

The Weekly Farbrengens



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EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

SIMCHAS BEIS HASHOEIVA

KEDUSHA AND SIMCHA

Every Sukkos, the Beis HaMikdosh was all afire with the festivities that celebrated the mitzva of nisuch hamayim, when water was poured on the mizbei'ach. In fact Chazal noted that "Whoever never witnessed Simchas Beis HaShoeiva has never in his life seen true joy."

After the first Yom-Tov was over, the Azara, the courtyard in the Beis HaMikdosh, would be prepared for the simcha. Balconies were built to accommodate all the women who came to watch, so that they should stand separate from the men. Golden candlesticks were set up, fifty amos high, with four gold bowls atop them. Four ladders led to the top of each candlestick, and four young kohanim mounted them, holding large jugs of oil which they poured into the golden bowls. Thick wicks were made from worn-out clothing of the kohanim, and when the candlesticks were lit, their brilliant light lit up every courtyard in Yerushalayim.

The levi'im, standing on the fifteen steps overlooking the gathering, played various musical instruments. The greatest chachomim and other men of stature danced joyfully, while all the other Yidden watched. Some of the chachomim would bear burning torches in their hands while singing Tehillim and other praises, and others heightened the simcha by performing incredible feats. Chazal relate that Rabbon Shimon ben Gamliel would juggle eight lit torches, which never touched each other. He would also bend down and kiss the ground and then draw himself up again, a feat which no one else could do.

Two kohanim, trumpets in hand, were stationed at the Upper Gate of the Beis HaMikdosh. As the roosters crowed to announce the first light of dawn, they sounded their trumpets, and as they descended the steps on their way to draw the water, they blew additional rounds of blasts. When they reached the Eastern Gate, they would turn to face the Beis HaMikdosh and exclaim: "We belong to HaShem and our eyes are turned to HaShem."

The water was drawn with a golden container from the spring of Shiloach, near Yerushalayim. When the kohanim returned from there to the gate of the Beis HaMikdosh, the trumpets would be sounded again. A kohein would ascend the ramp of the mizbei'ach, and on its left side he would pour the water into a silver bowl which led down to the depths under the Beis HaMikdosh.

In his later years, Rabi Yehoshua ben Chanania

recalled: "When we used to rejoice at the Simchas Beis HaShoeiva, our eyes saw no proper sleep throughout the entire Sukkos. In the morning, the korban tomid was offered, followed by Shacharis, and then the korban mussaf. From there we would go to the beis hamedrash to study. Then we would go and eat. Mincha was followed by the afternoon tomid – and then the Simchas Beis HaShoeiva began once more."

(סוכה ב"ח ע"א, ב"א ע"א ואילך)

CONSIDER

Why did only the great *chachomim* dance at the original *Simchas Beis HaShoeiva*? And what changed today?

Can one rejoice without understanding what he is joyous about?

This event was called Simchas Beis HaShoeiva, which means "the celebration of the place of drawing." The plain meaning of that name refers, of course, to the drawing of water. In addition, Chazal point out another meaning: from that holy celebration, the people present drew ruach hakodesh, for where there is joy, the Shechina rests. Indeed, it was from his participation in Simchas Beis HaShoeiva that the navi Yonah was granted the prophetic inspiration of the Shechina.

(ירושלמי סוכה פ"ה ה"א)

Today we cannot physically participate in the Nisuch HaMayim in the Beis HaMikdosh. The Alter Rebbe therefore teaches that each of us must therefore perform its equivalent in our own avoda. What is the spiritual equivalent of the pouring of water? – Quenching the burning love that a Yid has for HaShem, and from this, arriving at a state of inner bittul. This must be retained (as hinted at in the word atzeres) and continued, through the study of Torah.

(לקוטי תורה סוכות עח ס"ג)

REJOICING IN OUR TIMES

The Rebbe taught that although the original rejoicing

would take place in the Beis HaMikdosh on the occasion of Nisuch HaMayim, today, too, we can have this avoda – just as today we can carry out the avoda of the korbans, by davening. The Rebbe noted that today we even have certain advantages, since with us the rejoicing begins from the first night, and even ordinary people can actively participate.

The Rebbe added that in order for the simcha to be real, we must first understand it. On the other hand, this understanding and feeling must find expression in physical dancing.

(מעייני הישועה ע' 43)

One night on Chol HaMoeid, the talmidim of the Tomchei Temimim Yeshiva in Dokshitz arrived at the sukkah of Reb Yehoshua Lein to farbreng and rejoice in Simchas Beis HaShoeiva. The chossid told them, "What kind of simcha can one possibly have without studying beforehand the maamar that begins U'She'avtem (which explains the reason for the joy)?"

The bochurim went off to bring a few copies of Likkutei Torah from their homes and then studied that maamar for over an hour. Only then did they rejoice, dancing till late at night.

(לקוטי סיפורים פערלאוו ע' ש"ח)

After Maariv on the second night of Sukkos, the TzemaCh Tzedek would farbreng in honor of Simchas Beis HaShoeiva. He would explain profound concepts in Chassidus, and then niggunim were sung and the chassidim would dance. The TzemaCh Tzedek himself would dance so vigorously that even the yungeleit were unable to keep up with his pace. After the farbreng he would study a halacha in Choshen Mishpot in depth, so that the sweat of the mitzva (zeiah shel mitzva) should dry, thus ensuring that the energy previously generated by kedusha should not be diverted to kelipa (yenikas chitzonim).

(ס"ה תש"ג ע' 10)

From the year תשמ"א (1980), the Rebbe delivered a sicha after Maariv on each night of Sukkos, explaining the distinctive significance of that particular day and of the Ushpizin who come to visit. That year some chassidim celebrated Simchas Beis HaShoeiva by dancing, first in the Shul and later in the streets. The Rebbe encouraged their practice and explained the advantage of bringing the kedusha outside of the Shul and into the streets.

(מעייני הישועה ע' 7, שיח"ק תשמ"א ח"א ע' 195)



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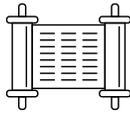


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GOOD NEWS.



TYING THE SCHACH

Can I zip-tie the schach of my sukka mobile so it doesn't fly away while driving?

To be kosher, the schach must have grown from the ground, be detached, and not have been turned into a vessel that is susceptible to become tamei (even if it no longer does).1 As a safeguard, Chazal decreed that the schach shouldn't even be placed directly on unsuitable materials—e.g. a metal or plastic frame—lest one come to use that object for schach as well. One may place schach directly on a brick or cement wall, or stones, since one will not come to use the wall or stones for schach.2

If the schach's main support is susceptible to tuma (even midrabanan),3 one should place something that isn't—like wood slats, even if they are nailed down—to separate between the frame and the schach. (Although some poskim are stringent with even indirect support, the Alter Rebbe rules that only direct support is a problem, as every sukka ultimately stands on the ground which is invalid for schach.)4 If the sukka was made without kosher support slats, it is kosher after the fact, and one may sit in such a sukka even as a preferred option.5

The schach must be placed in a manner that it won't blow away in a normal wind; otherwise the sukka isn't kosher, even while the schach is in place.6 To accomplish this, one may place an object that isn't susceptible to tuma—e.g. heavy 2x4s—on the schach to weigh it down, or use unprocessed plants—e.g. bamboo or lulav leaves—to tie it down.7 However, tying the schach down with regular rope or plastic cable-ties would be considered supporting the schach with unsuitable materials.8

When using bamboo mats, besides ensuring they are kosher—not made for sleeping, not held together with string that is susceptible to tuma, and that they provide sufficient shade—they also must be supported independently of their stringing which isn't kosher for schach. This entails placing the reeds perpendicular to the support beams and sandwiching them with heavy 2x4s on top, also perpendicular to the reeds.

If only an extreme wind would blow away the schach—e.g. a storm, or while driving a mobile sukka—the sukka is kosher as it is, and one may therefore use unsuitable materials to hold the schach in case of a strong wind.9 (Though, he shouldn't use the sukka during an extreme wind since at that time it's being supported by possul materials.10) In any case, the schach may not be nailed down since this is too permanent.11

1. שוע"ר או"ח סי' תרכ"ט ס"א-ב (ע"פ דברים ט"ז, י"ד). 2. ע"פ שוע"ר שם סי' א-י"ג וסי' תרכ"ח ס"ז. 3. ע"פ פסק"ת סי' תרכ"ט ס"ח. 4. ראה שוע"ר שם סי' ד. 5. ראה שוע"ר שם סי' ב, ודלא כמקראי קדש ח"א סי' כ"א. 6. ויש מבארים שמעמיד עצמו גזירה ואין גזרים גזירה לגזירה - ראה הליכות שלמה ע' קל"ב. 7. ראה שוע"ר או"ח סי' תרכ"ט ס"ג. 8. ראה שוע"ר או"ח סי' תרכ"ח ס"ד. 9. ראה משנ"ב או"ח סי' תרכ"ט ס"ו שמותר לקשור הסכך. (וראה באגודה שאסור במסמרים). 10. וראה סי' הסוכה ח"א פ"ח ס"ב ול"ג. 11. וראה שוע"ר סי' תרכ"ט ס"ה וסי' לגבי נשתנה צורתו. וראה פסק"ת שם. 12. ראה פסק"ת סי' תרכ"ט ס"ק"א. 13. ראה שו"ת אבני ישפה או"ח סי' ק"כ אות א'. 14. ראה ספר הסוכה ח"א פ"ח ס"ג. 15. ראה שו"ת בצל החכמה ח"ה סי' מ"ד. 16. ראה מוג"א סי' תרכ"ז סק"ב וראה פסק"ת או"ח סי' תרכ"ט סק"א ובהערות שם.

לע"נ מרת ציפא אסתר בת ר' שלום דובער ע"ה



REB MENDEL HORODOKER

Reb Menachem Mendel Horodoker (also known as Reb Mendel Vitebsker) was a great talmid of the Baal Shem Tov and Maggid of Mezritch. Initially charged by the Maggid with the task of spreading Chassidus in Russia, Reb Mendel later accepted leadership of the chassidim in White Russia after the Maggid's passing. A short while later, Reb Mendel relocated to Eretz Yisroel, accompanied by a large group of chassidim. Author of the sefer "Pri Haaretz" amongst others, Reb Mendel passed away in Tverya on the second of Iyar, תקמ"ח (1788), and is buried there.

their wealth, and cause their hearts to tear from the work of repairing their spiritual lives).

After the Maggid passed away, a letter arrived for Reb Mendel relaying the news. His talmidim decided it would be best to give Reb Mendel the letter after he lit Shabbos licht (as he lit the licht himself). Reb Mendel read the letter and said nothing. Shabbos continued as usual, with no noticeable changes in Reb Mendel's mood or behavior. On Motzoei Shabbos, immediately after havdala, Reb Mendel fell in a faint...

Two years after the Maggid appointed Reb Mendel to spread Chassidus in Russia, Reb Mendel visited the Maggid. In Yechidus, the Maggid asked, "What did you achieve with the Yidden of Russia?" Rabbi Mendel replied, "I found their clothes torn and hearts complete; I worked on making their clothes complete and their hearts torn."

One Simchas Torah, Reb Mendel lamented to the Alter Rebbe, his prodigy, that he knew one hundred pirushim on "Atah hareisa", each describing a unique level of avoda. Being yet to achieve these levels, he did not want to recite the psukim. The Alter Rebbe responded, "A person can never stand in the place where his eyes reach. When he arrives at that point, his view will extend even further. Similarly, even if the Rebbe reached all the levels described in these pirushim, the Rebbe would see new levels to reach."

(The poverty stricken Yidden in Russian struggled to properly plan their activities and make a living, hence the torn clothes. Yet their hearts were complete, unaware of their true purpose. Reb Mendel helped them significantly increase

Reb Mendel accepted the answer, and began reciting the psukim.

A Moment with The Rebbe



WHEN A CHILD ASKS

Every Hoshana Raba, the Rebbe would stand at the door of his sukka and lovingly distribute lekach to an endless line of men, women and children.

cake to my eager daughter. "When my wife's turn came, the Rebbe gave her a piece of cake, and then my daughter stuck her hand out again. The Rebbe again gave her a piece.

"One year," relates Harav Osher Lemel Cohen of Beitar, "My wife went by with our daughter (Mrs. Yocheved Butman). She was then two years old, and as she approached the Rebbe, she stretched out her hand.

"One of the attendants quickly commented that she had already received. But the Rebbe, despite a most hectic schedule, patiently turned around and said, "When a child asks for more, one must give..."

"Although there were others before her in the line, the Rebbe extended his hand over them, to give the honey

(Parshios Im Harebi, Bereishis, page 233)