

The Weekly Publication
for Every Jewish Person

נוסד תר"ץ ימי השלושים

Dedicated to the memory of Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka Schneerson

"To You I lifted up my eyes, You Who dwell in heaven" (Psalm 123:1)

L'Chaim



LIVING WITH THE REBBE

from the teachings of the Rebbe
on the Torah portion

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 concealed and 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 within him, that 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, developing the theme of Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur even further.

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 symbolizes one who possesses Torah learning and also does good deeds; the lulav 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.

Adapted from the works of the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

Dance Away

By Rabbi Simon Jacobson

As Jews prepare to dance ecstatically on Simchat Torah, completely oblivious of the world around them, let's explore the nature of this dance. Is it a form of escapism or a taste of reality?

October 3, 1995 was Erev Yom Kippur. It was also the day when a jury found OJ Simpson "not guilty" for murdering his wife. It was the talk of the town. That same day I had a pre-scheduled radio interview in connection with my book, *Toward A Meaningful Life*. The host called me: "I read and liked your book. But frankly, today everyone is interested in only the OJ Simpson verdict. They just won't care to hear a discussion on your book. Let's reschedule your interview."

I am not sure what got into me, but spontaneously I told the host that my book can shed light on the controversy. The radio host was surprised. "So you're ready to discuss the OJ Simpson trial?" She asked. "Absolutely," I answered.

So the interview commenced as scheduled on Erev Yom Kippur. After introducing me and my book as a distillation of the Rebbe's teachings on life, her first question was what I think about the Simpson verdict?

My reply: "Today is the day preceding Yom Kippur. Jews around the world are preparing for the holiest day of the year. Many are completely oblivious of the OJ Simpson verdict.

Now you may think that this is an unacceptable form of detachment from society. The fact is quite the contrary.

"Let me tell you a short story. Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev once led the High Holiday prayer service. Before he began Kaddish, he declared: 'The Russians say that their Czar is the greatest. The French say that their Emperor is the greatest. And I, Levi Yitzchak ben Sarah Sosha say... Yisgadal v'Yiskadash Shemei Rabba (Exalted and hallowed be His Great Name).'

"On the day before Yom Kippur, while the public is consumed with the OJ Simpson verdict and other 'vital' events, Jews declare: 'Today we enter the holiest moment of our lives; we connect to G-d and to the purpose of our existence.'

"Yes, it's all about defining what is real and what is not. Many people are trapped in a 'matrix' dictating the rules of 'reality,' shaped by social, media and peer pressures.

"We all need a moment of reality check, where we embrace the eternal – that which is not man-made."

That's the story.

Now we are up to Simchat Torah. We dance with unbridled joy because we have a connection that allows us to transcend all our man-made institutions with their inherent distortions.

Simply a day when we rise above it all so that we can re-immense with a fighting chance...

SLICE OF LIFE

A Sukkah Behind Bars: A Race Against Time



A few short years ago, in the bustling days leading up to Sukkot, Rabbi Mendy Katz found himself in an unexpected race against the clock. As the Director of Prison Outreach at the Aleph Institute, a Chabad organization dedicated to the welfare of Jewish inmates in U.S. prisons, Rabbi Katz was no stranger to challenges. But that year, a seemingly impossible task lay before him: securing a sukkah for detainees in Miami's ICE Krome Service Processing Center, with mere hours left before the holiday.

"We had an important breakthrough that year," Rabbi Katz explains. "For the first time, we received an approval to bring sukkahs into Florida prisons. But Krome was different. They cited safety concerns and lack of precedent. It was heartbreaking."

Despite his initial disappointment, Rabbi Katz didn't have time to dwell on the Sukkah at Krome. With 15 other prisons to attend to, organizing high holiday prayer services, and distributing 300 sets of the Four Species, his plate was more than full.

As Friday arrived, just three days before Sukkot, Rabbi Katz made a final push. "I pulled every string I could think of," he recalls. "Calls, emails, you name it. But by evening, it was clear – no sukkah for Krome."

The turning point came unexpectedly after Shabbat had ended. As Rabbi Katz was boarding his flight for his family trip to New York, he received a text message that changed

everything. "Have you seen this week's Living Torah weekly video?" asked Rabbi Aaron Lipskar, the Executive Director at Aleph.

Intrigued, Rabbi Katz watched the clip. There, the Rebbe's words from years ago rang out clear as day: "Have you made sure that the prisoners have a sukkah for Sukkot?"

"It was like the Rebbe was speaking directly to me," Rabbi Katz says, his voice filled with emotion. "I knew we had to try again."

What followed was a night of frantic activity. The Aleph team worked tirelessly, reaching out to all their ICE contacts via email in Florida and Washington, pleading their case anew.

The miracle came at 11:45 AM on Sunday, mere hours before the holiday. Stuck on a New York subway with spotty cell service, Rabbi Katz received the call he'd been praying for. "You've been approved for the sukkah," announced the non-Jewish prison chaplain.

But the race wasn't over yet. With no suitable sukkah on hand and time running out, Rabbi Katz had to think fast. A nearby Chabad emissary had a pop up sukkah, but wasn't home. In a tense race against time, the emissary's wife dropped everything to search for the sukkah while Rabbi Katz coordinated an Uber pickup from his moving subway car.

"As the train started moving, cutting off my cell signal, I saw the Uber arrive at the emissary's house on my app," Rabbi Katz recounts, still amazed at the timing. "It was nothing short of miraculous." Reflecting on the experience, Rabbi Katz's face softens. "The Rebbe's wisdom and guidance continue to inspire action and kindness. Thanks to his words, prisoners in Florida were able to fulfill this beautiful mitzvah."

As the sun set on Sunday evening, Sukkot eve, a small group of detainees gathered in a hastily erected sukkah at the Krome Processing Center. For Rabbi Katz and his team, it was more than just a successful mission – it was a powerful reminder of the enduring impact of the Rebbe's teachings and the importance of every Jew fulfilling mitzvah, no matter who or where.

The hastily erected sukkah in the detention facility yard stood as a testament to the Aleph Institute's unwavering commitment to serving Jews in challenging circumstances. This commitment traces its roots back to the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel

Schneerson, whose vision and guidance were instrumental in the organization's formation.

"The Rebbe always emphasized that every Jew, regardless of their situation, needs to observe and practice and be connected to their heritage," Rabbi Katz explains. "He was particularly concerned about those in prisons and in the military, often isolated from Jewish community life."

In 1981, inspired by the Rebbe's teachings, Rabbi Sholom Lipskar founded the Aleph Institute. The organization's name, 'Aleph,' is not just the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet but also the letter that changes the meaning of the word Golus (Exile) into the Word Geulah (Redemption).

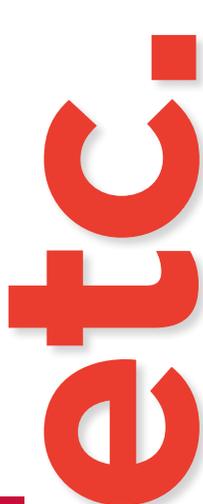
The Rebbe's influence extends beyond the organization's founding principles. His emphasis on the inherent worth of every individual, regardless of their circumstances, continues to guide Aleph's approach. "We don't just provide religious services," Rabbi Katz notes. "We advocate for alternative sentencing, support families of the incarcerated, and work towards rehabilitative justice."

Aleph's work extends beyond prison walls to military bases across the globe. "Many don't realize that we serve hundreds of Jewish personnel in the U.S. armed forces," Rabbi Katz says proudly. "From providing kosher MREs (Meals Ready to Eat) to organizing holiday observances on aircraft carriers, we ensure that Jewish service members can maintain their faith while serving their country."

The organization's military outreach program, inspired by the Rebbe's personal outreach to Jewish service members during World War 2, has become a crucial lifeline for Jewish soldiers, sailors, marines and airmen stationed far from established Jewish communities.

As the sun sets on another Sukkot in prisons and on military bases across America, the Lubavitcher Rebbe continues to shine through the work of Aleph. Each sukkah erected, each shofar blown, each holiday package delivered is a fulfillment of his vision - that every Jew, no matter where they are, should have the opportunity to fulfill God's commandments.

"The Rebbe taught us that no Jew is ever truly alone," Rabbi Katz concludes, "Through Aleph, we strive to make that a reality, one day at a time and one mitzvah at a time."



The Sukka in front of the United Nations

Public Sukkas

As in previous years, if you're in Manhattan, visit one of the Lubavitch Youth Organization's public Sukkas during the intermediate days of the holiday. They will be open: Sunday, October 20 through Wednesday, October 23, 10:00 am - 6:00 pm.

The Sukkas are: The United Nations Sukka, located in Ralph Bunch Park, near the Isaiah Wall across from the United Nations on First Avenue and 42nd Street; Sukka at Foley Square, near Worth Street; across the Federal Court House. The Garment Center Sukka in Herald Square across from Macy's and the Wall Street Sukka at Bowling Green Park. For more information call (718) 778-6000. To find out about public Sukkot in your area call your local Chabad Lubavitch Center.

Two Weeks in One

This current issue of L'Chaim is for the entire Sukkot holiday. Issue 1846 will be for 30 Tishrei/November 1 for the Torah portion of Noach.

Customs

Why do children march around and dance with flags on Simchat Torah?

In an army parade, each regiment carries its colors. So, too, on Simchat Torah, when all of the Torah scrolls are taken out of the ark and danced with, the children carry flags, like soldiers, to impress upon them that we are all in G-d's army.



The Rebbe Writes

from correspondence of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

UNITY AND JOY

Excerpts From a Letter

By the Grace of G-d
13–14th of Tishrei,
Erev Chag haSuccos, 5737
Brooklyn, N.Y.

To the Sons and Daughters of Our People Israel, Everywhere, G-d bless you all!

Greeting and Blessing:

As we are now coming from the Holy Day (Yom Kippur), which comes “once a year,” marking the conclusion and completion of the Ten Days of Teshuva; and on the threshold of the Festival of Succos, the Season of Our Rejoicing, which ushers in the second half of the month of Tishrei, and which is the conclusion and completion of all the festivals of chodesh hashvii,

The latter term, in addition to meaning simply the “seventh month,” also means the “sated month,” filled, as it is, with all good things, both materially and spiritually, as our Sages of blessed memory explain— It is well to consider the significance of the coming days in relation to the first part of the month, and to draw the proper inference.

In general, the month of Tishrei is divided into two basic parts, which differ from one another, yet complete each other, and also make it into one integral month that serves as an introduction and start of the new year.

The first part of the month is permeated with the spirit of Teshuva. Jews experience an impulse to move away from their state and to uplift themselves towards (more) spirituality and G-dliness.

This, in substance, is the general aspect of the Ten Days of Teshuva, in line with our Sages’ explanation that the admonition and plea, “Seek G-d when He is found, call on Him when He is near,” refers to the Ten Days of Teshuva. Also the subsequent four days come under the impact of Teshuva; so that the 15th day of the month is designated as the “first day”—the first day of a new accounting.

The second part of the month of Tishrei

stands under the influence of a movement which is directed towards bringing G-dliness down to earth by means of making the material things of the world things of holiness and Mitzvos, and to such an extent as to call forth joy, singing, and dancing—which is the point of the festival of Succos, the Season of Our Rejoicing. The Mitzva consists in having one’s daily meals, etc. in the Succah. The eating becomes a Mitzva, a reminder of the miracles attending the Exodus from Egypt, etc.

This joy finds particular expression in the Four Kinds, which have to be taken together right from the first day of the festival (except on Shabbos), as the Torah says: “And you shall take unto yourselves on the first day a beautiful tree-fruit” [with emphasis on the fruit’s beauty]—together with three other kinds, which are made into a Mitzva, with a Brochah praising G-d “Who has sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us”; and to do this with the kind of joy described by the words, “And’ you shall rejoice before G-d, your G-d.”

The said two aspects of the month of Tisrei, in the form of movements “from below—upwards” and “from above—downwards,” complete each other and create one integral whole, as stated earlier.

In addition, there is an essential point common to both parts of the month. It also serves as an introduction into the month and pervades all aspects of the month. It is the unity of the Jewish people.

Before the month begins, namely, on the Shabbos before Rosh Hashanah, the Torah reading for the assembled congregation is: “You are standing firmly this day, all of you, before G-d, your G-d.” Jews stand firmly all together before G-d; “all of you”—“all individuals as one,” “as one complete unit”—like one body.

In like manner is the second part of the month ushered in with the Mitzva of Succah, which embraces and unifies all who are in it, regardless of station, from the highest to the most ordinary; indeed, it has been declared that “All Jews are worthy to dwell in one Succah.”

Even more emphatically is the unity of the Jewish people expressed in the Mitzva of the Four Kinds—Esrog, Lulav, Myrtle, and Willow—which, as is well known reflect the four kinds of Jews, from those who have both “taste” and “fragrance” (Torah and Mitzvos) to those who (as yet) have neither taste nor fragrance. And only when all four kinds are united together it is possible to fulfill the Mitzva.

irresponsibility on the part of authorities; centers of learning will turn into bawdy houses; wars; many beggars having none to pity them; wisdom shall be putrid; the pious shall be despised; truth will be abandoned; the young will insult the old; there will be family breakups with mutual recriminations; impudent leadership.

MOSHIACH MATTERS

According to the Talmud, the world situation in the time immediately before Moshiach will include: an increase in insolence and impudence; oppressing inflation; unbridled

A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

In Memory of Rabbi Shmuel M. Butman, Director of the Lubavitch Youth Organization and Founder of the L'Chaim Publication.

From the Archives

This week we are celebrating the holiday of Sukkot. It is special in many ways, teeming with mitzvot and customs with far-reaching spiritual implications.

We were commanded by G-d to celebrate Sukkot as a reminder of the sukkot--booths--in which we dwelled while in the Sinai desert. According to some opinions, the sukka commemorates the actual booths and temporary dwellings the Jews lived in. However, other opinions consider these sukkot as a reminder of the Clouds of Glory with which G-d surrounded and protected us during the sojourn in the desert. Obviously, the sukka itself is a major aspect of the holiday.

It is not surprising, then, that our upcoming holiday is known almost exclusively by the name Sukkot.

There are other mitzvot that we perform every day or most days of the festival, though, such as blessing the lulav and etrog, and saying the special “Hoshana” prayers. Why, one might ask, is the festival known specifically for the mitzva of dwelling in the sukka?

The answer lies in the unique nature of the mitzva of sukka. Every other mitzva a person performs involves a particular limb or part of the body: tefillin, for instance, are wrapped around the head and arm; Shabbat candles are lit using the hand; Prayers are said with the mouth.

The sukka, however, is different. It surrounds and encompasses the entire person from head to toe. It envelops the person who sits within its temporary walls with the holiness of the mitzva.

May the Jewish people merit to witness what we read in the “Grace After Meals” on Sukkot, “May the Merciful One Restore for us the fallen Sukka of David” and may we celebrate all together this year in Jerusalem with Moshiach.

Shmuel Butman

L'ZICHRON CHAYA I MUSHKA לזכרון חיה י מושקא

The name of our publication has special meaning. It stands for the name of Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka Schneerson (obm), wife of the Rebbe.



Published by
Lubavitch Youth Organization
1408 President St, Brooklyn, NY, 11213
phone 718 778 6000

Chairman
Director
Publishing Director
Program Director
Secretary
Administrator
Layout
Associate Editor
Chairman Editorial Comm.
Rebbe photo

Rabbi Dovid Raskin ז"ל
Rabbi Shmuel Butman ז"ל
Rabbi Yosef Y. Butman
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IT HAPPENED ONCE

The Hakafot were in full swing. Round and round went the circle of dancing worshippers in the little shul. I had come to watch, that's all. Somebody from the circle pulled me into the whirling mass of dancers. I turned my head to glance at the man who had "roped me in." He seemed elderly and I wondered where he got so much strength to dance and dance without end. I was astonished to see that tears were streaming down his cheeks. An inner happiness and ecstasy were written over his noble face.

"It's a long time since I had such inspiring hakafot," said my dancing partner. "It was exactly thirty years ago today, during the terrible days after the First World War. I lived in Riga then, the capital of the newly born independent Republic of Latvia.

"That night we were sheltering in a cellar. Things were not going well for the nationalists. They were losing ground and they suspected treachery. Anybody suspicious was shot, without even any investigation. Suddenly sentries saw a light in a top floor apartment. 'The spy nest has been discovered!' the sentries decided, and they rushed to the house to lay their hands on the spy.

"Whom did they rush to seize? Zalman. And who was he? I will tell you. He didn't know what it meant to be sad. Heaven knows, he had plenty of worries. But G-d had blessed him with a cheerful disposition, and seemingly nothing, absolutely nothing could break his spirit. Zalman was with us in the cellar that night. That night of all nights, when Jews rejoice and dance with the Torah we sat downcast, shivering with every explosion.

"Zalman couldn't stand it any longer. 'Brothers!' he exclaimed. 'It's Simchat Torah tonight! We must rejoice!' But his words fell flat. He looked hurt, then he suddenly remembered something. 'I see, my friends, that without a little schnapps there will be nothing doing. I have a pint of schnapps at home, which I've been saving for tonight. I'll be right back.'

"Before we could stop him Zalman climbed to the sixth floor where he lived. He picked up a candle and found the bottle. He was so happy that he danced about with the candle burning in one hand, and the bottle in the other, forgetting all about the war, the bombardment, and the regulations.

"Now, my young friend, you understand what the sentries saw in the darkness of the night. It was just as we were preparing to celebrate hakafot that the sentries burst in, crying, 'Where is the dirty spy? Turn the spy over to us, or we will have you all shot!'

"At this moment Zalman stepped forward, bottle in hand, and calmly said: 'Officers, it was I that you saw with the light upstairs, but I was not signaling to the enemy. I...'" "Never mind, come along!" the soldiers said briskly, and marched poor Zalman off under heavy guard.

"If we had been depressed before, now we were truly grief-stricken. He would be put to the wall and shot immediately. Time dragged slowly. Suddenly we heard steps, and presently in walked--who do you think? --Zalman! We couldn't believe our eyes, but the bottle in his hand looked real enough. There were tears in all eyes.

"'Stop it! Stop!' cried Zalman. 'Let's just celebrate!' But we would not start until he told us what had happened.

"'Didn't I tell you, we have a great and mighty G-d?'" Zalman began. "When I was brought to headquarters the duty officer hardly looked at me. 'To be shot!'" he called out. I looked at the officer for a moment, and I called out: "Styopka! What on earth are you saying!"

"'The officer gazed at me for a moment, then burst out laughing. 'What a joke! You, Zalman, a spy! Well, well, sit down and let's talk about old times. Do you remember when I used to come to your house to remove the candlesticks on Saturday mornings, and light a fire in the winter? I was a kid then, but you treated me as though I was a grown-up. I loved you, Zalman. Those were happy days in our little town, but these are grim days. You are lucky that I was on duty tonight. It was not even my turn, but I was substituting for a friend. You would have been a dead duck by now. But, what's the idea of the bottle? Is it Purim tonight?'" "You ought to know better, Stepan Ivanovitch,"

says I to him. 'No, it's Simchat Torah.'

"'Sure, I remember. You go round and round in a circle dancing. Well, go back to your dancing, and say a prayer for us, Zalman. You Jews are marvellous, risking your neck for your religion, dancing in the shadow of death...'

"That was Zalman's simple story. He got a pass to come back to us. And then we began hakafot. Oh, those hakafot! I'll never forget them. Every Simchat Torah, I remember them; for the last thirty years!"

From The Complete Story of Tishrei

THOUGHTS THAT COUNT

on the weekly Torah portion

Sukka
Although a sukka is only a temporary dwelling, in certain respects we treat it as if it were our regular home--eating, drinking, and studying in it. This is how we should treat the world at large. We should not regard the world as an end unto itself, but rather as a means of furthering our spiritual development and refinement; by properly utilizing the physical world, we bring G-dliness into our surroundings, transforming the temporary into something lasting and eternal.
(Lubavitcher Rebbe)

In sukkot shall you dwell seven days
The sukka surrounds the entire person and one is enjoined to conduct all worldly affairs within it for seven days. The fact that all of a person's being is encompassed, including his very shoes, teaches us that not only through prayer and study do we worship G-d. The sukka teaches that it is also through the physical world that we approach G-d and draw holiness into our surroundings, as it states, "in all your ways shall you know Him." The mitzva of sukka strengthens our realization of this and gives us the power to carry out our G-dly mission throughout the year.
(Lubavitcher Rebbe)

Simchat Torah
One year, during the dancing on Simchat Torah, the Baal Shem Tov cried out: "Yisrael, you holy people. What is the cause of your great joy? It is our holy Torah! Do the other nations ever rejoice while holding their sacred books? Where do they go in the time of their rejoicing--into their inns and drinking houses! And we, the Jewish people, where do you find us in the season of our rejoicing? Inside the synagogues. And why are we dancing and singing? In honor of the holy Torah. When are we united, as one man with one heart? On Simchat Torah! Therefore, I say to you, Yisrael, my holy people! This day is a triple joy--the joy of the Torah, the joy of the Jewish people, and the joy of the Holy One Blessed Be He."

- Candle Lighting Time - NY Metro Area
- Eruv Tavshilin
- 14 Tishrei/Oct 16/Sukkot – Light for Sukkot at 5:55 p.m.
- 15 Tishrei/Oct 17/Sukkot – Light for Sukkot after 6:53 p.m.
- from a pre-existing flame
- 16 Tishrei // Oct 18 – light for Shabbat at 5:52 p.m.
- from a pre-existing flame
Shabbat ends 6:50 p.m.
- 21 Tishrei // Oct 23 – light for Shemini Atzeret at 5:45 p.m.
- 22 Tishrei // Oct 24 – light for Simchat Torah after 6:43 p.m.
- from a pre-existing flame
- 23 Tishrei // Oct 25 – light for Shabbat Bereishit at 5:42 p.m.
- from a pre-existing flame
- Blessing of the new month Cheshvan // Shabbat ends 6:41 p.m.



Dedicated In memory of
Mrs. Anna Lipschitz OBM
Chana bas HaRav Yoel Summer – The Linever Rebbe
By Hedy & Ben Lipschitz

to dedicate an issue call (718) 776 6000