bully crossed himself and ran off as fast as his shaky legs could carry him.

Yaakov Yitzchak picked up the etrog and lulav and went on his way to the widow's home. On his way back, none of the gentile boys were to be seen on that street.

Yaakov Yitzchak himself told no one what happened to him. But the story soon got around, when the gentile boys told their parents what the boy with the strange branch and fruit did to them, and their parents told it to the Jewish merchants in the marketplace. No one could believe that the little Yaakov Yitzchak could do such a thing. Only the children, Yaakov Yitzchak's friends, believed the story.

But whenever they would ask him what really happened between him and the gentile boys, he would just answer, "Oh, you can't believe the stories they tell..."

PARSHAH IN A NUTSHELL

The greater part of the Torah reading of Haazinu ("Listen In") consists of a 70-line "song" delivered by Moses to the people of Israel on the last day of his earthly life.

Calling heaven and earth as witnesses, Moses exhorts the people, "Remember the days of old / Consider the years of many generations / Ask your father, and he will recount it to you / Your elders, and they will tell you" how G-d "found them in a desert land," made them a people, chose them as His own, and bequeathed them a bountiful land. The song also warns against the pitfalls of plenty—"Yeshurun grew fat and kicked / You have grown fat, thick and rotund / He forsook G-d who made him / And spurned the Rock of his salvation"—and the terrible calamities that would result, which Moses describes as G-d "hiding His face." Yet in the end, he promises, G-d will avenge the blood of His servants, and be reconciled with His people and land.

The Parshah concludes with G-d's instruction to Moses to ascend the summit of Mount Nebo, from which he will behold the Promised Land before dying on the mountain. "For you shall see the land opposite you; but you shall not go there, into the land which I give to the children of Israel."

CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMAN STREET, ST KILDA EAST

PARSHAS HA'AZINU • 12 TISHREI • 21 SEPTEMBER

<b>FRIDAY NIGHT:</b>	MINCHA KABBOLAS SHABBOS	6:05 PM 6:35 PM
<b>SHABBOS DAY:</b>	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA SHACHARIS MINCHA SHABBOS ENDS	9:09 AM 10:00 AM 5:50 PM 6:55 PM
<b>SUN. EREV SUKKOS:</b>	CANDLE LIGHTING MINCHA MAARIV	5:59 PM 6:05 PM 6:55 PM
<b>MON. 1ST DAY SUKKOS:</b>	SHACHARIS MINCHA MA'ARIV CANDLE LIGHTING	10:00 AM 6:00 PM 6:45 PM After 6:57 PM
<b>TUES. 2ND DAY SUKKOS:</b>	SHACHARIS MINCHA YOM TOV ENDS/MA'ARIV	10:00 PM 6:00 PM 6:58 PM
<b>REST OF THE WEEK:</b>	SHACHARIS MNCHA MAARIV	8.00/9.15/10.00 AM 6:05 PM 6:50 PM

CANDLE LIGHTING



\* Light candles after the prescribed time from a pre-existing flame

	Shabbos		Sukkos		
	Begins	Ends	1st Night	2nd Night	Ends
Melbourne	5:57	6:55	5:59	6:57*	6:58
Adelaide	5:53	6:49	5:54	6:51*	6:51
Brisbane	5:25	6:18	5:26	6:19*	6:20
Darwin	6:25	7:14	6:25	7:14*	7:14
Gold Coast	5:24	6:17	5:25	6:18*	6:19
Perth	5:54	6:49	5:55	6:50*	6:51
Sydney	5:32	6:28	5:34	6:30*	6:30
Canberra	5:41	6:37	5:42	6:39*	6:40
Launceston	5:49	6:49	5:51	6:51*	6:52
Auckland	5:58	6:55	6:00	6:57*	6:58
Wellington	5:58	6:58	6:00	7:00*	7:01
Hobart	5:48	6:49	5:50	6:51*	6:52
Byron Bay	5:23	6:16	5:24	6:18*	6:18