

SUKKOS

A Holy Abode

The mitzvah of *sukkah* is described in the *possuk*, "His [HaShem's] right hand embraces me." Just as a person embraces his friend out of great love, not letting him separate from the embrace, similarly on Sukkos, the *schach* and the four walls signify the embracing of HaShem, surrounding the person from every side with *kedusha* and closeness to HaShem.

The Friediker Rebbe said that a glimmer of the *sukkah* that will be in the days of Moshiach shines in every *sukkah*.

(לקוטי תורה סוכות עט, ב, ספר השיחות תש"ה ע' 45)

Once, as the builders were erecting the *sukkah* outside the home of the esteemed chossid Reb Hillel Paritcher, the elderly chossid himself appeared. Taking a hammer, he joined the effort by knocking nails into the walls. "Rebbe," the men pleaded with him, "We do not need your help. You can be sure that we will build for you a *kosher sukkah*." Reb Hillel responded, "You should know that the four walls of the *sukkah* correspond to the four letters of HaShem's holy name. I too want to have a share in this."

(לקו"ס פרלוב ע' רצז)

It is the *minhag* to begin preparations for the *sukkah* on Motzoei Yom Kippur, at least in conversation. The Rebbe explains that since this is the time when *kelipos* are being returned to power, one protects himself by engaging in matters of the *sukkah*, which are a protection like the '*ananei hakovod*.'

(ס' המנהגים, שמח"ת תשכ"ו)

The Encompassing Kedusha

The Torah commands us to set the *sukkah* as our home on *sukkos*. Therefore, throughout *sukkos* one should perform all respectable activities in the *sukkah*, such as learning, conversing and relaxing. The mitzvah of *sukkah* is unique in that one performs the *mitzvah* when doing ordinary activities inside it.

However, one must be careful not to act inappropriately in a *sukkah*, which can *ch"v*

chase away the Shechinah. Conversely, through learning Torah in the *sukkah*, one reveals the *kedusha* more.

(שוע"ר סי' תרל"ט ס"ד, וראה לקו"ש ח"ב ע' 418, יערות דבש ח"א דרוש ו)

As a young child at his father's *farbrengens*, the Friediker Rebbe heard the following sayings:

The Baal Shem Tov said that a *sukkah* and a *mikveh* have a correlation, whereas they both refine the person and draw down new light. The Maggid said that while a *mikveh* purifies the person, the *sukkah* elevates him.

(לקו"ד ח"ג ע' 1010)

In Lubavitch they would not hang "*noi sukkah*" (decorations) on the *sechach* or the walls. The reason for this: by the Rebbe Rashab the "*noi sukkah*" was the one sitting in the *sukkah*. Since the fear of accepting the Heavenly yoke on Rosh Hashanah, the *avodah* of Erev Yom Kippur, Yom Kippur and the joy of *Sukkos*, were, for the Rebbe Rashab, experiences of the innermost soul.

(סה"ש תד"ש ע' 12)

The *sukkah* is a *mitzvah* article and must therefore be treated with reverence by keeping it clean and respectable.

(שוע"ר סי' תרל"ט ס"ב)

The *meshares* of the Rebbe Maharash, Reb Yosef Mordechai, once entered the *sukkah* in anger. The Rebbe said to him: "One must have *derech ertz* for the *sechach*; *sechach* does not like anger."

(ספר השיחות תד"ש ע' 12)

Special Guests

The Zohar teaches that throughout Sukkos, our *sukkos* are honored with the *ruchniyus*'s *dike* presence of the *Ushpizin*, the seven shepherds of *klal Yisroel*. On each day, one of the *tzaddikim* heads the visit, and his *kedusha* dominates that day.

The Rebbe explains that these visits instill in us *kedusha* to overcome the long winter months.

(זח"ג קג ע"ב, שיחוק"ק תשל"ח ח"א ע' 79, תו"מ ח"ד ע' 33)

There are two versions concerning the order of the *Ushpizin*, whether Moshe precedes Yosef or follows him. After many years of following one order, Reb Yitzchak Aizik of Komarna considered changing to the other order, and sent his son Reb Eliezer to consult with Reb Yitzchak Aizik of Zidatshov. The Zidatshover Rebbe replied, "I am surprised that your father suggested this change, for didn't we see last year how Moshe Rabbeinu entered our *sukkah* before Yosef Hatzaddik."

(סיפ"ח זוין מועדים ע' 151)

Reb Avrohom Mordechai of Ger once arrived late at the *sukkah* of his father the Chiddushei Harim. When questioned about his delay he replied that his young son, later to become the Sfas Emes, had cried, insisting that he be shown the *Ushpizin* in the *sukkah*.

"Nu," responded the grandfather, "Why didn't you oblige?"

(סיפ"ח זוין מועדים ע' 152)

The Rebbeim added that throughout *sukkos* we are also visited by the seven Rebbes from the Baal Shem Tov through the Rebbe Rashab. They accompany us in our *avodah* of refining the world during the time of *galus*.

The Rebbe added further that on Shemini Atzeres we are visited by Shlomo Hamelech and the Friediker Rebbe.

(אג"ק רי"צ ח"ט ע' 444, ליל א' דחה"ס תש"נ)

CONSIDER THIS!

- Can the *kedusha* of the *sukkah* be felt? Does it affect us?
- What does it mean that the *Ushpizin* 'visit us'? What is the difference who heads the visit?



A WAY OF LIFE

Rabbi Chaim Hillel Raskin
Moreh Hora'ah - Beis Hora' Rechovot

Lumber for Schach

Can I use standard wooden planks for *schach*?

- The Torah says that we celebrate Sukkos when we gather "from your threshing floor and your wine cellar." From this *posuk*, Chazal derive that the *sukkah* itself (i.e. the *schach*) must be made with the likeness of wheat stubbles and vines that: (a) grow from the ground, (b) are no longer attached to the ground,¹ (c) cannot become impure (not food or a vessel).²
- Although wooden boards conform to these rules, Chazal disqualified boards which are wider than four *tefachim* (12.5 inches, 32 cm) since they are similar to standard roofing panels,³ and a wooden roof is *possul min haTorah* since it is made for protection and not for shade.⁴ Since these beams were disqualified, they are ineligible even if positioned sideways where they are narrower than four *tefachim*.⁵
- Modern roofs use much narrower beams, and so *halacha* extends this prohibition to any plank which is commonly used in roofing.⁶ This would preclude using 2x4's for *schach*.
- Another concern with beams of any size is that they can line up neatly and prevent the rain from entering. Halacha states that although a *sukkah* in which the sun's rays or the stars can't be seen is *kosher bdieved*, if the rain can't enter it is *possul*, since it is like the roof of a house.⁷ One would therefore have to place them sparsely and leave spaces between them.⁸
- Contemporary *poskim* are divided regarding 1"x2" boards or smaller sticks, since they don't line up neatly to keep the rain out and bear no similarity to a roof.⁹ In addition, there is a custom quoted in *poskim* not to use any lumber to be safe of using invalid beams. In practice, one should avoid using all lumber except in a situation of great need.
- The entire prohibition is only to use the beams to cover the *sukkah*. However, there is no problem at all to use wooden beams (narrower than four *tefachim*¹⁰) to support the *schach*.

1. סוכה י"א ע"ב והלאה. שו"ע"ר סי' תרכ"ט
 2. סוכה ט"ז ע"א. שו"ע"ר שם ס"ב. ושם סי' ט
 3. סוכה י"ד ע"א. שו"ע"ר שם סכ"ט.
 4. שו"ע"ר סי' תרכ"ו ס"א.
 5. גמ' שם ע"ב, שו"ע"ר שם ס"ל.
 6. הגהות מיימוניות הל' סוכה פ"ה אות א', מג"א או"ח סי' תרכ"ט סקכ"ב, שו"ע"ר שם סל"ב.
 7. שו"ע"ר סי' תרל"א ס"ה.
 8. שו"ע"ר סי' תרכ"ט סל"ב.
 9. שו"ת צי"א חט"ו סי' כ"ח (וכן היה מנהג ירושלים מקדם להקל). ספר הסוכה מילואים לפ"ח אות מ"ט. ובס' מבית לוי פט"ז אות י"ג שיש מחמירים בזה, וכן משמע מפשטות לשון שו"ע"ר סל"ב להחמיר.
 10. וברחב יותר מוד' טפחים ה"ה מחלוקת הפוסקים מצד מעמיד בדבר הפסול מדרבנן האם אין להעמיד בו לכתחילה – הפרמ"ג סי' תרכ"ט א"א סק"י"א ואמרי יושר ח"א סי' מ"ג מחמירים, ובביכורי יעקב סי' תרכ"ט סק"ד מיקל שהול' חומרא יתירה.

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OUR HEROES

Reb Dovid Horodoker



Reb Dovid Kievman (Horodoker) was born around 5644 (1884) in Horodok. At the age of fifteen he received *smicha* on all four sections of *Shulchan Aruch* and shortly after he traveled to study in Lubavitch. He soon became one of the elite *temimim* who the Rebbe Rashab held in high esteem. In 5670 (1910) he married the daughter of a businessman from Vitebsk and then moved to the city of Vietka where he served as the *rov* for the next eighteen years, 5671-5689 (1911-1929). He was in Samarkand during World War II where he passed away shortly before *Pesach* 5703 (1943) while baking *matzos*.



R. Dovid had the ability to concentrate while *davening* or learning that he was literally unaware of his surroundings. His children would sometimes climb on his lap during *davening*, but he remained oblivious. When the NKVD came to his home and found him in middle of *davening*, they left him alone.

Once, a group of chassidim wanted R. Dovid to finish *davening* and *farbreng* for them, but were afraid to ask him to hurry up. The forty men sang near him loudly without avail, and only when they began dancing did R. Dovid notice them.



R. Dovid once asked R. Mendel Futerfas, then a young *bochur*, to accompany him to the train station several hours before his train's departure time, as he was particular to begin a journey during the daytime as the Gemara advises. When R. Mendel expressed wonderment at what he would do there for so long, R. Dovid replied, "Whatever I'm doing here I could do there..."

(אוצר החסידים ברה"מ ע' 167, 177)



R. Dovid once complained to the Rebbe Rashab that being the *Rov* of his town he has to read the local newspapers to find out the happenings in his area. The Rebbe replied, "I too am a *Rov*, yet I don't read newspapers."

(אוצר החסידים ברה"מ ע' 178)

A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

One Aveira Doesn't Correct Another



"One Sukkos," related the *meshamesh bakodesh* Reb Sholom Ber Gansburg, "it looked like it was going to rain, so the Rebbetzin asked me to close the awning over the *schach*."

"I had obviously planned to open it before the Rebbe came, but it slipped my mind. Only once the Rebbe entered the *sukka* to make *kiddush* did I remember. I quickly ran and pulled it up."

"I was very distraught that I was late, and it bothered me for a few days. I couldn't get it out of my mind."

"One day of *yom tov*, the Rebbe approached me and whispered in my ear, 'One *aveira* cannot be corrected with a second *aveira*,' referring to my melancholy on *yom tov*."

(Bakodesh Chazisicha, page 70)