



Greater Washington Community Kollel SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"L

Presented by Rabbi Menachem Winter, Rosh Kollel

From Our Archives

"And you shall take for yourselves on the first day the fruit of the tree of beauty (Esrog), leaves of palm branches (Lulav) and myrtle branches (Hadas) and willows of the brook (Arava), and rejoice before Hashem your G-d for seven days" (Vayikra 23:40).

Rambam states that, although there is a mitzvah to be joyous on every festival, there is an extra measure of joy and happiness on Sukkos (Laws of Lulav 8:12). Indeed, the Talmud in Tractate Sukkos describes in great detail the transcendental joy and celebration that took place in the Temple on Sukkos.

What is it about Sukkos that engenders such happiness and induces such celebration?

The secret to this holiday's unique character may be found in the two prominent mitzvos of Sukkos: the mitzvah to bind and take the Four Species and the commandment to dwell in Sukkah huts. Regarding the mitzvah of the Four Species, the Medrash (Vayikra Rabbah) shares with us the great symbolism and power of this commandment. Each one of the Four Species represents a different segment of the Jewish people in relation to their level of spiritual attainment: someone with (a) both Torah scholarship and good deeds; (b) good deeds, but lacking Torah scholarship; (c) Torah scholarship, but lacking good deeds; and (d) neither good deeds nor Torah scholarship. G-d, in His profound love for all of His children, wishes to bestow His bounty and shine His countenance even upon the unworthy. He therefore commands that all the segments be bound together in a unifying bouquet, which allows the undeserving to merit — through the truly righteous — G-d's blessing.

The mitzvah to dwell in Sukkah huts focuses more on our attitude towards our transient existence. A chief theme discussed by the commentators is that, by leaving the comfort of our furnished homes to live in sparse and flimsy Sukkah huts, we are able to rid ourselves of our physical and material inclinations. This divestiture of the corporeal allows us to realize and strengthen our spiritual element. Rabbi Shmuel Rozovsky comments that it is this very muting of the physical, and nurturing of the spiritual, that promotes and fosters the unity of the Four Species. Our acquisitive and material nature pulls us in disparate and diverse directions. Our spiritual character, on the other hand, binds us in common purpose and mission, allowing us to unite together as one.

Rabbi Rozovsky concludes that it is these two mitzvos that create the potent power of unity and infuse the Sukkos Festival with such great joy. Only when we are united, standing together before G-d, can true gladness be attained.

Wishing you a wonderful and joyous Sukkos!

TABLE TALK

POINT TO PONDER

If rain is falling, one should enter his home; however, on the first night of Sukkos, one must eat a kzayis of bread in the Sukkah, even if it is raining. (Rema Orach Chaim 639, 5)

Even though one is uncomfortable eating in a sukkah when it is raining, there is an obligation on the first night of Sukkos that one must eat, no matter the circumstances. This is derived from a word in a verse which links Pesach and Sukkos. On the fifteenth night of Nissan there is an absolute obligation to eat matzoh, so too, on the fifteenth night of Tishrei there is an unconditional obligation to eat in a Sukkah. (Mishna Berura ibid 35)

It seems from the Mishna Berura that there are two mitzvos regarding eating in a Sukkah. 1) One must dwell 2) One must eat on the first night. If so, shouldn't there be a separate bracha for the first night specifically on the mitzva to eat in the Sukkah on the first night?" Why do we only recite a bracha regarding the obligation to dwell in a Sukkah?

PARSHA RIDDLE

Which mitzvos does a person perform with his or her whole body?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

What similarity is there between Yom Kippur and Asara B'Teves?

Answer: They are both never pushed off.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Ve'Zos Ha'Berachah*, the tribe of Levi is praised for its unwavering loyalty to Hashem and His will (33:9): "for they have observed Thy word, and kept Thy covenant." Rashi explains that "Thy covenant" (*brischa*) refers to the covenant of circumcision (*bris milah*): although the general Jewish populace did not practice circumcision during the sojourn in the desert (as per *Yehoshua* 5:2-7), the tribe of Levi did (and cf. *Seforno*). [The *Metzudas David* (*Yehoshua* *ibid.*), on the other hand, seems to assume that the desuetude of circumcision was universal, without exception].

The Talmud (*Yevamos* 71b-72a) asks why circumcision was not practiced in the desert, and offers two answers, both variations on the basic theme that it was too dangerous, either because of the rigors of the journey, or due to certain prevailing meteorological conditions. But if this was the case, why did the tribe of Levi nevertheless practice circumcision?

The *Avnei Nezer* (*YD* 323:2-5, *OC* 453:5 and see also *YD* 326:11-12) explains that the commandment of circumcision cannot be (permanently) ignored due to a remote fear (*chashash*) of danger, since after all, every circumcision involves some risk of mortality (as the Talmud (*Gittin* 57b) explains: "'Yea, for thy sake are we killed all the day long' (*Tehillim* 44:23) ... this is circumcision, that was given on the eighth day [for sometimes [the infant] dies' - Rashi]"). In support of this bold suggestion, the *Avnei Nezer* adduces the position of the Ramban that the failure to perform circumcision in the desert rendered the general populace ineligible for the Paschal sacrifice, despite the standard rule that someone with a legitimate dispensation from the commandment is not rendered ineligible. It is thus evident, argues the *Avnei Nezer*, that the general failure to circumcise was actually improper, despite the risk factors asserted by the Talmud.

The *Beis Yitzhak* (*YD* 2:90:2), on the other hand, assumes that the risk did indeed justify the general populace's neglect of circumcision, and that the tribe of Levi voluntarily assumed the risk. He derives from this that one may voluntarily perform a circumcision that entails at least some level of risk not only upon oneself, but even upon one's child.

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

WHO AM I?

#1 WHO AM I ?

1. I am for your heart.
2. I am for your lips.
3. I am for your spine.
4. I am for your eyes.

#2 WHO AM I ?

1. Normally I am four.
2. Sometimes I am three.
3. I may be five.
4. I am not a sucker, rather a ...

Last Week's Answers:

#1 *Vidui* (I make you bend; I make you bang; I am for the mouth; I am for the heart.)

#2 *Shmoneh Esrei* (Most days I am 3 times; some days I am 4 times; this Shabbos I am 5 times; my name is one off.)

All children 13 and under who answer a "Who Am I?" correctly will be entered into a raffle to

Win a
SNAP CIRCUITS
ARCADE SET



Congratulations to
Eliezer and Binyomin Kerchner
and others for answering last week's questions correctly!

Visit gwckollel.org to submit your answers.

Answer as many as you can.
Each correct answer will entitle you
to another raffle ticket and increase
your chances of winning!

THE NEXT
RAFFLE WILL BE
OCTOBER 17TH.

KOLLEL BULLETIN BOARD

Greater Washington Community Kollel wishes all of its friends, supporters, participants, and the entire community a joyous Sukkos!

The Fall Semester begins Sunday, October 22!

To sponsor a day of learning for \$100 please contact our office at info@gwckollel.org.