

TORAS AVIGDOR

AUTHENTIC TORAH THOUGHT FOR LIFE

RAV AVIGDOR MILLER ZT"L

SUKKOS

WITH

RAV AVIGDOR MILLER ZT"L

BASED ON HIS BOOKS, TAPES & WRITINGS OF TALMIDIM

THE PERMANENT WORLD

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Part I. The Purpose of Yom Tov

Visiting the Mikdash

Tomorrow night begins the *yomtov* of Sukkos and so, of course, the subject tonight will be the *sukkah*. But first, we'll make a slight detour and speak about *yomtov* in general; we'll review together a fundamental principle that applies to all three *regalim*, and then a little bit later we'll see how it applies especially to Sukkos.

One of the most well known ancient provisions of the *shalosh regalim* is the mitzvah of appearing before Hashem in the Beis Hamikdash. Everybody, even the non-chachomim, know the mitzvah because we mention it on *yomtov* at Mussaf. And in the Torah, in one place, it's described like this: שְׁלֹשׁ יָרְאָהוּ כָּל זְכוּרֵיךָ, פְּעָמִים בְּשָׁנָה – *Three times every year, יְרָאָהוּ כָּל זְכוּרֵיךָ, אֵל פְּנֵי הָאֲדֹנָי הַזֶּה* – *all of your males should appear, should be seen before the Master Hashem* (Shemos 23:17).

Now even though you say that *possuk* and you might even know it, but that's not enough; we have to think about it too. In the olden days

when there was a Beis Hamikdash, so three times a year, on Pesach, Shavuot and Sukkos, all the men were required to go up to Yerushalayim. They had to leave over their homes and their farms and their herds and families – if their children and wives wanted to come along they could but if not they had to go themselves – and they thronged the highways and came to Yerushalayim to visit the Beis Hamikdash.

Visiting the Master

Now the Torah, in one of the places where it describes this mitzvah, uses an unusual expression: 'To show yourselves before the Adon.' 'Adon' means Master and if you're familiar with *Tanach* you know that Hakadosh Baruch Hu is almost never called Adon. Sometimes He's called א-ד-נ-י. More frequently He's called Elokim and even more frequently He's called Hashem, י-ק-ו. But that He should be called א-ד-נ-י is exceptional. If you look through the *chumash*, you'll see that it's almost unique.

And so the question is why in this case does it say that we show ourselves to the 'Master Hashem'? It could have said 'אֵל פְּנֵי הַ' or 'אֵל פְּנֵי הַ'

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הָאֵלֹקִים, like in other places. That would have been more standard, more appropriate.

And the answer is that the way it says it is the most appropriate. Because these three times a year, that's the purpose of our traveling to Yerushalayim. We are coming to demonstrate that we have an *Adon*, a Master, a Landlord; it's a national demonstration. We come to the Beis Hamikdash – that's where the Shechina is; it's the place that represents Hashem – to show ourselves before the Landlord as if to demonstrate, “We realize that the land is Yours; that You are the *Adon*, the Master, and we are only visitors and tenants on Your land.”

The Cottage Ceremony

Imagine that you're a baron in medieval times and you have a big estate. Or even today, let's say you're an owner of a huge estate, many square miles. And there are developments, cottages, where a lot of people live. You're a nice fellow and you let people live in the cottages. Maybe they pay a nominal rent fee but whatever it is, it's your estate and you give them permission. Not forever but it's a long term stay.

Now these people who live on your estate tend to forget that you're the landlord – they get used to the cottages and they do some work there; they add on a porch or maybe a second bathroom. They plant a little garden in the front and they put a little plaque on the door with their name. Oh, the name plaque! That's already something. And so they tend to forget about you. Even though there's a clause in the contract that stipulates that you are the lord of this entire estate and that you can remove them at your will; but the tenant doesn't think about that too often. It's his place now. And not only it is his but he'll be here forever; that's how he tends to think.

So you wish to institute a ceremony. And therefore you write it into the contract that

when somebody buys a cottage on your land, three times a year they have to trot over from their cottages and show themselves before you just to say, “Hello, boss.” That's all. Just to realize that they have someone who owns the property.

Understanding Yom Tov

That's what Pesach, Shavuot and Sukkot are for; to remember that actually you're only a guest here. Of course each *yomtov* has its own individual nuances, its own shades of meaning; but underlying all of them is a common purpose, to demonstrate that Hakadosh Baruch Hu is the *Adon*. Three times a year you leave your home, your farm, and you remind yourself that the whole thing is not as secure as you imagine. That's what *yomtov* is about.

I'm sure most of you have never heard that before. *Yomtov* means פָּנֵי הָאֲדוֹן! To recognize the Landlord!

It's an open *possuk*, only that we tend to ignore what's written openly. We like *pshetlach* and *drashos*. We like secrets, to hear what's beneath the surface; even though it's not there, we imagine something is beneath the surface. But here is an open verse which states a purpose of *aliyah l'regel* three times a year and that is to demonstrate that Hashem is the Master and we are only temporary visitors. Unfortunately today we're in *golus* so we can't do that anymore. It's a great loss for us. But picture in the ancient times when they all stood before Hashem and they were acknowledging to Him, “You're our *Adon*! You're the Master of the land!”

A Double Purpose

Now what's the purpose of emphasizing the fact? A double purpose. One is to know that He's the Landlord; you're not the landlord here. It's not our subject but that's already a big lesson. Because what usually happens? Out of habit,

people tend to forget. You became accustomed to being the owner of this place.

So the first thing this procedure tells you is that you're a tenant and Someone else is the Boss. You thought you're such a big *macher*? So *yom tov* says 'Get off your high horse and pay a visit to the Master.' That's very important. הַשָּׂמֶר לְךָ פֶּן תִּשְׁכַּח אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ – Watch yourself so that you shouldn't forget about Hashem, your G-d (Devarim 8:11).

But it's not enough that you remind yourself once in a while when you go to shul for *Mincha* and you see His name in the *siddur*: "Oh, Him. Yes, I remember Him from this morning, from *Shacharis*. He was mentioned in the *siddur* then too." *Pen tishkach* means it should be on your mind always, that it should be an attitude of yours. And therefore that's purpose number one, to take part in a ceremony which makes that truth real. It's a trip; you're trudging the roads to go up to the Beis Hamikdash to show yourself to the Landlord. It's a big deal, a long trip and a big ceremony, and it gets into your bones: "There's an *Adon!*"

The Second Purpose

But the second purpose – and this is what we're going to speak about now – is to let us know that not only is there a Landlord but that we don't really belong here; this is not our place. Yes, it's a nice cottage. It's fun and good times on this estate but I'm only a visitor here. The Landlord let you come for the summer or maybe a year or even more – hopefully it will be a hundred years – but whatever it is, it's only a visit. We're just visiting temporarily and actually we are headed to a better place, a more secure place.

And it's not Eretz Yisroel! Not even Eretz Yisroel when it is really Eretz Yisroel. Because this mitzvah was in effect when they were living

securely on their land. 'Visitors' means anywhere in this world and 'a better place' means a place even more secure and permanent than Eretz Yisroel in the best of times.

Because of their fathers, Avrohom, Yitzchok, v'Yaakov, the Jewish people have been given a promise that לְעוֹלָם יִרְשׁוּ אֶרֶץ – they're going to inherit the land forever (Yeshaya 60:21). Which land? The land that's worth inheriting. So the plain meaning is maybe Eretz Yisroel but it means much more than that. 'They're going to inherit a land that's forever' means actually forever! Because in Eretz Yisroel even if you'll be secure – let's say we'll have Dovid Melech Yisroel and his invincible army protecting us – but who can protect us against the *malach hamavess*?

The Real Land

So after you live nine hundred and so years like the oldest who ever lived on this earth, finally the bitter day comes when you must say farewell. And Dovid with all of his armies won't be able to help you. Moshiach won't prevent you from dying. So it's not *l'olam*.

And so wherever you are – even if you're in Eretz Yisroel, and you're with the Melech haMoshiach, and you live in a palace, and the borders are *secure shebi'secure* – it's still not forever. And Hakadosh Baruch Hu wants us to remember always the real destination that's promised to the people of Hashem and that's *Olam Haba*. That's our place. *Olam Haze*? It's just a temporary estate; we have a cottage and it seems permanent but actually we're just passing through.

No Replacement Tickets

And it's very important to remember because that promise, that every Yisroel has a place in the World to Come, is not a guaranteed promise. It's a ticket but you have to hold on to that ticket.

It's like a yeshiva that's making a big trip to an amusement park. And they give each one of their *talmidim* a ticket for himself and for his family too. But the *menahel* warns the boys, "There are no extra tickets, no replacements. So don't lose what I gave you."

And so when he comes home he tells his family, "We're going to an amusement park next Sunday and here are tickets!"

Then after a while, he gets into a fight with his younger brother and out of spite he tears up his ticket! And now the whole family goes next Sunday to the park but he remains home. He lost his ticket.

Hold On Tight!

And so, you have to keep hold of your tickets. If a Jew loses the ticket, if he stops saying *kriyas shema shachris v'arvis* or wearing *tefillin* or keeping Shabbos, or all the other things – that's how you hold onto the ticket– he's going to lose his admission to what he was rightfully entitled to have.

And the tighter you hold on to it – it means the more perfection you acquire in this temporary world – the greater the party will be for you in the world that's permanent. And that's why to be reminded of our station in this world, there's nothing more important than that. Because *כָּלֵלּוֹ שֶׁל דָּבָר* – the general principle of life is, *הָאָדָם לֹא נִבְרָא בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה* – that man was not created for his place in this world, *אֲלֵא בְּעוֹלָם הַבָּא* – rather for his place in the World to Come (Mesillas Yesharim, Hakdamah).

Part II. The Purpose of the Sukkah

The Purpose of Sukkos

Now with all this in mind, we're going to study the subject of the *yomtov* of Sukkos. Because even though all the *yomim tovim* have this *tzad hashaveh* of appearing before the Master Landlord and reminding ourselves that we are only visitors here in Olam Haze, Sukkos is especially made for that purpose.

Now, everyone knows what the mitzvah of *sukkah* is all about. At least superficially we all know. When the *yomtov* approaches you have to build a *sukkah* and if the weather permits, you have to move out of your house entirely, even to sleep in the *sukkah*. Of course today in some places it's dangerous to sleep outdoors in the *sukkah*; the criminals make it impossible. But that's how it really should be; we should be living in the *sukkah* day and night.

Vote for Sukkos–Safety

And I say, by the way, that it's our fault, the *frum* Jews' fault, because we don't know how to vote. Because at least *we* should be the ones who have the common sense; the *frum* Jews should be up in arms for law and order. Not to vote for politicians who will give us money for programs for Orthodox organizations, for yeshivas. We don't want that! We want politicians who will give money to hire more police! Politicians who will fight for our safety. Politicians who fight for law and order!

And by the way I want to bring up a shining hero. Seymour Kravitz! I never even heard of him before, but I say: vote for him. I don't know if he's a *shomer Shabbos* at all, maybe he's a gentile, but he deserves our vote. Why? Because he made an advertisement; his name and his picture with the slogan, 'Jail Not Bail.' 'Jail Not Bail'? That's the man for us! Maybe he doesn't

even mean it, but still if he's bold enough to put up that slogan we're all for him.

And those politicians or those Orthodox organizations who don't go along with us, we should boycott them and force them to do it our way! The trouble is we're not doing it and therefore we are suffering what our laziness brings upon us. It's our own fault if criminals are roaming the street and we can't sleep safely in the *sukkah*.

But suppose you have a safe *sukkah* that's built on a balcony and you're able to sleep there, so *frum* Jews move out of their homes and they live in the *sukkah*. They forsake their homes and they live in a flimsy little hut all week long. We eat there and sleep there and spend time there. That's the mitzvah.

The Secret of the Sukkah

But there's something else. Because the *maaseh hamitzvah*, the outward performance, is one thing, and the *pnimiyus* is something else. And when it comes to the mitzvah of living in a *sukkah* the *possuk* uses an interesting word that really explains the intention of this procedure.

The *possuk* states as follows: כָּל הָאֶזְרָח בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל יֵשְׁבוּ בְּסֻכּוֹת – Every *eizrach* of Yisroel should dwell in *sukkos* (Vayikra 23:42). That's a queer word to use. You don't find it used elsewhere; 'every *eizrach* should eat kosher', 'every *eizrach* should keep Shabbos', 'every *eizrach* should refrain from shaving with a razor blade'. It doesn't say that; it says every 'Jew', every 'Yisroel', something like that. Only when it comes to Sukkos it says *eizrach*.

And so you have to think about that. Why does it say *eizrach*? Such a peculiar word surely has a peculiar reason.

Second Class Citizens

And the answer is that *eizrach* means bona fide citizen, a certified citizen. You know a greenhorn, an immigrant who's new to America, so he feels like he doesn't belong. Even if he has his papers but he's quite uncomfortable in the beginning. He knows he's a visitor. But after a bit he begins to settle in. He finds an apartment and he learns the language a little bit. His children go to the public school and learn the cuss words. Little by little he becomes an American.

That's what happens to all of us in this world. We get our footing established and we feel like we belong. And some even do very well. Some people have brick homes. A brick home? Absolutely that's an *eizrach*. It's a big drawback when you're surrounded by a real brick home. Stucco after all is a flimsy thing. But suppose you have a real brick home, a sturdy building! So you begin to think you'll live as long as the building.

Lucky Renters

Now, if you live in a rented flat you could consider yourself lucky. Because when it's dripping from the ceiling, the bathroom above you is dripping down on you, you don't feel so much that you'll be here forever; every Monday and Thursday you threaten the landlord to leave. And he doesn't even care because soon as you move out, he'll put in three Puerto Rican families instead of you; he'll make more money.

But today even the renters live like kings of old. It's quite nice, even the small crowded apartments. People have bathrooms that in my days were considered Hollywood bathrooms. Bathtubs and fancy faucets. Even indoor plumbing means you're doing quite well. You're already an *eizrach*.

And if you have a bit of a home in a nice quiet street and you have a big garden, surely it's a danger. You walk out in the morning to shul and

you see your flowers and shrubs and you see the street is quiet and clean and you feel like you belong here; instinctively you know you'll be here for the next ten thousand years.

And that's the biggest danger for a Jew in this world. If Olam Haba is so far off so you forget about it; it becomes the last of your concerns. Maybe in nine thousand years, you'll start thinking about it. And that means that your ticket to Olam Haba, your station in the Next World is slipping out of your hands.

Bricks, Stucco and Schach

And therefore it's of the greatest urgency, it's an emergency, that you have to be reminded right now. The renter has to be reminded and the stucco-man has to be reminded more, and the brick-man even more: "All of you are in need of that reminder," the Torah says. "Because you feel that you're an *ezrach!* You feel you're a permanent settler here, a permanent burgher, a real citizen. And so you have to be reminded that it's a facade, a test; actually this world is only a פְּרוֹזְדוֹר לְפָנֵי הָעוֹלָם הַבָּא – *it's a hallway that leads to your place of permanent residence.*"

And how do we remind ourselves? The answer is move out! אֲמַרְהָ תוֹרָה כֹּל שִׁבְעַת הַיָּמִים צֵא מִדִּירְתָּ קִבְעָ וְשׁוּב בְּדִירְתָּ אֶרְעֵי – Hashem says, "Leave your 'permanent' home and enter a temporary dwelling" (Sukkah 2a). And the loyal Jew listens. So you go out into a flimsy little hut. Even if you'll decorate it and bring out your table and chairs, what is it after all? What kind of roof is this over your head? It's a weak kind of protection. Some sticks, some *schach*. It could rain too and you'll get wet.

And the walls are also not so permanent either; sometimes a heavy wind can make the walls creak. And when the children yell or misbehave you're embarrassed from the

neighbors. They hear everything. It's quite temporary.

The Torah's Eviction Notice

And therefore, if you do it right, if you put your mind to it, the *sukkah* becomes a *beis medrash* – it's teaching you Torah ideals, Torah attitudes. You're being reminded that you're heading to a better, more permanent place. Hopefully it will be later than sooner but that's what the *sukkah* tells us.

Isn't that a beautiful idea? Hakadosh Baruch Hu, in order to do a big favor to His people, He serves us with a yearly eviction notice. But not like when the sheriff does it, with a court order and with police. This eviction notice is fun. We go out in the *sukkah* and we enjoy ourselves. It's a lot of fun to go out into the *sukkah* with the family. Very good! The Am Yisroel is always busy with good times; that's what Hakadosh Baruch Hu wants. But in the midst of *simchas yom tov* we never forget the purpose; once a year, for seven days, we are evicted from our homes in order to remember that our homes aren't forever, that this world is not forever.

Don't Worry, Be Happy

Now, there's a reason why I made sure to point out that the *sukkah* is fun. Because my dear friends, I don't want you to be disheartened by that reminder that you're only passing through. Oh no! It's a happy reminder. Because that's the reaction of all those who are facing the prospect of Olam Haba; that this world is a much happier world.

It's not a silly idea I'm telling you. When a man knows – like all of us know – that he's in this world for the next 65 million years, it's boring. The whole world is boring, it's not interesting, when you still have 65 million years ahead of you! But when you know it's a little less than 65

million years then you think, “Maybe I should enjoy it.”

Melamdin Have More Fun

It's like the poor *melamed* who goes to the country in the summer for only a week or two; he can't afford to pay for the whole summer so they find a short-term place. You know, when you're there for two months you have plenty of time and so you're not in a hurry to enjoy it and it becomes boring too after a while. But while you're there you notice those who are coming for a one-week vacation and you see that these one-weekers, they come along with fishing rods. They come along with hiking boots. They come with plans how they're going to do everything during that week; they'll go here and they'll go there.

Because they know they're only here for one week, they come with the intention of getting the most they can out of it. And so they go swimming all the time and fishing and hiking and looking and jumping. They're busy all the time because they know time is short and they want to get the most out of this one week. Which means, a tourist has more fun and a tourist makes more use of the opportunities.

And so that's what the *sukkah* is; for seven days we're reminded that our brick home is also just a *sukkah*. And that gives a zest to life! We enjoy the lesson of the *sukkah*, the reminder that this world is fleeting, that it's passing by and actually we are heading to our permanent station in the Next World. And we enjoy the *diras arai* of Olam Hazeh so much more because of that.

Part III. Extending Your Yom Tov

More Than Happiness

But happiness, that's not the only benefit. It's very important but there's something else, a

second thing, and we can't leave it out. When a person understands that he's only visiting this world and he has firm conviction in the World To Come, in the afterlife, then he's going to be very careful in utilizing this life. But not utilizing only for happiness; he's going to utilize it to accomplish.

That's what Dovid Hamelech expressed in Tehillim. In *kapitel* קי"ט, he says like this: גַּר אֲנִי בְּאֶרֶץ – “I am a stranger in this world,” and then he continues, וְאֵל תִּסְתֵּר מִמֶּנִּי מִצְוֹתֶיךָ – and don't hide from me any of the commandments (119:19). What's the connection? “I'm a stranger and therefore I want to fulfill the mitzvos”?

It means what we're saying now. Dovid said, “I know that I'm only visiting; I'm just passing through. And if that's the case, I know what to ask for. Please Hashem, give me success in learning Your Torah and success in performing Your mitzvos. I am a stranger after all.”

It means if I had no function other than to be here, like a rabbit or a monkey, so my function is fulfilled by existing. I'd fulfill my function by eating and drinking and going to the bathroom. I could go in the woods and hike, climb trees, whatever it is, and finished. And if I'm going to ask for something I'll ask for This World things; a fancier car or a fancier chandelier. But that's not my function. I realize that there's another place where I'm going to be and that's my home. So therefore, גַּר אֲנִי בְּאֶרֶץ – because I'm only a stranger in this world, so Dovid knows what to ask for. He knows what he needs.

'All Aboard'

It's like the man, let's say, who's waiting at the bus terminal of Penn Station or Grand Central. He's waiting for the train to come and pick him up and so he wants to sit. Is he going to order from the local furniture store that they should

bring an expensive sofa? Or even any kind of a sofa?

You don't order chairs or a dinette set because any moment the conductor will come in and announce, "All aboard" and you can't take anything with you except a few small things that you packed in your suitcase. **בְּשַׁעַת פְּטִירְתּוֹ שֶׁל אָדָם** – *When a man has to leave and they call all aboard,* **אֵין מְלִוִּין לוֹ לְאָדָם לֹא כֶסֶף וְזָהָב** – *all the cumbersome things you don't take along;* **אֲלָא תוֹרָה וּמִצְוֹת טוֹבִים** – *only the things you can carry in your suitcase, your torah and mitzvos* (Avos 6:9).

Make Money and Buy a Sofa

It doesn't mean you shouldn't beautify your home. It doesn't mean you shouldn't make money. Absolutely you need money. It costs big money to raise a Jewish family. Even an Italian family costs – rent is money, shoes are money, food is money. And a Jewish family many times over. *Schar limud* is money. You have to marry off your children. To buy a *ben Torah* for your daughter can cost a small fortune.

So even though you're only visiting, it's not as simple as waiting at Grand Central Station. But it's only different in proportion – the *yesod*, the attitude, is the same. When you know that you're just passing through you think differently. You begin to live differently; you live like a visitor.

The Tzaddik Without a Sofa

It's like the story, you remember, that was told here before. Once a visitor came to see the Chafetz Chaim, *zichrono livracha*, and he walked in and saw him sitting in a little room. There was no furniture except a table made of boards nailed together and a bench also of boards nailed. So he thought that maybe they were renovating the house inside, the real house, and the Chafetz Chaim, in the meantime, was exiled to the empty

room with makeshift furniture while they were preparing the house for him.

So he said, "Rebbe, where is the furniture?"

So the Chafetz Chaim said to the visitor, "And where is your furniture?"

So he said, "I'm only a tourist – I'm just a visitor here."

So the Chafetz Chaim said, "So am I."

And that's how the great men lived – that this world was only a temporary place. By the way, you should remember that the Chafetz Chaim was here a long time, however. He was here until ninety two years, at least. And he was in good health and he had red cheeks until the last year. But he was only a visitor, a happy visitor but a visitor nonetheless. And because he knew that, he accomplished.

The Thirtieth Thought

The Chofetz Chaim knew what the Chovos Halevavos tells us. The Chovos Halevavos, in the Shaar Cheshbon HaNefesh, he has thirty *cheshbonos*, thirty forms of contemplation, which he recommends for people who want to make progress. If you want to achieve something, you have to spend some time thinking. Of course, you can be a good Jew if you don't strain your mind too much. But if you want to be something better, so it's necessary to contemplate certain ideas.

Now, the thirtieth one, the last one, is as follows: **הַשְּׁבוֹן הָאָדָם עִם נַפְשׁוֹ** – *A man should think to himself,* **בְּתִנְיָאֵי הַגְּרוּת בְּעוֹלָם הָזֶה** – *the conditions of being a sojourner, a visitor in this world.* And he goes away further discussing that subject, the various good results that come to a man who makes this *cheshbon* with himself and learns to live accordingly.

The Thirtieth Means Thrills

He says that it's one of the most important of all *cheshbonos* because it includes everything. Not only because you'll enjoy life more. Like we said before, absolutely you will. The *tzaddikim* are tourists in this world and they enjoy this world much more sharply, with more zest than anyone else. You see *tzaddikim* don't get into cars Saturday night and chase around. People are looking for pleasures but the *tzaddikim* have them already; they have their thrills already.

Yeshiva boys too; they don't take a shot in the arm because they have their thrills; they're happy with the *beis hamedrash*. They are thrilled in the *beis hamedrash*. Even to walk from the house to the yeshiva is for them fun. They never stopped to analyze it, but when a person understands that this world is only a temporary visiting place, he certainly gets much more out of it whether he is aware of it or not.

The First Ushpizin

But the thirtieth *cheshbon*, to contemplate that we're only passing through, is most important because it means you're attaching yourself to the promise that Hakadosh Baruch Hu made to Avraham. When Hakadosh Baruch Hu wanted to promise our father, Avraham, a great reward, he promised him as follows, וְאַתָּה וְאֶתְּיָדְךָ בְּשָׁלוֹם – “You will come to your fathers in peace” (Bereishis 15:15).

So let's understand what that promise is. Is Hakadosh Baruch Hu telling him that you're going to have peace down to the last moment of your life? So it should say, וְאַתָּה וְאֶתְּיָדְךָ בְּשָׁלוֹם – you'll come to the grave in peace. But He's telling him, “You'll come to your fathers in peace,” which means that Avraham is going to rejoin his forefathers. He's going to rejoin Sheim and his son, Eiver; and further back, Noach and Adam.

He'll rejoin all the *tzaddikim b'shalom*. And *shalom* means he'll be successful.

When he comes there he'll meet once more with his ancestors – Avraham met some of them in his lifetime – but now he's going to rejoin them with great success. Because he knew that he was heading there so he prepared and now he's returning as an accomplished person.

Emulating the First Ushpizin

Like somebody who leaves home and he goes to a different country, a far-off country, to make money. And because he knows why he's in this place so he makes out well and he becomes wealthy and then finally he decides to return home to visit the old folks. And he comes back with news of his great success, of his big honors, his big achievements and that's his happiness to return home with a report of success.

And that promise to Avraham is a promise to all of us. Hashem said אַל תִּירָא אֲבָרָם שְׂכָרְךָ הַרְבֵּה קָדָר – Don't be afraid Avraham; your reward is very great! What reward is that? Only Olam Haba is called great; other than that there's no reward that can be called *harbei me'od*. And that promise is to all of his descendants: כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל יֵשׁ לָהֶם חֵלֶק לְעוֹלָם הַבָּא – As long as we hold on to the ticket, as long as we learn the lesson of the *sukkah* and keep it with us after we go back into our brick homes, בָּא יָבוֹא בְרֵנָה נִשְׂא אֶלְמָתָיו – we'll come back singing, bringing the sheaves of the crop that we sowed and reaped by our life in this world (Tehillim 126:5).

That's a good thing to think about when Avraham comes in the *sukkah* to be our guest. What does it mean that Avraham Avinu will be our guest? It means that the *dugmah*, the influence, should come into our *sukkah* and be *mashpiah* upon us. We should think about that great promise made to Avraham and how he lived because of that. That's more important

than Avraham Avinu coming into our *sukkah*. If he came and we didn't think about anything, if we didn't think about who Avraham Avinu was, it would be a waste of time – a waste of a visit. But when Avraham's influence comes, that's more important than Avraham himself.

Extending Yom Tov

And that's why it's so important to live with Sukkos all year long. You can go back into your homes. You can enjoy your Hollywood bathrooms. Why not? I don't begrudge that from you. Me? Who cares what I say? Hakadosh Baruch Hu doesn't begrudge that. But it's on condition that you have the right attitude in your head, that you took with you into the house the attitude you gained in the *sukkah*.

That's one of the lessons of Isru Chag, that we don't want to part from the lessons of the *yomtov*. If we understand that Sukkos is not only a vacation, a time to spend fun times with the family – it's good times after all, to sit with your family in the *sukkah*; if it's good weather especially. And if you're fortunate you have your sons-in-law and daughters-in-law there too. Good times!

But when we know that it's the lessons of the *sukkah* that matter most so we don't want to let go so fast. Even when Sukkos is over; it's time to take down the decorations and take down the *diras arai* and put everything away. But the lesson of *diras arai*, that you're not putting away; that you're taking back into the house. And that's how you'll live happily and successfully all year long.

Have a Wonderful Yom Tov

This week's booklet is based on tapes:

136 – Alone With Him | **245** – Citizens of Olam Haba
271 – Tenants in the World | **614** – The Succah | **756** – The World and the Succah | **E-250** – In His Eternal Succah

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ש א ת א ב ר ו ו י ג ד ד ז ח ט י י ו י א ק ר ו ל ר

QUESTION

Besides for the mitzvah of picking up the *lulav* and *esrog* we also shake it by *Hodu* in Hallel. What should we think when we shake the *lulav* by *Hodu*?

ANSWER

So when you do the *naanuim* tomorrow morning and you say, הוֹדוּ לַה' בִּי טוֹב – We raise You up Hashem for all of the good You've done to us, so you start thinking. Didn't I marry off my daughters well? It wouldn't be a bad idea to make one *naanuim* for this son-in-law. "Ay yah yay! I'm thanking You Hashem for this son-in-law." And by the next *naanuim*, הוֹדוּ לַה' בִּי טוֹב, "I'm thanking You Hashem for the next son-in-law." That's how to work it. It's such a very big thing to have married off your children well that you can never thank enough for a good son-in-law or for a good daughter-in-law. And that's how you should think when you make the *naanuim*. It shouldn't just be a mechanical thing.

You think it's silly! It's not silly at all. I do it. Many times I think like this: One *naanuim* is for my oldest son-in-law. Boruch Hashem I have a good *eidim*. Boruch Hashem! And boruch Hashem, I have a good second son-in-law. And boruch Hashem for the next *eidim*. Boruch Hashem, there's no trouble there. I never hear any *machlokes*. My daughters live in *shalom* with my *eidim*.

Boruch Hashem, I'm happy. Such good *eidims*. That's why we make *naanuim*. That's what it means. "I'm thanking You for what You've given to me."

TAPE # 757 (September 1989)