

## INNER MEANING BEHIND THE 4 SPECIES & THE SUKKAH

**In** the Yom Tov of Sukkos, the main mitzvos are to hake the four species and to sit in the sukkah. (*There used to also be the mitzvah of nisuch hamayim in the Beis Hamikdash, but we no longer have the Beis Hamikdash*).

**The** mitzvah of the four species

involves movement – we shake them and move them around, which symbolizes how we want to move away from evil, and instead to come closer to Hashem. By contrast, the mitzvah of sitting in the sukkah involves no movement at all – we sit in it and don't move at all. This symbolizes a different aspect of our

avodas Hashem: to reach the point of “non-movement.”

**In** other words, there are two steps in our avodas Hashem- sometimes we have to “move”, and sometimes we “don't move”.<sup>1</sup>

## SUKKOS OF TODAY AND SUKKOS OF THE FUTURE

**There** is a halachah on Sukkos that we have to sit specifically in the “shadow” (*tzail*) of the sukkah. This is the sukkah of nowadays – we sit in the sukkah's shadow, which symbolizes how Hashem's radiance is concealed from us.

**However**, in the future, Chazal state that the sukkah will be made from the skin of the leviathan – it will be a sukkah of entirely light. The Sukkah of the future will be the perfect sukkah, in which “all citizens” (*kol ha'eizrach*) will be enveloped within

it; “ezrach”, “citizen”, is rooted in the word “zerichah”, “light.” This alludes to the sukkah of the future, which will be totally light. This is because the depth behind the sukkah is not just to be “in the shadow” of the sukkah, but to sit in the light of Hashem.

**Dovid** Hamelech says that “Hashem is my light, and my salvation.” Chazal expound on this verse that “my light” is referring to Rosh Hashanah, while “my salvation” is referring to Yom Kippur. Sukkos, which is the continuation of

this, is the actual revelation of “my light”, Rosh Hashanah – which is entirely Hashem's light.

**It** is only nowadays that the sukkah is like a “shadow”, because since there is evil in the world, the evil places a “shadow” on the “light” of Rosh Hashanah and dims it from its full effect. But in the future, there will be no more evil, and then Sukkos will no longer be a concept of shadow, but rather a concept of complete spiritual light.

## SHEMINI ATZERES – D'VEYKUS WITH HASHEM

**Even** higher than Sukkos is the level of Shemini Atzeres, which is the day of complete unity between Hashem and the Jewish people. It is a power that is

above even the spiritual light revealed through Rosh Hashanah and Sukkos.<sup>2</sup> Chazal say of this day that Hashem said, “Remain with me one more day”. This is the great desire of Hashem toward

His people, and it was there even before Hashem created light on the first day; this great desire that He has to us returns on Shemini Ateres.

מספר מועדי השנה - סוכות - הקדמה

<sup>1</sup>The Rav has been brief here in this fundamental concept; we will elaborate here to give more background. Generally speaking, the lower mode of Avodas Hashem involves movement, such as the six days of the week, when we move and work, representing the mundane. On Shabbos we don't move, because we do not work; thus non-movement is always seen as the higher aspect of our Avodas Hashem. In sefer Da Es Menuchasecha (which is available online in English as “The Search for Serenity”), these concepts are explained at length in regards to achieving menuchas hanefesh – that the more we reach our “non-moving” state of our soul, the closer we come to our inner peace. The innermost part of our soul, our Yechidah, is a non-moving part of our existence, because our actual self is very still, content with its existence, for it is a cheilek eloka mimaal, a “portion of Hashem”. Our very essence is unmoving because it is rooted in Hashem, who is unmoving. Non-movement is also explained more in sefer Bilvavi Mishkan Evneh: Shabbos Kodesh, as well as in sefer Da Es Hargoshosecha (soon to be released in English as “Getting To Know Your Feelings”). This footnote does not nearly exhaust the topic; it is a very vast subject which the Rov frequently discusses, and the references we have given here are the main sources where the Rov discusses it at length.

<sup>2</sup> Editor's Note: See sefer Sifsei Chaim: Moadim (Vol. I) who explains how the spirituality of Shemini Atzeres is deeper than the first days of Sukkos. On Sukkos, we have the mitzvah of sukkah and the four species, because we are given these tools on Sukkos to reach closeness to Hashem through them. However, Shemini Atzeres is a higher connection we have with Hashem, as it is the culmination of the entire Yomim Noraim; thus, it doesn't require us to sit in the sukkah or to shake the four species, because it is more of a direct connection with Hashem. See also Bilvavi Mishkan Evneh on Sukkos, pages 112-113 for an esoteric difference between Sukkos and Shemini Atzeres.

## DEPTH OF LULAV & ESROG

### THE LULAV CORRESPONDS TO YITZCHOK OR YOSEF

The *Midrash* compares the Four Species to Avraham, Yitzchok, Yaakov and Yosef.<sup>1</sup> The *esrog* corresponds to Avraham, the *lulav* corresponds to Yitzchok, the *hadassim* to Yaakov, and the *aravos* to Yosef. However, the Zohar says that the *lulav* corresponds to

Yosef.<sup>2</sup>

The *Midrash* also states that the Four Species correspond to four different parts of the body.<sup>3</sup> The *lulav* corresponds to the spine, the *hadassim* correspond to the eyes,

the *aravos* correspond to the mouth (the lips), and the *esrog* corresponds to the heart. Here we will focus on how the *lulav* corresponds to the spine.

### LULAV CORRESPONDS TO THE SPINE & YITZCHOK A3VINU

The *Gemara* says that there are 18 interlocking points in the spine.<sup>4</sup> The human spine and the animal spine have the same general structure. The Rambam writes that the spine is connected to the brain by a chord, which has a protective shell.<sup>5</sup> This chord allows the brain's life-giving energy (*chiyus*) to extend through the spine. It extends the energy from the upper section of the body into the lower section of the body.

The *lulav* also bears this correspondence. The leaves of the *lulav*, which extend upwards from the spine of the *lulav*, correspond to the chord that connects the spine

with brain. Just as the brain is soft tissue and the spine is hard, so are the leaves of the *lulav* soft and the spine of the *lulav* is hard. The highest part of the spine is above the brain, and it is parallel to the where the *tefillin* are placed [directly behind the skull]. This is called the "luz bone", where the Resurrection of the Dead begins from.<sup>6</sup>

As mentioned earlier, the *lulav* corresponds with Yitzchok, and just as Yitzchok experienced a degree of the Resurrection of the Dead [when he was tied to the Altar, his soul left him and Hashem returned his soul to him], so does the *lulav* correspond to the

Resurrection of the Dead [for the *lulav* corresponds to the spine, and the top of the spine is the *luz* bone, where the Resurrection of the Dead begins from].

Here we will see that there are two aspects to the *lulav*: the spine, and the leaves. The spine of the *lulav* corresponds to Yosef. The spine itself does not extend upward, it does not ascend, and so does Yosef represent the concept of non-ascension. The leaves of the spine of the *lulav* correspond to Yitzchok, and just as the leaves ascend upward, so did Yitzchok ascend upwards, when he was sanctified as an *olah* at the Altar.

### IS THE THE LULAV OR THE ESROG MORE PROMINENT?

When listing the order of the Four Species, the Torah first lists the *esrog*, then the *lulav*, and then the *hadassim* and *aravos*. However, when the Mishnah discusses the laws of the Four Species, the Mishnah first

discusses the laws of the *lulav*, whereas the laws of the *esrog* are described last. This needs understanding.

There appears to be a novel concept here.

We must say that there are two aspects to the *esrog*. In one aspect, the *lulav* is more prominent than the *esrog*, and in the other aspect, the *esrog* is more prominent than the *lulav*. We shall explain how.

### LULAV\LINE & ESROG\CIRCLE

The shape of the *esrog* is similar to the shape of a skull, whereas the shape of the *lulav* resembles a spine. If an *esrog* is as round as a ball, it is invalid for use. However, a skull is not perfectly round. The skull is not the brain, it is above the brain. The brain is above the spine, and the skull is above the

brain. In contrast with this, the *lulav* must be straight, and if it is bent too much and it resembles a chisel, it is invalid. (The *hadassim* and *aravos* though are kosher for use if they are bent or crooked.)

Clearly, we can see the difference be-

tween the spine\*lulav* and the skull\*esrog*. The straight shape of the *lulav*, which resembles the spine, represents the concept of *yashrus*, uprightiness [also called *yoisher*, the "line", of Creation]. The round shape of the *esrog*, which resembles the skull, represents the concept of *igul*, the "circle" (or the equaliza-

1 *Vayikra Rabbah parshas Emor 30:10*

2 *Zohar III: Raya Mehemna parshas Pinchos 236a, 256a*

3 *Vayikra Rabbah parshas Emor 30:14*

4 *Berachos 28b*

5 *Peirush HaMishnayos L'Rambam: Chullin 3:1*

6 *Beraishis Rabbah 28:3*

tion, or equilibrium) of Creation, where all points are equidistant from the center.

[In terms of the two Messiahs, which correspond to the *lulav*\Yosef and *esrog*\Dovid]: The *lulav* corresponds to Yosef, and the *esrog* corresponds to Moshiach ben Dovid. From the viewpoint of *Moshiach* ben Yosef, the *lulav* comes before the *esrog* [meaning that *yoisher*\line\straightness\uprightness is more prominent than *igul*\circle\roundness\equilibrium] but from the viewpoint of *Moshiach* ben Dovid, the *esrog* comes before the *lulav* [meaning that *igul* is more prominent than *yoisher*].

The *Gemara* says the blessing over the Four Species is recited over the *lulav*, since it is the tallest of the four species [hence it appears the most prominent]. The *Gemara* asks: Why don't we lift the *esrog* above the *lulav*, and then make the blessing over the *esrog*? The *Gemara* answers that it is because the *esrog* must be held together with the *lulav* when reciting the blessing, so the *esrog* cannot be placed higher than the *lulav*.

We can learn from this that the *Gemara* originally thought that there is no require-

ment to hold the *esrog* together with the *lulav* when reciting the blessing, and that is why the *Gemara* thought that perhaps the *esrog* can be placed higher than the *lulav*. The *Arizal* wrote explicitly, however, that the *lulav* and *esrog* need to be held together. The *Shulchan Aruch* rules that they must be held together.

However, **it seems that in the future, the blessing of the Four Species will be over the *esrog*.** The *Gemara's* original thinking, that the *esrog* should be placed above the *lulav*, is really about the future. The *halachah* in our times is that the blessing is made over the *lulav*, but this is because we live in a world after the sin. That is also why the Mishnah first discusses the laws of the *lulav* before the *esrog*.

In our times, the *lulav* corresponds to Yosef, while the *esrog* corresponds to Dovid. Yosef corresponds to the concept of *yesod*, foundation, while Dovid corresponds to *malchus*, royalty. In our times, *lulav*\Yosef\yesod is more prominent than *esrog*\Dovid\malchus. In Hashem's four-letter name of *havayah*, the letter *beh* corresponds to the *esrog*, and the letter *vov* corresponds to the *lulav*.

Our *avodah* nowadays is in *yoisher*, also called *kav*, the "line", which also connotes a war with the evil inclination. This is depth of what Chazal say, "We have been victorious". But in the higher dimension, the *esrog* precedes the *lulav*, meaning that *esrog*\igul\Dovid\malchus is more prominent than *lulav*\yoisher\kav\Yosef\yesod. This will be manifest in the future, when *Moshiach* ben Dovid will rule, when the world will return the state of before the sin, when the bark of the tree tasted like its fruit – because the entire world will be at equilibrium. That is why the *esrog* is round, like the round skull which is above the spine, above the place where the body receives life-giving energy from, and above even the brain, the source of the spine, where the spinal cord extends from.

**In our times, a round *esrog* is invalid for use. But in the future, it will be kosher for use. The *esrog* in our times is less prominent than the *lulav*, hence the *esrog* is subservient to the *lulav* in our times – and that is what causes the *esrog* not to be perfectly round.**

## 2 KINDS OF LIFE – LULAV\STRAIGHTNESS & ESROG\ROUNDNESS\EQUILIBRIUM

The word *lulav* is equal in numerical value to the word *chaim* (life), which is 68. The word *esrog* is equal to 610, which is almost equal to 9 times the amount of 69 (612). The *lulav* and *esrog* have different aspects of *chiyus*, of life-giving energy.

Both a dry *esrog* and a dry *lulav* are invalid for use. An *esrog* is deemed too dry if a needle and string can pass through it or not, meaning that its dryness is measured by how moist it is. Concerning the *lulav*, though, there are three different opinions of what defines a dry *lulav*: Either if it is 12 months old, or if it is easily broken from the touch of a fingernail, or if its green color has whitened.

A *lulav* is straight, for it resembles the spine. On a deeper level, this corresponds to the idea of *bechirah*, to choose, between good and evil. Since the *lulav* corresponds to *chaim*\life, and the Torah says that one

should "choose life", the straightness of the *lulav* represents the "line" that one must find between the two points of good and evil, of life and death. Often a person needs to take the middle path, as the Rambam says.

The other kind of "life" is represented by the *esrog*. The round shape of the *esrog*, which corresponds to the skull, represents a kind of life where one is naturally pulled after good. The *esrog* stays on the tree from year to year, and it does not fall to the ground like the fruit of all other trees. It is the very opposite idea of the *lulav*, which becomes too dry after 12 months. The *esrog* represents the state of before the sin, when there was no death yet, where there was only eternity. After the sin, there was death, and now our life depends on how we utilize our *bechirah*. Through using our *bechirah* correctly, we draw forth life.

Now that we are after the sin, the *esrog*

can also "die" [i.e. it can become dry], but even when the *esrog* dies\dries, it hints that its main role is to draw forth life on its own – how so? Its dryness is determined by how moist it is, and moisture is from the element of water, which corresponds to eternal life, for water comes to a person without any exertion and preparation to get it, and also, it comes from Heaven, as opposed to being produced from the ground. It also can be consumed the way it is, unlike bread, which needs to be baked first. It also does not have to be digested.

In the *lulav*, however, a lack of moisture does not show that it is dry. The *lulav* is not meant to be eaten, hence its moisture or lack thereof does not define its aliveness.

Earlier, we mentioned that the Resurrection of the Dead will begin from the *luz* bone, which is parallel to the place [behind

the skull] where the *tefillin* is placed. This is the top of the spine. Thus, the Resurrection of the Dead is linked with the *lulav*, as opposed to the *esrog*. The *esrog* corresponds to the point before the sin, as mentioned earlier [hence the Resurrection of the Dead is not linked with the *esrog*, for the *esrog* is rooted in the point where there is no sin and hence no “death”].

The *Midrash* says that a *lulav* has a taste with no scent. Taste corresponds to eating, and eating is linked with Adam HaRishon. The *lulav*'s taste is its fruit, which are dates. Chazal state that one should cleave to Hashem as two dates which cling to one another.<sup>7</sup> As is known, the purpose of the *Melaveh Malka* meal is to give enjoyment to the *luz* bone. It is a higher form of enjoyment. The

*luz* bone did not partake in Adam's act of eating from the Tree of Knowledge, hence it enjoys a higher form of pleasure. The meal of the *Melaveh Malka* is not enjoyed by a person on physical level, and only the *luz* bone enjoys it. It is an act of eating which is undamaged from sin, and that is why the *luz* bone has enjoyment in it.

### IN CONCLUSION

When the *lulav* and *esrog* will be joined together in the future, it will be the joining of Yosef (*lulav*) with Yehudah (*esrog*).

Nowadays, we bind together three of the

Four Species, and the *esrog* is not included in this. But **in the future, the *esrog* will be joined together with the other three species, and the *esrog* will also be held above all of them, and the blessing will be over**

**the *esrog*.** “*And they will become unified, in your hands.*”<sup>8</sup>

This drasha was translated from the audio file:  
סוכות\_019\_לולב ואתרוג מיהו הראשון

<sup>7</sup> *Sanhedrin 64a*

<sup>8</sup> *Yechezkel 37:17*

## DEEP JOY ON SIMCHAS TORAH

**On** Simchas Torah, there is simcha over the completion of the Torah. But does everyone have the same happiness? If a person only has enthusiasm in his learning, but he doesn't use his brain much to think in-depth as he learns, he is not truly connected to his learning.

**Compare** this to someone who spent a year learning Torah in-depth, and now it comes Simchas Torah. Is his happiness a feeling of enthusiasm? It's much more profound; he is enjoying now the fruits of his efforts, a year well spent on learning Torah.

**When** someone knows how to dance and jump up and down by Hakafof, he can do the same each thing each year; it doesn't show that anything in his learning changed since a year ago. If he was so enthused from the Torah, why doesn't he continue to learn Torah as soon as they close the Aron? Why does he keep jumping...? If someone keeps jumping, it shows that his entire learning comes from enthusiasm, and not because he is so connected to his learning...

**But** a person who dances on Simchas Torah after a full year's worth of learning in-depth has a much more profound kind of happiness. He doesn't have to feel enthused, because he has a more inner kind of happiness. He's connected to his learning - so he's automatically happy towards his learning.

**People** want simcha (*joy*) and chiyus (*vitality*) in their Avodas Hashem. But often this is a desire for superficial chiyus. It is not being truthful.

**Compare** this to the difference between a baby versus someone getting married; or someone dancing on Simchas Torah who learned Torah during the year, versus someone who didn't learn Torah during the year. The difference between them is vast.

**May** we merit from Hashem to understand that Avodas Hashem become properly built, and that our feelings of enthusiasm, joy, and our other feelings are only built through the power of utilizing our intellect. Using our intellect is what gives us the power of subtle understanding, which helps us understand and develop profound feelings that last - as opposed to feelings that are temporary feelings of elation and excitement.

**This** is the true simcha we can have in our Avodas Hashem.

ראש השנה\_025\_בסיס של אבודה.הוא לימוד בעיון.תשסט



## GROWTH ON YOM TOV

1) Yom Tov is pretty stressful when I go away to my parents for Yom Tov. My kids can be wild and my mother wants me to run after the kids so they don't break anything. My grandfather is not an easy person to be around and tries to convince me not to sleep in the succah. All the more so if I get into arguments with my wife on Yom Tov. How can I feel simchas Yom Tov in spite of all these challenges which always ruin my Yom Tov?

### ANSWER

Every so often, pause for a few moments and focus inwardly, entering into your *pnimiyus* (inner soul), and that is where you can draw *simchah* (joy) from.

### QUESTION

2) Since I don't enjoy Yom Tov that much when I go to my parents for Yom Tov, and because of the general atmosphere there, is it possible that Hashem wants me to get all my *simchas Yom Tov* from just honoring my parents and also learning how to look past the faults of others?

### ANSWER

That can be a part of your growth on *Yom Tov*, but it can't be all of it. (Refer also to the answer above).

### QUESTION

3) What is better to learn on Yom Tov, to learn a sugya of Gemara or to learn things that have to do with the Yom Tov?

### ANSWER

It is preferable to learn a *sugya* [of Gemara or *halachah*] that is related to the Yom Tov, and through it you can find

*simchah* on Yom Tov. In addition, learn about any concepts that have to do with the Yom Tov.

## QUESTIONS - SIMCHAS TORAH

1) What should a person be thinking as he's dancing on Simchas Torah by the *Hakafos*?

### ANSWER

By dancing we are moving our feet, so one should be thinking as he's dancing on Simchas Torah that he wants to give a *tikkun* (repair) to his feet if they ever went to go do an *aveirah*, and to repair any *mitzvos* that were done habitually, and that we will instead become habitually used to learning Torah. This is the aspect of intention to have while dancing, but there also intentions of *hakafos* (encircling) which are a separate matter.

### QUESTION

2) There is an argument which honor is more important, Chosson Torah or Chosson Beraishis. Is the root of this argument really about what's more important, beginning to learn (Chosson Beraishis) or finishing the Torah (Chosson Torah)?

### ANSWER Yes!

### QUESTION

3) Shemini Atzeres is called the time of *yichud* with Hashem, and it is when the message is sent out in Heaven regarding a person's judgment for that year. Is this a continuous process throughout Yom Tov or does it happen only at the final moments of Yom Tov?

### ANSWER

The main *yichud* with Hashem takes place at *Tefillas Geshem* at *Mussaf* (on

Shmini Atzeres), and that is when the message of one's verdict is handed over in Heaven.

### QUESTION

4) On Simchas Torah can a person drink a little bit (an alcoholic beverage) for simchas Yom Tov, just a little bit and without getting drunk? There were *tzadikim* who drank on Simchas Torah, and I heard that even in Lita there were *Gedolim* who drank a bit of whiskey privately before *Hakafos*. Or should our simchas Yom Tov come solely from our *pnimiyus* and not through any alcoholic beverages?

### ANSWER

Because of *simchas Yom Tov*, it is proper to drink a *reviis*. *Halachically*, there is a mitzvah to rejoice on Yom Tov by drinking wine, as Chazal said, "There is no joy except through meat and wine." In the times of the *Beis HaMikdash* this was fulfilled through eating the meat of the *Korbon Shelamim*, and later when meat was made forbidden to eat, the *mitzvah* could become fulfilled through wine, for those who become gladdened from drinking wine. It is proper to drink a *reviis*, but if one needs more wine in order to reach a happy state, he should be careful not to get near intoxication. It is proper for one to mainly get his joy from within his *pnimiyus*, and any drinking should only be used as a means to awaken one's joy – but drinking should not be taken any further than that.

## SUCCAH OF THE LEVIATHAN IN THE FUTURE

Chazal teach that in the future we will sit in the "succah made of the skin of the Leviathan". Will this be in This World or in the Next World?

**ANSWER**

It will be on This World, in a state that is a semblance of the World To Come.

**D'VEYKUS & MITZVOS**

I feel deeply connected to *ruchniyus* whenever I focus on how much I love Hashem or fear Hashem or on my *emunah* in Hashem, in all the different levels – and that's when I feel *ohr* (the light). But when I do mitzvos, all I feel is my *kavanah* when doing the *mitzvah* but I don't feel anything about the actual *mitzvah* I'm doing. Just to give an example of how far this goes, when I'm putting on tefillin, I feel that I'm doing something so special and holy, but I also know that if someone were to come and remove the *parshiyos* from my tefillin, I would still feel the same that I'm doing something holy! My feelings of *kavanah* and feeling connected to Hashem through the *mitzvah* of *tefillin* would stay the same! In other words, I'm not really feeling the actual *ohr* of doing the *mitzvah*, because it's not the *mitzvah* I'm concerned about, it's my own feelings of *ruchniyus* that have nothing to do with the *mitzvah*. I can shake *arba minim* and feel so connected to them, but if someone were to switch my beautiful kosher esrog for an esrog that's not kosher, I wouldn't feel anything has changed! I daven and I feel connected to Hashem, but if I were to say the wrong words, like if I would say *Baruch Agid* instead of *Baruch Atah*, I would feel the same connected when I daven - I would feel like I still have the same deep *kavanah* when I daven and that I've merely switched around the order of the words. Why am I like this and how can I change this?

**ANSWER**

You have the *ohr*, but you don't have

the *kli* – you aren't building a container to house all of the *ruchniyus* that you are feeling. You should learn *halachah l'maaseh* (the practical *halachah*), and you should be careful to follow every *halachah* you learn, with the clear recognition that this is what Hashem wants from you, and you should do this with every detail of *halachah* you learn, even the smallest detail of a *halachah*, that this is all the *ratzon Hashem*. This is you should connect yourself to the power of *maaseh* (action) in general, and to being careful with every detail of *halachah* specifically, to become deeply connected to each *mitzvah* act with all of your *nefesh*.

**KAVANOS ARIZAL**

For a long time now already I make sure to have the *kavanos* (intention) of the different names of *HaVaYaH* with their different vowelizations depending on the month....and I can even see these names of *HaVaYaH* when I close my eyes since I have gotten used to concentrating on them. I am very drawn after these *kavanos* of the Arizal. But I'm starting to give up because there's so many different *kavanos* to remember! Is the *kavanos Arizal* only for people on a high level and not for regular people? Are there certain conditions necessary in order for a person to have these *kavanos*? Also I've heard the Rav say that today our *avodah* is not mainly the *kavanos* but something deeper - what is it?

**ANSWER**

There is such a path, and the view of the Ben Ish Chai was that the *kavanos* are for everyone.

There is more inner light shining today which is deeper than the *kavanos*, and it is called *p'shitus*. This is unlike *yichud*, which is about combining together dif-

ferent names. The essence is *p'shitus*, while the garment is *yichud*. The main thing must be *p'shitus*, while *yichud* (the *kavanos*) should be viewed as a garment.

**USHPIZIN**

How does a person work on acquiring the middos the Ushpizin on each day of Succos?

**ANSWER**

In every area a person can find the 7 middos of ahavah (love), yirah (fear), rachamim (compassion), Netzach (victory), hod, yesod, malchus. For one who wants to take this path, he should find these 7 areas on each day of Succos and see how on the first day how he can show more love for Hashem, on the second day how he can show more fear of Hashem, etc.

**QUESTION**

What is the relationship of Shlomo HaMelech with the other Ushpizin?

**ANSWER**

Shlomo HaMelech is called the "root" of the 7 Ushpizin. The *Ramchal (Pirush HaMitzvos 8, 9)* says that Shlomo HaMelech appointed the 7 shepherds (the Ushpizin), and that Shlomo is the eighth of the Ushpizin, and the number 8 is the number of the future and the level of complete tikkun. As a hint, Shlomo's mother was Bas Sheva – he is the product of 7, which is 8. Shlomo HaMelech was called by 7 names, as the Zohar says. Also, the Zohar elsewhere says that the Avos, Moshe, Aharon, Dovid and Shlomo are the 7 shepherds corresponding to the 7 Sefiros, and they came to the Succah [according to this view in the Zohar, Yosef is not counted in the Ushpizin and instead Shlomo is

counted]. The *Gra* says that Shlomo is the foundation of all 7 shepherds. See *sefer Tolaas Yaakov on Succos*.

## QUESTION

Are Mashiach ben Yosef and Mashiach ben Dovid included in the Ushpizin?

## ANSWER

Yes. Yosef is the root of Mashiach ben Yosef's soul, and Dovid is the root of Mashiach ben Dovid's soul.

## 4 ELEMENTS OF 4 SPECIES ON SUCCOS

Is there a connection between the 4 species on Succos and the 4 elements of earth, water, air and fire?

## ANSWER

Lulav – Yesod Ruach (air).

Hadasim – Yesod Mayim (water).

Aravos – Yesod Aish (fire).

Esrog – Yesod Afar (earth).

## MOSHE – NETZACH

The Sefirah of *Tiferes* is called “Torah”. Therefore, in the 7 Sefiros which correspond to each of the 7 *Ushpizin*, why does Moshe correspond to *Netzach* and not *Tiferes*, since he gave the Torah (*Tiferes*)? Why is Yaakov the *Tiferes* and not Moshe? And what is the connection between Moshe and *Netzach*?

## ANSWER

There are several ways to look at it. The Zohar says “Yaakov on the outside, Moshe on the inside.” Thus Yaakov is *Tiferes* and Moshe is *Netzach*, because *Netzach* is the inner level within *Tiferes*, since *Netzach* is called the inner level of all six *Sefiros*

which comprised the *partzuf Zeir Anpin* (*sefer Koheles Yaakov*). *Sefer Chaim V'Chessed* says that the Torah overcomes all the nations, thus Torah is associated with *Netzach*. *Sefer Toldos Abron* says that Moshe is called *Netzach* because he was victorious over the angels to get the Torah, and that really Moshe was on the higher level, *Tiferes*, but because of his humility, he was willing to go down to the level of *Netzach*. *Sefer Imrei Pinchos* says that Moshe is called *Netzach* because Moshe's holiness spreads to every generation, thus Moshe is eternal, *Netzach*. *Sefer Toldos Abron* also says that Moshe is called *Netzach* because he overcame all of his *middos*, so he was victorious, *Netzach*. The inner level of *Netzach* is daas, which is the root of all the *middos*.

## MISHNEH TORAH ON HOSHANA RABBAH NIGHT

1) What is the benefit of hearing Mishneh Torah (sefer Devarim) on the night of Hoshanah Rabbah?

## ANSWER

1) See *Sefer Moshav Zekainim* (Bamidbar 21:14) that reading the book of “wars of Hashem” which refers to sefer Devarim, which contains the victories of the Jewish people. 2) See also to *Tosafos to Gittin 2a* that “Mishnah Torah is not counted” as one of the sefarim of the Torah because it is entirely repetition of everything that was said in the first 4 books of the Torah. This would make Mishnah Torah on the level of Malchus which has nothing of its own. 3) It is a sefer which is entirely rebuke to Klal Yisrael. R' Nosson of Breslov says that even though it is entirely rebuke, it is to show us that we should not despair from Hashem's mercy. 4) Aderes Eliyahu (*Gra*) explains that

it contains 995 pesukim. The Mekubalim said there are 995 Heavens, thus in each possuk Moshe said in Mishneh Torah he was opening another Heaven. 5) The Maharal says that Mishneh Torah is the Torah we receive, which needs explanation in order to understand, as opposed to the regular Torah. On a deeper level, there is Written Torah and the Oral Torah, and Mishneh Torah is the bridge between them. 6) The mitzvah of d'veykus is in Sefer Devarim. It was said in Arvos Moav, right before they entered into Eretz Yisrael, thus Sefer Devarim (Mishneh Torah) is the root of the level of Torah of Eretz Yisrael, whereas the other 4 sefarim of the Torah were said in the desert and they are on the level of the desert. 7) The Arizal says that Sefer Devarim corresponds to Malchus, which is the level of Hoshanah Rabbah. Another reason for Mishneh Torah on Hoshanah Rabbah night is mentioned by R' Nosson of Breslov. 8) There are 7 sefarim of the Torah, because *Vayehi B'Nesoa Ha'Aron* is counted as a separate sefer (see Maseches Sofrim 6:1), thus Sefer Devarim is the 7th sefer. And the king would read it at the end of every 7 years. [Hence Sefer Devarim is read on the 7th day of Succos].

## QUESTION

2) Why does it have to be done before midnight? ANSWER

The Arizal (Shaar HaKavanos, drushei Succos) says that at the first half of the night, we read sefer Devarim, and after that one should learn *Avos*.

## QUESTION

4) What should a person be thinking about when he's hearing Mishneh Torah? Is there something more to it than just a custom of hearing it?

**ANSWER**

Connect to the soul's power of receiving (being *mekabel*).

**QUESTION**

5) Can I say the tikkun alone and learn alone if I learn better that way?

**ANSWER**

At least a little bit should be with the tzibbur, so that one shouldn't separate from the tzibbur. The rest of the time can be spent on how you want it to be. It's a fundamental question if a person should act on Kaballah matters even when he is not on the level.

**QUESTION**

6) Am I allowed to learn on Hoshanah Rabbah night instead of hearing Mishneh Torah?

**ANSWER**

Same answer as before – it depends on if one is obligated to do something according to Kabalah when he isn't on the level to. However, if until now he did it, he needs *hataras nadarim* if he wants to forego his custom of Mishneh Torah.

**QUESTION**

7) What should I focus on the night of Hoshanah Rabbah?

**ANSWER**

See answer to #4.

**BANGING THE HOSHANOS & THE EREV RAV**

We bang Hoshanos on the ground

Hoshanah Rabbah in order to nullify the Erev Rav and bring them down into the ground (as the Rav explained in one of the shiurim on Succos). But we know that there's an infinite light of Hashem which repairs everything, even evil. Shouldn't we then wish to repair the souls of the Erev Rav when we bang the Hoshanos, and instead of simply wishing to destroy them we should have the kavanah that they should receive their tikkun? After all, Hashem wants them to get a tikkun.

**ANSWER**

Their tikkun is through *bittul*, through nullifying them. There are two ways to be nullified – lower *bittul* and higher *bittul*. Lower *bittul* is to simply be nullified (destroyed). Higher *bittul* is to become nullified to the *EinSof*, the Infinite.

**SHMINI ATZERES**

The Sfas Emes says that Shmini Atzeres corresponds to Yosef. In another place he says it corresponds to Dovid, and in another place he says it corresponds to Moshe. How do we reconcile this?

**ANSWER**

Shmini Atzeres corresponds to Yosef because it is the added day onto the festival, for Hashem says "Stay with Me one more day", and Yosef is called *tosefes*, the addition. Shemini Atzeres also corresponds to Dovid, because Dovid is the all-inclusive soul of Klal Yisrael, and Shemini Atzeres holds within it all the other revelations of every festival that came before it and contains it all within it. Shemini Atzeres also corresponds to Moshe, because it is the day of Simchas Torah, and Moshe gave us the Toras Hashem Temimah, the Torah of

Hashem which is perfect.

**SUCCOS & SHMINI ATZERES**

The Midrash says that the aravos correspond to the reshaim, and their *tikkun* is to be taken together in one *agudah* (bundle) with the other species [the lulav and esrog and hadassim, who are compared to tzaddikim (the esrog) and people who have good deeds (hadassim) or Torah learning (the lulav), and by being joined together] they "atone" for the aravos - the reshaim. Since the other species correspond to *tzaddikim* (on varying levels), especially the *esrog*, can we deduce from this Midrash that the *tikkun* for the *reshaim* is to become connected with the *tzaddikim*, and even more so, to connect to the personal "tzaddik" that is within every Jew's soul, the "Yechidah" level of the soul, that pure place inside of us which never sins and is always connected to Hashem – and if that's correct, can we take this insight further and say that the way to be saved in this generation [if we are on the level of *reshaim*, *chas v'shalom*] is to become connected to *tzaddikim*?

**ANSWER**

That is a good insight, but even more so, we know that after the *arba minim* (4 species) of Succos comes Shmini Atzeres in which there is no *arba minim*, in which Hashem says "Stay with Me one day", and this high level of closeness of Hashem available on Shmini Atzeres doesn't require the *arba minim* [Thus there is a deeper level than Succos, which is the level of connecting to the tzaddikim. And that is Shmini Atzeres, where we can connect to Hashem directly with no intermediary in between]. Understand this.

