



TORAH WEEKLY

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Sukkos 5781

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A Taste of Torah Lifting Mundane Matters

by Rabbi Dov Holczer

The festival of Sukkos has many different mitzvos associated with it. There is the mitzvah of *sukkah*, the *Dalet Minim* (Four Species) and, in the times of the *Bais Hamikdash* (Temple), *nisuch hamayim*, the special offering of water that was poured upon the *Mizbe'ach* (Altar) every day of Sukkos. Every mitzvah has its own lofty roots and reasoning; for example, the *sukkah* represents the *ananei hakavod*, the Divine Clouds of Glory that protected the Jewish People during their time in the desert, while each of the *Dalet Minim* represents a different type of Jew as well as different important parts of the human body, all uniting to serve our Creator. However, there is an overarching lesson to be learned regarding the performance of mitzvos that comes to the fore on Sukkos.

The Talmud (Megilla 26b) quotes a *beraisa* (non-Mishnaic Tannaic teaching): "Things that are used to service a mitzvah can be thrown away, but things that were used to service *kedusha* (something sanctified) need to be hidden away. These are articles used for a mitzvah: *Sukkah*, *lulav*, *shofar* and *tzitzis*. And these are items used for *kedusha*: Pouches used to hold sacred writings, tefillin and mezuzahs, Torah scroll coverings, and tefillin coverings."

It is clear that an item used for a mitzvah does not retain a special sanctity following the performance of the mitzvah, but items used for *kedusha* do. An item used for *kedusha* attains sanctity in its own right because of what it services. A cloth used to cover a Torah scroll, for example, receives its own *kedusha*. However, articles used for a mitzvah do not attain their own, independent sanctity. Rather, the item has sanctity only during the time the mitzvah is being performed. Apparently, the *kedusha* exists only because it is, at that moment, being used for a mitzvah; it does not gain an inherent sanctity that lasts after the mitzvah is done. What is the difference these two groups?

The answer lies in the designation of

use for the item. Articles that are used for *kedusha* purposes are designated for that purpose, and they are not meant for another use. This idea can be seen from the Mishna in Megillah (25b) that teaches that if one wants to take an article that is used with one sanctified object and use it for another sanctified object, he may only do so if the new use is for a more sanctified purpose, such as a cloth used to cover tefillin being used to cover a Torah scroll. A downgrade in sanctity, such as using the Torah scroll cover to cover tefillin, would not be permitted. This halacha is based on the aforementioned idea that the purpose of this item is to service a sanctified article, and it thus takes on sanctity on the level of the item it services; a downgrade in what it services is therefore forbidden.

Using an object for a mitzvah, however, does not entail making its permanent status a "mitzvah object." When one takes the Four Species on Sukkos in fulfillment of the mitzvah, they achieve a temporary level of sanctity while in use for the mitzvah. However, before and after the mitzvah is done, they are just a palm branch, citron, myrtle branch and willow branch. A hut with branches as a roof that provides shade from the sun is used to fulfill the mitzvah of dwelling in the *sukkah*, but it was, and continues to be, a hut that provides shade. The inherent state of the item is not altered, and the object therefore does not become sanctified outside of the time it's used for the mitzvah. (It should be noted that, nonetheless, these items should be discarded in a respectful matter, such as wrapped in a bag before being placed in the trash, so as to show respect for the mitzvah these items were part of.)

This idea, of taking what is an otherwise ordinary, mundane object, and infusing it with holiness for a few moments as part of a mitzvah, holds an important lesson for us. The world around us, with its seemingly endless array of ordinary items, is given to us as a means to bring holiness

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Stories for the Soul

Earn Your Share

In the town of Berditchev one year, there was no esrog to be had. Concerned, Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev (1740-1809) told some of the members of the community to wait at the crossroads near the town for passersby in the hope that one of them would have an esrog that they could use.

Soon enough, a traveler was brought before Reb Levi Yitzchak; indeed, he had an esrog. However, he was on his way home for the holiday, and home was quite some distance from Berditchev. Despite the many pleas and entreaties of Reb Levi Yitzchak and the townspeople, the man insisted he was going to continue on his way.

At this point, Reb Levi Yitzchak offered the man a deal. If he would agree to remain in Berditchev for Sukkos, allowing the town use of his esrog, Reb Levi Yitzchak would give the man half of his own portion in the World to Come. Upon hearing this, the man agreed to remain.

The first night of Sukkos arrived, and the esrog-bearing guest returned home from shul to his lodgings. Upon entering the house, he found the table set with wine, challos, and a full holiday meal. The man was astounded; did his host not eat in the *sukkah*?! He hurried out to the courtyard and discovered that, indeed, his host was in a *sukkah* with his family. However, they informed their guest that he was not allowed to enter their *sukkah*.

The poor fellow was flabbergasted and began going from house to house, looking for a *sukkah* in which to eat. However, he was turned down by all. Eventually, the man made his way to Reb Levi Yitzchak, who informed him that he had ordered the townspeople not to give the man access to a *sukkah*. "I will only allow you to use a *sukkah* if you release me from my promise to give you half my share in the World to Come,"

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Kollel Happenings

KOLLEL CLASSES CONTINUE VIA ZOOM MEETING

The Kollel is continuing many of its classes and offering new classes via Zoom Meeting. You can tune in to live classes online or call in on a phone. For a full schedule and the links and phone numbers to access this treasure trove of Torah, visit www.denverkollel.org or email info@denverkollel.org.

BUILD YOUR LEGACY AND SECURE THE FUTURE OF TORAH WITH LIVE ON/LIFE & LEGACY

The Kollel is one of 28 local organizations selected to be part of Rose Community Foundation's Live On/LIFE & LEGACY program, which focuses on creating financial stability for the future through planned giving. Think it's not for you? Think again! Anyone can make a planned gift, no matter the amount. Visit www.denverkollel.org, email rmh@denverkollel.org or call 303-820-2855 for more information.

HELP BUILD THE FUTURE OF TORAH IN DENVER

Claim your part in building the future of Torah in Denver! The Kollel is in the midst of a capital campaign to build a three-story, state-of-the-art Torah Center that will serve the entire Denver Jewish community. To contribute, or for dedication opportunities and details on the building, visit denverkollel.org or email info@denverkollel.org.

Parsha Quizzers

Parsha Quizzers are based upon Parshas Vizos Habracha

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| 1) Greeting the bride | 4) Chanukah miracle |
| 2) Tribal nation | 5) Monthly crop |
| 3) Live in two worlds | 6) Strength and beauty |

Lives of Our Torah Leaders

Rabbi Menashe ben Yisrael - Part XXIII

Rabbi Menashe published many works on Jewish theology, death, reincarnation, Moshiach and the Messianic era. His most famous Torah work to gain acceptance in the Jewish world, *Nishmas Chaim*, focused on the subject of the soul, its immortality and its reincarnation.

A Taste of Torah

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into our lives and into the world. Every object can be a vehicle for us to serve and grow closer to Hashem. All we need to do is use it in the proper way and with the proper intentions or, in the case of a forbidden item such as non-kosher food, to avoid it. Of course, some items can be used only in the proper time. One who shakes a *lulav* and *esrog* on Chanukah is doing nothing more than shaking a palm branch and citrus fruit, even if he feels he is doing this for Hashem. Proper intent and following the laws and details in using mundane items of this world can bring sanctity into all of our actions.

Perhaps this idea can be best illustrated through the act of eating. Two people can be eating the same type of food side-by-side,

and yet one can be doing a mitzvah while the other is not. One person eats to satisfy his hunger and nothing more, but the other person is eating because he wants to have strength to study Torah, pray and perform mitzvos. The first person is doing nothing special, but the latter person is performing a mitzvah and engaging in an act of sanctity through his eating.

Let us learn from the mitzvos of Sukkos to uplift the mundane and make it holy. Simply working on having the proper intent during our seemingly ordinary activities will help ensure that we do not waste the opportunities that constantly present themselves.

Stories for the Soul

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declared Reb Levi Yitzchak.

The man, faced with the prospect of not eating in a *sukkah*, decided it was more important to fulfill the mitzvah, and agreed to the demand. He then took the food that had been set up for him in his place of lodging and made his way to a *sukkah* to have his meal.

Following the holiday, Reb Levi Yitzchak

called the man back as he was preparing to leave. "I now give you half my share in the World to Come, as we agreed originally," he declared. He then explained himself. "I did not want you to attain a share in the World to Come so cheaply. You needed to earn it! By agreeing to forfeit that great reward in order to fulfill the mitzvah of *sukkah*, you are now deserving of this portion in the World to Come!"

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|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| (1) Greeting the bride 33:2 s.v. mShini | (3) Live in two worlds 33:6 s.v. yechi, v'tal |
| (2) Tribal nation 33:3 s.v. af | (4) Chanukah miracle 33:11 s.v. michatz |
| (5) Monthly crop 33:14 s.v. gersh | (6) Strength and beauty 33:17 s.v. v'kamei |

Parsha Quizzers - Answers