



# Ask The Rabbi

Researched at Ohr Somayach, Jerusalem

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OHR SOMAYACH אור שומאך  
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Parshas Vayelech

### WALLS ON WHEELS

Shira Schmidt from Kiryat Sanz, Netanya, Israel  
<shiras@netvision.net.il> wrote:

Dear Rabbi,

*I would like to know whether it is okay during Succot if one is traveling around long distances, to build a succah on an uncovered pick-up truck and move it around (of course, not on Yom Tov)? If it is parked, can you use it on Yom Tov? Thank you.*

Dear Shira Schmidt,

Good idea! The mishna states: "One who makes a succah on a wagon, or on a ship, it is a valid succah and one may enter it on Yom Tov." Similarly, you are allowed to build a succah on your pick up truck, and you can even use it on Yom Tom (when the truck is parked).

Sources:

- Tractate Succah 22b
- Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 628:3

### LITTLE KIPPUR

W. Mann from Australia <billm@alphalink.com.au> wrote:

Dear Rabbi,

*As I am of the opinion that Hoshana Rabbah was known as Yom Kippur Katan in parts of pre-war Eastern Europe, could you please confirm this? Looking forward to a prompt reply.*

Dear W. Mann,

Yom Kippur Katan ("Little Yom Kippur") commonly refers to the day before Rosh Chodesh, as many use the beginning of a new month for introspection and repentance.

I've never heard the phrase Yom Kippur Katan applied to Hoshana Rabbah; however, such usage is readily understood: Hoshana Rabbah, the seventh day of Succot, is in some ways a mini Yom Kippur. In the Midrash, G-d says to Abraham, "I will give your descendants a special day for

forgiveness: Hoshana Rabbah. If they are not forgiven on Rosh Hashana then let them try Yom Kippur; if not, then Hoshana Rabbah." Some of the Hoshana Rabbah prayers are similar to those of Yom Kippur in both text and melody.

On Hoshana Rabbah some people wish each other "pitka tava," which basically means "a good ticket." This refers to the idea that the final sealing of a person's yearly judgment occurs on Hoshana Rabbah. Rabbi Yeshaya Horowitz, author of Shelah (Shnei Luchot Habrit) compares the ten days between Yom Kippur and Hoshana Rabbah to the Ten Days of Repentance.

Sources:

- Shnei Luchot Habrit, Succah 70

### USHPIZIN

Mrs. Alexis S. Berman wrote:

Dear Rabbi,

*I seem to be having a difficult time understanding the concept of inviting Abraham, Isaac, et al, to join as guests in the succah. This is my first time observing Succot. I would appreciate it if you could explain it to me as easily as possible.*

Dear Mrs. Berman,

This concept that you mention is called the "ushpizin" — "guests." According to tradition, the ushpizin visit us in our succah every night of succot.

The source for the concept of the ushpizin is the Zohar: "When a person sits in his succah, the Shechina (G-d's Divine Presence) spreads its wings (metaphor) over it from above; and then Avraham together with the other five tzad5 dikim (Yitzchak, Yaakov, Yosef, Moshe and Aharon) and King David dwell together with him."

One of the important experiences of Succot is that of leaving the protection of our permanent dwellings and basking in the shade and protection of G-d's presence. Each of the seven ushpizin exemplified this idea during his lifetime. For instance, Avraham left the security of his home

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and the house of his father and went off on a journey protected by G-d's promise. Yitzchak had to leave his home and dwell amongst the Philistines because of famine. Yaakov had to leave his home and live with Lavan, etc.

The seven also correspond to attributes of G-d to which we aspire. For instance, Avraham represents chessed (loving kindness), Yitzchak gevurah (strength), etc. These seven attributes also refer to much deeper concepts — which are often discussed in Chassidic texts as well as the Kabbalah — called the Sefirot.

These are aspects of the way in which G-d interacts with His Creation. There is a custom attributed to the Arizal to invite seven poor people to eat in the succah corresponding to the seven ushpizin. You then have seven exalted guests from above, with seven earthly guests and G-d's Divine Presence hovering over it all.

Some Sephardic Jews have the custom of setting aside a chair in the succah for the guest of the day. The chair is decorated and an announcement is made each day that this is the chair of the ushpizin.

In my neighborhood here in Israel, the children have a beautiful custom of gathering together and then visiting every succah that has a child with the same name as that day's ushpizin. They dance and sing in the succah; and they get some treats for their effort. My children wait each year with such excitement for the night when the boys will come and dance in our succah. I suggest it for communities everywhere.

Sources:

- Zohar - Parshat Emor
- Rabbi Eliyahu Kitov - The Book of our Heritage (English edition), vol. 1, pp. 155-161
- Otzar Yisrael Encyclopedia - Ushpizin

#### **MOM, DAD, ME, AND THE TREE**

David Sher <106031.1643@compuserve.com> wrote:

*Dear Rabbi,*

*I've spent a short time (around 11 days) in Ohr Somayach in Jerusalem and a few weeks in Ohr Somayach in Monsey and have enjoyed both. Alas, it is difficult for adults such as myself with professions to be able to take off much more than a week or two every few years for immersion in Torah study.*

*So anyway, I've just arranged to have my parents have a succah. Since I have an apartment, it was impossible for me to have one. However there are questions that came up, particularly about the schach (roofing). I'll try to ask my rabbi, but it is a very busy time and perhaps you can point me in the right direction in case he is not available.*

*Here's my question: If a tree above a succah prevents one from seeing the sky because of its leaves, does that invalidate the succah? A tree is above the porch which would be the most convenient place for a succah. However, an alternate location with clear sky is available.*

Dear David Sher,

A succah must be directly under the sky; if it's built underneath anything else, it's invalid. Even if the foliage of the tree is very thin, it could still invalidate an otherwise valid succah according to some authorities. Therefore, extreme caution should be taken when building a succah in order to avoid placing it under a tree.

Sources:

- Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 626:1
- Aruch Hashulchan Orach Chaim 626

#### **HAVDALAH BREAK-FAST**

Chava Miriam from Miami, FL <amlsong@aol.com> wrote:

*Dear Rabbi,*

*I would like to know if after the Ne'ila (concluding) service of Yom Kippur, do we do a full Havdalah or just light a candle?*

Dear Chava Miriam,

After Yom Kippur, we recite the Havdalah service over a cup of wine, and we say the blessing over a havdalah candle as well. Unlike Shabbat, this candle should be lit from a flame that was alight throughout Yom Kippur. We omit the spices, unless Yom Kippur occurs on Shabbat.

Source:

- Aruch Hashulchan 624:1,2

# Yiddle Riddle

**Question:** Did Esav get nachas from any of his children? (Note: "Nachas" generally refers to getting satisfaction or pleasure from someone or something).

**Answer:** Yes. Nachas son of Reuel was the name of one of Esav's grandchildren (Bereshet 36:17). Hence, Esav got "Nachas" from his son Reuel. For this reason, some people bless each other with the phrase "You should have 'yiddishe' (Jewish) nachas, as opposed to 'Esav-type' nachas.

*Riddle submitted by Rabbi Dovid Alexander, Neve Yaakov Jerusalem*

## THE PUBLIC DOMAIN

*Comments, quibbles, and reactions  
concerning previous "Ask-the-Rabbi" features*

Re: Touching Lives

I just want to take this time to tell you how much I appreciate your commentary on the weekly Parsha. I look so forward to your comments. Several times, questions that I have had for many years are answered. I share these things with our family and friends. Sometimes a person has an influence on others and they don't even know it. You have influenced my life for a deeper love for Torah. Blessings, Shalom.

*Roi and Family < RoiGar@aol.com >*

Re: 3 Cheers for Ears (Ohrnet Shoftim)

Regarding your answer to the question "Why do we say a daily blessing for sight, but not for hearing": A friend of mine, Rabbi Zevi Trenk, once explained it a different way. He pointed out that when a person is asleep, all of his senses remain on alert. If you touch him or say his name, he'll wake up. If he smells fire, he'll wake up. But a person cannot see when he is asleep. Therefore we thank Hashem every morning for restoring our faculty of sight.

*Alter < alterbentzion@juno.com >*

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