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RABBI YEHUDA MUNK
EDITOR
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MRS. CHANIE LANDAU

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SUCCOS

STANDING TALL. HOLDING TIGHT.

Steps to the Throne with Joy by Rabbi Nosson Muller

LULAV

The Gemara (*Succah* 37b) wonders why the blessing made on the Four Species mentions only the *lulav*, the palm branch, and omits the other three *minim*, and offers the following answer: "Because in its species (i.e., its natural growth form) it is the tallest of all of them."

Similarly, the Tosafos Yom Tov (3:1) asks why the Mishnah records the laws of *lulav* before the three others and cites the Gemara's answer above. The *lulav* takes precedence due to the fact that it is taller than the rest.

The Gemara's answer is baffling.

Is height so significant a feature that it influences the text of the blessing or the sequence in which the laws are written down?

Why not make the blessing on all four together? Even if for some reason, we are forced to select only one, wouldn't the *esrog* be the more intuitive choice? It is called *pri eitz hadar*, fruit of the beautiful tree, offers both a rich fragrance and taste, and represents the righteous, while the *lulav* represents simple Jews. Generally viewed as the most significant of the Four Species, more money and time is spent choosing the *esrog* than the three other species combined.

Shouldn't those qualities supersede something as unimportant as height?

The *lulav's* height is meaningful, says R' Moshe Kanner, because it represents a nation's refusal to bend. Two thousand years of *galus*, two thousand years of persecution and temptation, and the Jewish spine still stands upright: unbroken, unbothered,

and unimpressed by anything the world has to say.

Like the *lulav*, we stand proud, straight, and tall.

Yidden still run to daven and learn Torah, and our yeshivos and schools still teach the truth exactly as it was received at Har Sinai. The Jewish spirit withstood the fires of the Inquisition, the Holocaust, and everything before, after, and in between, because we always held the *lulav* securely in our hands.

We always stood tall, pure in our faith and convinced of its truth.

Rebbi recorded the Mishnah as *galus* began. He sought to perpetuate the indestructible message of

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The Chasam Sofer

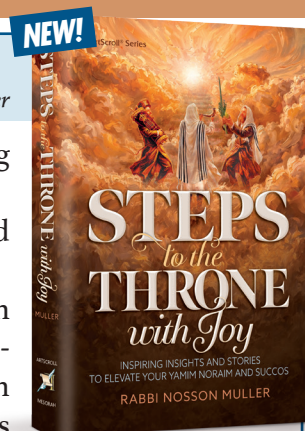
the *lulav* by giving its laws precedence over the other three.

Al netilas lulav, we proudly recite every year, because a Jew stands taller than everyone else.

The Chasam Sofer answers our question with another powerful message.

Although the *esrog* symbolizes the tzaddikim, the elite of our nation, their strength is derived from the people they lead. The *lulav*, the nation at

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large that it represents, is the tallest species of them all, reaching places that sometimes even the *esrogim*, the greatest among us, cannot.

The blessing is made on the *lulav* because there is nothing more important than the Jewish people as a whole, and when they stand united there is no mightier force in the world.

A well-known verse can be homiletically interpreted with this insight: יִרְשׁוּ אֶרֶץ, *Your people will all be righteous; they will inherit the Land forever* (Yeshayah 60:21).

Simply understood, the *Navi* is telling us that when Hashem's people are all righteous, they will inherit the Land. But perhaps the Chasam Sofer's message is hidden inside these words as well.

Vameich kulam — when Your nation is whole, united in one faithful voice, they are akin to *tzaddikim*; they carry the same power the righteous do on their own. Joined together like that, we will inherit the Land for eternity.

The *lulav* is us: one people with one shared purpose, standing tall and changing the world.

Al netilas lulav: That secret is worthy of a blessing all its own.

ESROG

The Torah instructs us to take a *pri eitz hadar*, fruit of the beautiful tree. Two unique qualities are alluded to in these words, leading the Gemara to identify it as the *esrog* we use.

First is the juxtaposition of *pri* and *eitz* that teaches us that this fruit shares an identical taste with the tree on which it grows. Only the *esrog* bears that special quality.

The last word of the phrase used in the verse, *hadar*, alludes to another singular feature an *esrog* possesses. It is *dar mishanah l'shanah*, living on the tree from year to year, unlike every other fruit that lasts only one season, and falls to the ground before the next crop emerges (*Succah* 37a).

The Shemen Rosh infers two beautiful and relevant lessons from the two special qualities that give the *esrog* its name.

The taste they share alludes to a son following in the footsteps of his father, and the beauty inherent in a heritage passed on. Our fervent hope for the children we raise is that they will believe as we do, and live nurtured by the truth we fight so hard to instill in each one.

More than anything else, we want the fruit to taste like the tree.

Remaining attached to the tree that bears it illustrates the beauty that consistency holds. The *esrog*, not fazed by winter's biting winds and unrelenting summer sun, or any of the other inclement elements brought with each season, remains firmly attached to its source. It holds tight and endures, year after year, one day after another.

We must live that way too.

Every day brings its own challenges. The baby was up all night with a hacking cough, and when he got a little older, he could not sit still in class and the rebbi or *morah* wants to know why. Sometimes, we lose our jobs, and other times, we cannot seem to find one. A friend needs a hand, and the boss has a deadline and is slowly losing patience.

And yet.

Every day, we clear our desks of the growing pile of bills and the worry growing along with them, and make room for our *Gemaros*. Three times daily, we silence our phones and stand to daven, turning our attention from the computer screen to our Creator.

A Jew holds on tightly to the tree.

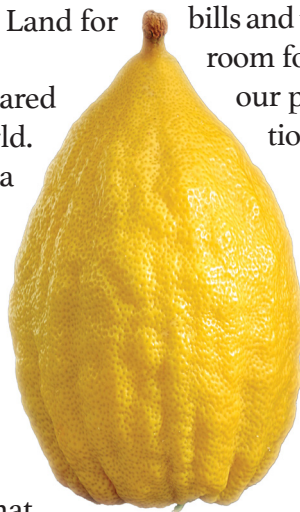
EVERY DAY, WE CLEAR OUR DESKS OF THE GROWING PILE OF BILLS AND MAKE ROOM FOR OUR GEMAROS

He knows that every day counts, and that consistency is the real secret of commitment.

And so, he shows up as the sun rises, and refuses to let go, even as it sets.

He marches on, day after day, year after year, cutting through the noise to hear the only Voice that matters in the end.

A midrash cited in the introduction to *Ein Yaakov* highlights the fortitude spawned from relentless tenacity. While Ben Zoma points to *Shema Yisrael* and Ben Nannas to *V'havta l'rei'acha kamocha* as the verse that most encapsulates the Torah, Shimon Ben Pazi cites the daily *korban tamid*. Without daily commitment, faith cannot endure. The *esrog's* message is the same: Stay attached to the tree, consistently and tenaciously, and you will produce beautiful fruit. Children who witness such unwavering dedication will naturally seek that same enduring connection in their lives. 🌳



The *mo'adim* have tremendous significance. The Yom Tov of Succos is extremely special, yet what connection does it have to Simchas Torah, and why does it precede the day on which we celebrate finishing the Torah?

When Klal Yisrael were in the *Midbar*, they were fleeing from Mitzrayim, the largest prison in existence. They sought to escape from the Egyptians, who were intent on continuing to enslave them as they had done for hundreds of years.

Surprisingly, Klal Yisrael began panicking and wanted to return to Mitzrayim. How do we begin to understand this? Finally, they were free from their tyrannical masters, no longer being worked for unending hours and being beaten mercilessly. Moreover, they had seen the *makkos* and the incredible *nissim*. They saw that Hashem was there saving them. Why, then, did they wish to return to Mitzrayim?

It is certainly true that “*ein ha-mikra yotzei midei peshuto* — a *pasuk* never departs from its plain meaning.” However, on a deeper level, there appears to be something profound taking place.

Klal Yisrael were not merely on a physical journey escaping the confines of Mitzrayim. They were in fact fleeing from spiritual confinements; not just Mitzrayim, but *meitzarim*, confinements. They had descended into the abyss of the forty-nine *shaarei tumah*, and this is what they were escaping from.

After Hashem came and took them out of Mitzrayim *b'chipazon*, suddenly they were raised from these terrible levels of *tumah* and brought to exceedingly high levels of *kedushah*.

However, being brought *b'chi-*

pazon by Hashem to high levels of *kedushah* is just the beginning of the journey. These levels must then be integrated into day-to-day life. The *kedushah* must become part and parcel of who they are; it must penetrate their regular, mundane lives. When they were asking to go back to Mitzrayim, they were really asking to take everything they had



YET HASHEM SAYS, NOT SO FAST. HOW WILL YOU RETAIN THIS?

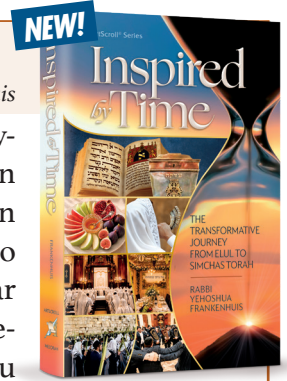
achieved, all of the tremendous levels, and take them into their “regular lives.” They desired to implement all of their newfound *hasagos* and use them to connect to Hashem.

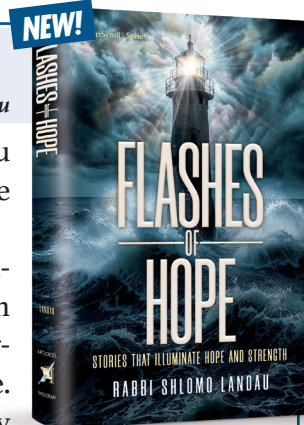
But Hashem did not allow them to do so. Instead, He insisted that they continue and not go back to Mitzrayim. Why? Surely it would have been a meaningful step. The answer is that it certainly would have been a positive thing. However, in order to fully implement the new levels of *kedushah*, those levels first had to be retained. The Jews were unable to do this, since they had not yet received the Torah. What Hashem was telling them was that indeed you have reached

wonderful levels. However, in order to retain them, in order to return to regular life and implement them, you must first receive the Torah.

We have just experienced an intense Elul. We went through Rosh Hashanah, the Aseres Yemei Teshuvah, and Yom Kippur. We blew the shofar, fasted, did *teshuvah* with *Viduy* and Ne'ilah, yet all this was just the *avodah miyirah*. From here we ascend to the wonderful days of *ahavah*, Succos, where we bask under the *tzila d'Meheimnusa* (Divine Shadow). We then have the final day, the culmination of all of this *avodah*, the day when we bind it all together, Hoshana Rabbah. We are extremely elevated and excited. We feel so close to Hashem and ready to go into the winter with extra strength to implement our *kabbalos* (resolutions), maximize our *she'ifos* (aspirations), and finally live with our newfound connection with Hashem.

Yet Hashem says, not so fast. How will you retain this? How will you go into the winter and manage to retain what you achieved? How will you manage to hold on strong? For this you need the Torah. For this reason, before we leave these days, before we go into the winter *zman*, Hashem says, Stop! I would like to give you one more Yom Tov. I want to give you the Yom Tov of Torah. It is only after singing and dancing with the Torah and, most importantly, being *mekabel* the Torah anew, that we are able to go back to our regular lives and truly attain all that has been achieved. 📖



Flashes of Hope by Rabbi Shlomo Landau

In June of 2024, Menachem received an email that immediately made his stomach tighten.

It was from the U.S. Department of Energy.

This wasn't spam. It was an official notice informing him that he was under investigation.

The issue was something he had never imagined could become such a problem: incandescent light bulbs. Menachem had been selling them as part of his business. But under new federal regulations, many incandescent bulbs had recently been banned. According to the government, Menachem had continued selling them after the regulation went into effect.

The email laid out the potential penalties.

Each bulb carried a fine of about \$525. When the investigators calculated the number of bulbs they claimed he had sold, the total came to more than five million dollars in penalties.

Menachem stared at the number. Five million dollars. It didn't even feel real.

He contacted a lawyer immediately. Over the following weeks and months, there was a steady stream of emails, documents, explanations, and negotiations. The lawyer went back and forth with the Department of Energy, arguing the case and trying to reduce the penalty.

Eventually the lawyer called him with what sounded like good news.

"After negotiations," he said, "they're willing to settle for around three to four hundred thousand dollars."

From the lawyer's perspective, this was a major victory. Compared to a potential \$5.2 million penalty, it was a huge reduction.

"You should probably take this," the lawyer advised. But Menachem wasn't convinced.

He had done his homework. On the Department of Energy's own website, the exact bulb he had been selling was listed as a specialty bulb, which meant it was permitted under the regulation. When he pointed this out, the government's response was that the website simply hadn't been updated yet.

Menachem's reaction was straightforward.

"That's your website," he said. "If it says the bulb is permitted, that's not my problem."

Still, everyone knows the expression: "You can't fight City Hall."

The government has endless time, endless lawyers,

and endless resources. Even if you are right, the process itself can be exhausting and expensive.

And so the case lingered. For almost a year and a half, Menachem lived with that uncertainty hovering in the background of his life. It wasn't that he lost sleep every single night, but there were certainly many weeks when the pressure weighed on him heavily. Every so often the thought would return: What if this doesn't go my way?

Then, shortly before Rosh Hashanah, Menachem received a phone call.

It was from a woman he knew who was raising money for children in Eretz Yisrael whose parents could not afford new clothing for Yom Tov. The goal was simple: to make sure these children would have something new to wear for Succos.

She sounded stressed and overwhelmed. Fundraising is never easy, and the clock was ticking.

Menachem listened for a moment and then said, "Count me in for ten thousand dollars."

He clarified that he wasn't promising to personally write a \$10,000 check. His plan was to raise the money. If he couldn't raise it, then he would cover it himself. But he felt confident that if he focused on it, he would be able to bring in the amount.

The very next morning, Menachem arrived at his office and checked his emails. Sitting there was a purchase order from a customer. Orders like that weren't particularly common in his business, so he looked it over carefully.

When he ran the numbers and calculated the profit, he stopped for a moment.

The profit was just about ten thousand dollars.

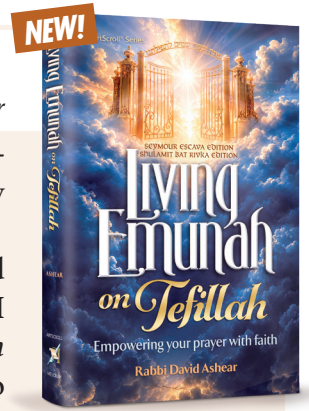
The same amount he had just committed to raise for the children.

Five days later, another email arrived from the government. This one looked just as official as the first one he had received more than a year earlier. Menachem opened it and began to read.

It informed him that the entire case had been dismissed. There would be no penalties, settlements, or fines. After nearly a year and a half of uncertainty, the matter was simply closed.

**THE GOAL WAS TO
MAKE SURE THESE
CHILDREN WOULD
HAVE SOMETHING
NEW TO WEAR
FOR SUCCOS**

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One of the greatest gifts Hashem has given us is the ability to speak to Him. A person can turn to Hashem at any moment, from any place, and ask for His help.

Sometimes we pray for ourselves, and sometimes we pray for others. When we pray for others, we may never get to see what our *tefillos* have accomplished. We say a few words, shed a few tears, and then move on with our lives. But sometimes Hashem allows us to see just how powerful one heartfelt *tefillah* can be.

A rabbi related the following story, which he heard directly from the man to whom it happened.

One evening at around 7:30, in Bnei Brak, there was a knock at Chaim Ozer's* door. Anyone with a large family can imagine what a home looks like at that hour: children everywhere, the house bustling, everyone busy.

Chaim Ozer opened the door and saw a man standing there. "*Mazal tov!*" the visitor cried. "My wife just had a baby girl!"

"*Mazal tov,*" Chaim Ozer replied, but he was confused. Who was this person standing in his doorway, and why was he there?

"May I come in for a few minutes?" the visitor asked. Chaim Ozer invited him into the living room.

After sitting down, the man said, "I want to take you back about nine months, to Simchas Torah.

"I had been married for eighteen years without children. Most of the time I managed to cope, but Simchas Torah was especially painful. Everywhere I looked, fathers were dancing with their children. I couldn't take it anymore, and decided I was not going to pray in my regular shul that day. Instead, I went to a different one, which happened to be where you are praying.

"I was sitting by myself near the wall, and you came over to me and asked why I was just sitting there. 'Gather your children and go dance with everyone!' you said.

"I felt like you had poured salt on my open wound and answered sharply. I told you that I had specifically come to this shul because I couldn't bear watching ev-

erybody celebrate with their children when I didn't have any of my own.

"You may not have realized it, but after our conversation, I watched you walk over to the *aron kodesh*. You started crying out to Hashem, saying, 'Ribbono shel Olam, why did I just say that? Why did I speak that way? *What did I do?* Please help this man. Please send him a *yeshuah*.'

"You didn't know my name," the visitor continued. "You didn't know my story. You knew nothing about me. You simply stood there and begged Hashem to help me, with tears streaming down your face.

"Before Succos, we had just received results from a renowned specialist telling us there was virtually no chance we would ever have children. But between Motza'ei Simchas Torah and now, everything changed.

"Today, after eighteen years of marriage, my first child, a baby girl, was born. You are the very first person I came to tell. I wanted you to know that your *tefillah* helped bring about this *yeshuah*."

Chaim Ozer had not even been asked to pray. He did not know any details. He simply felt the pain of another Jew. And when he realized that he had added to that pain, he ran to the *aron kodesh* and cried out from the depths of his heart. Nine months later, Hashem showed him what those words accomplished.

See how valuable even a short *tefillah* can be! A person may think that a few words spoken to Hashem cannot possibly make a difference, but they can.

We never know what one sincere *tefillah* can achieve. We never know how much can be gained when we pray for another person with genuine care. Every *tefillah* matters. Every tear is counted. And sometimes Hashem allows us a glimpse into the incredible power of our words. 📖



HELPING HASHEM'S KINDERLACH continued from page 4

Menachem later reflected on the timing. Right when he stepped forward to help Hashem's *kinderlach*, children who needed clothing for Yom Tov, things began to turn around. First came the unexpected order that brought in exactly the amount he had committed to

raise. Then, only days later, the government case that had been hanging over him for so long was suddenly gone.

To Menachem, the message felt clear. When a person steps forward to help Hashem's children, Hashem takes care of them in return. 📖

וַיִּשְׁמְחוּ כָּל חוֹסֵי בָךְ, לְעוֹלָם יִרְנְנוּ, וְתִסְדָּךְ עָלֵינוּ; וַיַּעֲלֵצוּ בְּךָ אֲהָבֵי שְׁמֶךָ.

All who take refuge in You will rejoice, forever they will sing joyously,

You will shelter them; and those who love Your Name will exult in You. (Tehillim 5:12)

One of the words used in reference to *bitachon* is חִסּוֹן, *seeking refuge*. This term describes someone who runs to Hashem for protection like people run under an awning to protect them from the rain. Hashem has not offered the person a safe haven, but rather, the person has run to His shelter on his own. The awning is stable, ever-present, ready to receive. What does this “refuge” mean in terms of *bitachon*?

The Midrash (Yalkut Shimoni, Tehillim 25) relates the following story:

Long ago, a man crossed an international border in the dark of night without the proper papers. The guards at the border caught him and threatened to beat him as a punishment for breaking the law.

“Don’t strike me!” the man warned. “I’m a member of the king’s family!”

Fearing that they might run afoul of the king, they took the man captive and brought him to the capital. The next morning, they presented him to the king.

The king did not recognize the man. “How are you related to me?” he asked.

The man admitted that he was not in fact a relative. However, he still pleaded for mercy.

“Please, I relied on you,” he told the king. “If I hadn’t said we were related, they would have beaten me. I was counting on your kindness.”

The king turned to the guards and said, “Since he relied on me, leave him alone.”

G-d is a refuge for anyone who seeks His shelter. Those who do so are never disappointed. They are happy, “and sing forever.” This joy doesn’t expire.

The Radak adds further meaning: The *pasuk* promises that when people seek refuge in G-d, וְתִסְדָּךְ עָלֵינוּ — G-d will shelter them. The word תִּסְדָּךְ comes from the same root as the *s’chach* of the succah, which is the embodiment of *bitachon*. When we leave our homes and go out into the elements, we demonstrate that we know Who is protecting us.



R' David Sutton

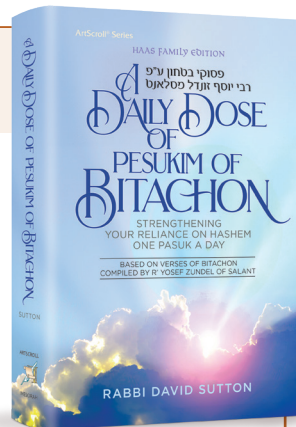
David HaMelech’s words teach that the security of living under the “*s’chach*” of Hashem’s shelter can be ours any time of year, not just on Succos, which is called *z’man simchaseinu*, the time of our joy. Joy is ours whenever we realize that our lives are supervised by Hashem with special, wondrous, personal care. This, says the Malbim, brings us to a state of exultation.

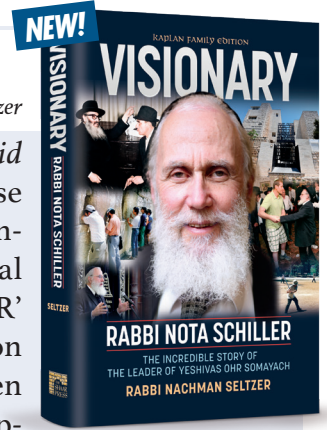
Someone who *truly* seeks refuge in Hashem is always happy because he’s not concerned that anything bad will happen to him. He’s under the awning, and although he sees and hears the storm, he doesn’t fear it.

**WITH
BITACHON,
EVERY DAY
CAN BE Z'MAN
SIMCHASEINU.**

The *sefer Shomer Emunim* offers another important lesson from this *pasuk*: *Bitachon* is a source of *simchah*—the best tool for fighting life’s challenges, since sadness robs us of the clarity and energy needed to confront difficult situations. *Bitachon* counters that sadness because “all who take refuge in You will rejoice.”

And this approach reinforces itself: When someone experiences the security of taking refuge under Hashem’s shelter, he does not want to leave; he knows that remaining there will protect him, infuse him with happiness, and ultimately bring him success. Like Hillel (see *Berachos* 60a), he may perceive signs of trouble, but he does not fear that it will strike him. This is a beautiful *pasuk* to ingrain in our minds: Rather than viewing *bitachon* as a test and a struggle, we can remember that, at its core, it is a wellspring of *simchah*. Every day can be *z’man simchaseinu*. 📖





As one of the people who had written the book on how to be *mekarev* people, R' Nota's thoughts on any topic related to returnees to Judaism were well developed and on point.

Sometimes he'd say, "All of the Jewish people are commanded to observe the 613 commandments, but a *baal teshuvah* has an extra positive and negative commandment: 'Thou shalt be normal' and 'Thou shalt not be weird.'"

R' Menashe Shapiro, a *talmid*, recalls R' Nota addressing the yeshivah after Covid was basically over and people had stopped wearing masks.

"Wearing masks is now *assur*," he said, "because no one is doing it and we are not allowed to be weird."

This also applies to taking on *chumros* and *min-hagim* before one is ready to do so. One of the *talmidim* at the yeshivah decided that he wanted to follow the opinion of the Chazon Ish and wear a long *kapote* on the Yamim Noraim and the Yamim Tovim. He ordered a frock before his wedding and wore it on both days of the following Rosh Hashanah, which occurred shortly after his wedding.

"During Rosh Hashanah," the *talmid* says, "I had several encounters with R' Nota, who clearly saw that I was wearing a frock. But he didn't say a word about it at the time. It was a few days after Rosh Hashanah when he called me into his office."

"Look," R' Nota said to the *talmid*, "we need to have an open and frank conversation. Wearing a frock on the Yamim Noraim and Yamim Tovim is not our way."

"But what about the Chazon Ish?" the *talmid* protested.

"This is not our way," R' Nota repeated. "This is not our tradition. You are not on the level to be doing this at this point in your life. If you become a rav one day and you are leading a shul, we can revisit the question. But right now, it's not the right thing for you."

Though the student had been put in his place and R' Nota had basically forbidden him from doing

what he wanted to do, the *talmid* didn't feel bad about it, because the conversation had been conducted in a nonjudgmental way. He was also grateful to R' Nota for ignoring the situation on Rosh Hashanah itself, even though he was completely opposed to it. This showed true sensitivity and caring to the *talmid*, which made him more receptive to R' Nota's gentle *mussar shmuess* afterward.

That night, the *talmid* went home and hung the frock in his closet.

It's still hanging there today.

...

R' Yonasan Jaffit merited learning and teaching at Ohr Somayach for the better part of a decade. He then continued working for R' Nota on a campus in Toronto for more than a decade.

"While I have innumerable stories about R' Nota," he says, "I would like to share one particular experience. As a *bachur*, I was invited to the Schiller home once for a Shabbos dinner. As I was eating the first course, I proudly told the Rosh Yeshivah that I had become so used to making *berachos* on my food that I had almost made one unnecessarily on the soup. R' Nota's response left an indelible im-

pression on me.

"Yonasan," he said, 'a Jew must never operate on autopilot.'

"That line forever changed the way I approached mitzvah observance."

Somehow R' Nota always knew the perfect thing to say and do.

R' Nota, with all his brilliance and abilities, was also incredibly modest. When people would refer to R' Nota as a *marbitz Torah*, he would comment, "Yes, that's correct. I've forgotten many *sefarim* on planes and trains, and I hope people are using them..." 



R' Nota Schiller with *talmidim*

A JEW MUST NEVER OPERATE ON AUTOPILOT

R' David Rosenberg was an old-time Jew whose values and ideals reflected the world in which he was raised.

One year shortly before Succos, at a time when he was living in Monsey, New York, R' David purchased a beautiful — and expensive — *esrog*.

Upon returning home from yeshivah, R' David's son Sruly — today a member of the Lakewood, New Jersey, community — asked to see his father's *esrog*. Sruly was stunned by the fruit's beauty. It had clearly cost his father a pretty penny. This surprised him, as R' David was not a person of means, and spending in such a fashion was uncharacteristic of him.

"How much did you pay for the *esrog*?" asked Sruly.

"Seventy-five dollars," answered R' David.

"Seventy-five dollars!" asked Sruly. "How's that even possible?"

Sruly knew where his father had bought the *esrog*. There was no way that he had been able to get what appeared to be a \$300 to \$400 *esrog* for a mere \$75.

"Yes," said R' David. "I paid \$75 for the *esrog*, and the rest went for *tzorchei Yom Tov*."

*It took Sruly a moment to digest his father's enigmatic response. But then he understood. R' David had simply reframed the way to look at his expenditure. The portion of money that he had spent beyond what was within his range for an *esrog* was simply a way of helping another Yid — in this case, the *esrog* seller — cover his Yom Tov expenses. And what more beautiful way to help a fellow Yid than to give*

him the funds by buying what he's selling?

Rabbi Menashe Miller, who first told me the above anecdote, shared a related memory from the period when he was a *talmid* at Mesivta of Long Beach.

A fellow would visit Mesivta of Long Beach selling several items, including pens. Many of the *bachurim* balked at the idea of buying these writing implements, as they were overpriced. After all, who wants to be taken advantage of?

One day, during one of this seller's visits, Rav Shimon Alster, *maggid shiur* at the yeshivah at the time, bought a number of pens. The *bachurim* were a bit surprised.

Later, after delivering his *shiur*, Rav Alster addressed his *talmidim*. "Many of you are probably wondering why I bought pens from the man who visits our yeshivah. Let me explain. If this man had gone around collecting money for himself, we'd each give him a dollar or so, wouldn't we? Of course we would. Now, however, that he's decided to raise money for himself by selling some items, you decided not to buy any, because no one wants to pay

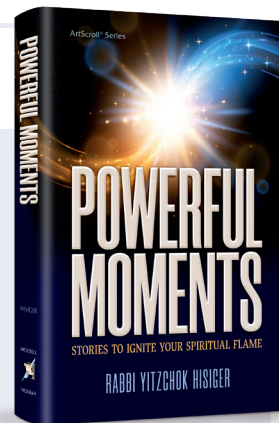
someone's outrageous prices. This man is too proud to collect *tzedakah*, so he's selling pens. There's no better way to sustain a Yid than by buying what he's selling."

Rav Alster, like R' David Rosenberg, imparted an important lesson in supporting others in a manner that protects their dignity and self-worth. 📖

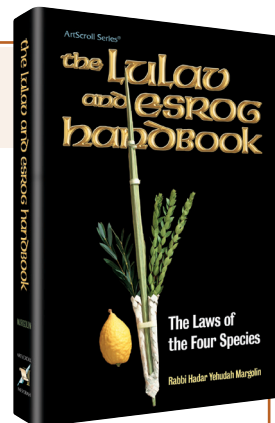


R' Shimon Alster

**THERE'S NO
BETTER WAY
TO SUSTAIN A
YID THAN BY
BUYING WHAT
HE'S SELLING!**



	SHABBOS SEPTEMBER 26 טו תשרי	SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 27 טז תשרי	MONDAY SEPTEMBER 28 יז תשרי	TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 29 יח תשרי	WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 30 יט תשרי	THURSDAY OCTOBER 1 כ תשרי	FRIDAY OCTOBER 2 כא תשרי
BAVLI	Bechoros 8	Bechoros 9	Bechoros 10	Bechoros 11	Bechoros 12	Bechoros 13	Bechoros 14
YERUSHALMI	Yevamos 49	Yevamos 50	Yevamos 51	Yevamos 52	Yevamos 53	Yevamos 54	Yevamos 55
MISHNAH	Oholos 5:5-6	Oholos 5:7-6:1	Oholos 6:2-3	Oholos 6:4-5	Oholos 6:6-7	Oholos 7:1-2	Oholos 7:3-4
KITZUR	98:1-7	98:8-13	98:14-22	98:23-32	98:33-99:2	99:3-100:4	100:5-10
ORAYSA	Yevamos Chazara 109a-110a	Yevamos 110b Chazara 110a	Yevamos 111a Chazara 110b	Yevamos 111b Chazara 111a	Yevamos 112a Chazara 111b	Yevamos 112b Chazara 112a	Yevamos Chazara 110b-111a



The First Day of Succos vs. the Rest of the Days

In commanding us to take the Four Species, the Torah tells us: וּלְקַחְתֶּם לָכֶם בְּיוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן, *And you shall take for yourselves on the first day* (Vayikra 23:40). Thus, our mitzvah d'Oraisa (Biblical requirement) to take the Four Species applies only to the first day of Succos. The verse continues, וּשְׂמַחְתֶּם לִפְנֵי ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם שִׁבְעַת יָמִים, *and you shall rejoice before Hashem, your G-d, seven days*. This is understood as teaching that “before Hashem,” i.e., in the Beis HaMikdash, the mitzvah applies for seven days.

When the Beis HaMikdash was destroyed, the Sages instituted taking the Four Species everywhere for seven days, in commemoration of the Beis Hamikdash (Mishnah, Succah 41a).

However, when the Sages made this enactment, they stipulated that several of the disqualifications that apply on the first day would not apply on the other days. They include:

שָׂאוֹל, Borrowed: It is understood that when the Torah states, “*And you shall take לָכֶם, for yourselves, בְּיוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן, on the first day...*,” it is telling us that on the first day one must use Four Species that *belong to him*. Accordingly, on the first day — and on *Yom Tov Sheni* — one may not use Four Species borrowed from one's friend, unless his friend gives them to him to own. (One can, however, have a friend give him the Four Species on the condition that he will then give them back to his friend to reacquire.) On the other days of Succos, however, there is no disqualification of “borrowed.”

חֶסֶר, Incomplete: If any of the required parts of one of the species is missing (e.g., a piece of the esrog or the top of the central leaf in a lulav), it is disqualified for use on the first day but acceptable on the other days; on *Yom Tov Sheni* it would be used without reciting the *berachah*. This results from an alternate reading of the above-cited verse, וּלְקַחְתֶּם לָכֶם בְּיוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן, *And you shall take for yourselves on the first day ...* The Hebrew for “And you shall take” is

“*Ulekachtem*,” which alludes to לְקַיֵּחַ תָּמִיד [lekichah tamah], a complete taking, i.e., one that is not deficient. Since this is stated with regard to the “first day,” it applies to the first day only. Here too, on *Yom Tov Sheni* one using Four Species that are deficient would use them without reciting the *berachah*.

הָדָר, Hadar: The *Rishonim* (early authorities) disagree as to whether the disqualifications based on *hadar*, “beauty” (as defined by the halachah) apply to Chol HaMoed as well. The majority view, expressed by *Rambam* and *Shulchan Aruch*, is that these disqualifications do not apply. The other view, expressed by *Rosh* and *Rema* and followed by Ashkenazi Jews, is to require *hadar* for all the days of Succos.

Not the species described in the Torah: A disqualification based on being different from the species described in the Torah (e.g., a grafted esrog, an esrog so green that the fruit is clearly not fully developed, a hadas that is not triple-leaved or missing most of its leaves [and thereby not being *avos*, braided like a cord, see page 75) applies to all the days of Succos.

Yom Tov Sheni — The Second Day

Jews who live outside of Israel keep a second day of Succos similar to the first. This day is known as *Yom Tov Sheni* (the second festival day). In general, all disqualifications that apply to the first day apply to the second day as well. It is nevertheless not necessary to be stringent about a minimal deficiency, since some permit a minimal deficiency even on the first day (see *Mishnah Berurah* 648:8).

If another, fully acceptable set of Four Species are not reasonably available, one may take species with first-day disqualifications. He may not, however, recite the *berachah* over them (*Shulchan Aruch* 649:5 and *Mishnah Berurah* §50; see there for the reason). 

SHABBOS OCTOBER 3 בג תשרי	SUNDAY OCTOBER 4 כד תשרי	MONDAY OCTOBER 5 כה תשרי	TUESDAY OCTOBER 6 כו תשרי	WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 7 כז תשרי	THURSDAY OCTOBER 8 כח תשרי	FRIDAY OCTOBER 9 כט תשרי
Bechoros 15	Bechoros 16	Bechoros 17	Bechoros 18	Bechoros 19	Bechoros 20	Bechoros 20
Yevamos 56	Yevamos 57	Yevamos 58	Yevamos 59	Yevamos 60	Yevamos 61	Yevamos 62
Oholos 7:5-6	Oholos 8:1-2	Oholos 8:3-4	Oholos 8:5-6	Oholos 9:1-2	Oholos 9:3-4	Oholos 9:5-6
100:11-16	100:17-End	1:1-4	1:5-2:4	2:5-3:1	3:2-End	4:1-5:1
Yevamos Chazara 111b-112b	Yevamos 113a Chazara 112b	Yevamos 113b Chazara 113a	Yevamos 114a Chazara 113b	Yevamos 114b Chazara 114a	Yevamos 115a Chazara 114b	Yevamos Chazara 113a-113b

It has been a month filled with such inspiration, such *chizuk*, such joy and elevation, but in a way, the real *avodah* lies ahead of us.

In Slonim, they would say that “the Ribbono Shel Olam of *Atah Vechartanu* is the same One of *Atah Chonantanu*.” On Yom Tov we celebrate how “You chose us and elevated us,” and as we prepare for the winter ahead, we do so with the reminder that “You have granted us...,” the *tefillah* we say when Shabbos or Yom Tov departs.

“I was at a *sheva berachos* recently, and the speaker shared such a precious story...” There is joy in Reb Meilech’s face as he recalls the story. “A *maaseh* to live by...”

There was a Yid from Lelov who was planning to travel to his Rebbe in Lublin for Pesach. He would be making the journey for the first time, and he set out a few days before Yom Tov.

He had been given careful directions, and he knew that when he reached the first major cross-roads, he was to follow the sign toward Lublin.

The problem was that a long winter of snow and wind had sent the four-way signpost toppling to the ground, and it lay on its side. The signs for Lublin, Warsaw, Krakow, and Lelov were still affixed to the pole, but it was no longer clear which sign was meant to point in which direction.

He pondered the situation for a few minutes and came to a realization. “I know from which direction I have come,” he reasoned, “and that Lelov is in that direction.”

He lifted the pole back up, so that the sign indicating Lelov faced the road from which he had come.

With that, it was clear in which direction he had to head in order to reach Lublin, and he happily continued on his way.

At the *sheva berachos*, the *darshan* turned to the *chas-san* and said, “You are going on a journey now, walking a new road. Do not be frightened, *chassan*, because if you know from where you come — if you hold fast to the lessons of your parents’ home, and remember the *chinuch* that you received — then you will know pre-

cisely how to go forward!”

I think about his story now, as Yom Tov fades and we look ahead...

Remember the Rosh Hashanah we just had, the way we felt on Yom Kippur, the joy of Succos and the *deveikus* of Simchas Torah... we all wanted one thing, just to be close to Him. If we remember where we are coming from, we will be able to walk the road ahead with clarity about what is expected of us.

On Motzaei Simchas Torah, the Ropshitzer Reb-

be would say, “Now, we are going from the *groisse teg*, the glorious days, and heading into the *groisse necht*, the long winter nights with so much potential for growth and *aliyah*.”

Di heilige vinter necht, *tzaddikim* would call them, the holy nights of winter.

One Motzaei Simchas Torah, a group of chassidim came to their Rebbe, Rav Mordechai of Lechovitch.

“Rebbe,” they cried, “that was such an elevated Yom Tov, we tasted such closeness and *deveikus* in Hashem. What happens now?

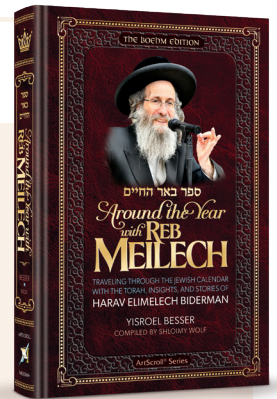
What will be with all those pure, holy intentions once we return to the markets and fairs and realities of everyday life?”

The Lechovitcher responded with a *vort* from Rav Aharon Hagadol of Karlin. The *pasuk* says, *When you sacrifice a korban to Hashem, לְרִצְוֹנְכֶם תִּזְבַּחְהוּ*, you shall slaughter it to find favor for yourselves (Vayikra 19:5) and he explained that the Torah is addressing us, today. If someone wants to bring a *korban* now, when we no longer have a Beis HaMikdash, do you know how he can do it? Through *lirtzonchem tizbachuhu* — by sacrificing his own *ratzon*!

Closing one’s eyes, mouth, or hands to avoid something improper is a *korban*—a sacrifice of one’s own *ratzon*. And since the day one brings a *korban* is a personal Yom Tov, every such act creates another Yom Tov, allowing a person to live continuously with the joy of *lirtzonchem tizbachuhu*. 📖



**IF YOU KNOW FROM
WHERE YOU COME —
THEN YOU WILL KNOW
PRECISELY HOW TO GO
FORWARD!**



What If... on Yamim Tovim Adapted by Rabbi Moshe Sherrow from the works of Rabbi Yitzchok Zilberstein

Q. Effy had painstakingly saved up money to fly to *Eretz Yisrael* for Succos — his dream come true. His friend Avi, who lived in Yerushalayim, had agreed to rent Effy his spacious apartment, which had a large adjoining *succah*, as Avi was spending Yom Tov with his parents in Bnei Brak.

Two days before Yom Tov it began to rain, so Avi covered the *succah* with its removable roof to protect it from getting wet. Unfortunately, when he left the apartment for Bnei Brak the day before Succos, he forgot to open the roof.

Effy joyfully arrived in *Eretz Yisrael* on the morning of Erev Succos and picked up the keys to Avi's apartment from a neighbor. He immediately busied himself with settling his family in their lodgings.

That night, after Yom Tov had begun, Avi remembered that he had forgotten to open the sliding roof. That meant that Effy would unknowingly miss out on the mitzvah of sitting in the *succah*, as well as make several *berachos* in vain. He knew that a non-Jew was manning the local medical clinic.

Can Avi ask the man to call a different non-Jew in Avi's neighborhood to warn Effy about the closed roof?

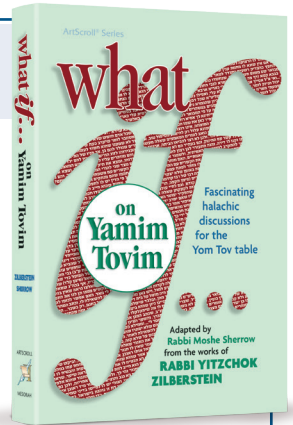
A. Avi would be allowed to ask a non-Jew to contact Effy, for several reasons. The Gemara in *Eruvin* states that it is better for one person to violate a lesser prohibition in order to save someone else from unknowingly committing a more serious violation. *Tosafos* elaborates that the Gemara is only referring to a case where the first person was responsible for creating the situation that would cause his friend to sin. In this case, Avi was certainly responsible for creating a situation in which Effy would transgress the severe

prohibition against pronouncing Hashem's holy Name in vain. Therefore, in these circumstances, Avi could even violate the prohibition against asking a non-Jew to communicate the urgent message about the closed roof to Effy.

In addition, the *Rema* cites the *Ba'al HaTtur* that one may ask a non-Jew to do a *melachah* on Shabbos to enable him to perform a mitzvah. The *Rema* concludes that one should not employ this leniency unless there is a great need, as the majority of *poskim* do not agree with this opinion. The *Mishnah Berurah* quotes the *Shelah*, who is stringent even the case of great need, e.g., an entire group of people sitting in the dark at a *sheva berachos*. Nevertheless, the *Ba'al HaTtur* may be applied when there are other reasons to permit it, as well.

Rav Chaim Kanievsky (*Derech Emunah Ma'aser* Ch. 9; *Tziyun Halachah* 89) records that the Chazon Ish allowed a man to separate *ma'aser* on Yom Tov, which is prohibited under ordinary circumstances, in order to allow an *esrog* that had already been sent to a different community to be used on Yom Tov. Had *ma'aser* not been taken, the entire community would have made *berachos* in vain on the *esrog* that was invalid, and they would have missed out on the mitzvah of *lulav*, as well.

If the non-Jew was unsuccessful in conveying the message to Effy, Effy would not have to pay the rent for the first day of Yom Tov, since he did not secure the apartment that he was promised. After all, a Succos rental without a *succah*, and through which Effy lost a precious mitzvah and made *berachos le'vatalah*, is not worth anything. 📖



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THE WEEKLY QUESTION

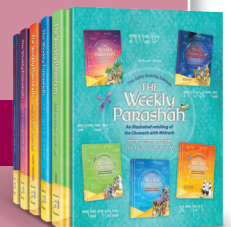
What are the minimum and maximum permitted heights of a sukkah, and is there a maximum length or width?

Kids, please ask your parents to email the answer to shabbosquestion@artscroll.com by this Wednesday to be entered into a weekly raffle to win a \$36 ARTSCROLL GIFT CARD! Be sure to include your full name, city, and contact info.

Names of winners will appear in a future edition.

The winner of the question for Ki Savo is: MOISHY BERMAN, Cleveland OH

Question for Ki Savo was: What declaration does a farmer make on the last day of Pesach of Year 4 of the Shemittah cycle?
Ki Savo Answer: That he gave everything he was supposed to during the first three years of the cycle.





BY RABBI PAYSACH KROHN
AND B. WEINGARTEN

They Called Her Lulava

IT WAS HOSHANA RABBAH IN 1973, A FEW DAYS AFTER THE START OF THE YOM KIPPUR WAR, WHEN ARIK SHUALI WAS DRIVING HIS AMMUNITION TRUCK TOWARD HIS ARMY BASE.

WHAT'S GOING ON OVER THERE?
WHAT'S ALL THE COMMOTION ABOUT?

R' SHAMMAI,
CAN I SHAKE YOUR LULAV
AND ESROG?

CAN
I ALSO HAVE
A TURN?

WHY IS
EVERYONE LINING UP,
RAFI?

WE'RE ALL WAITING
FOR A TURN TO SHAKE THE
LULAV AND ESROG.

HOW ABOUT
WAITING FOR YOUR
TURN TOO?

NAH,
I'M NOT INTERESTED
IN WAITING AROUND
HERE.

YOU'RE SURE, ARIK?
IT'S HOSHANA RABBAH TODAY.
IT'S THE LAST DAY TO DO THIS
MITZVAH UNTIL NEXT
YEAR.

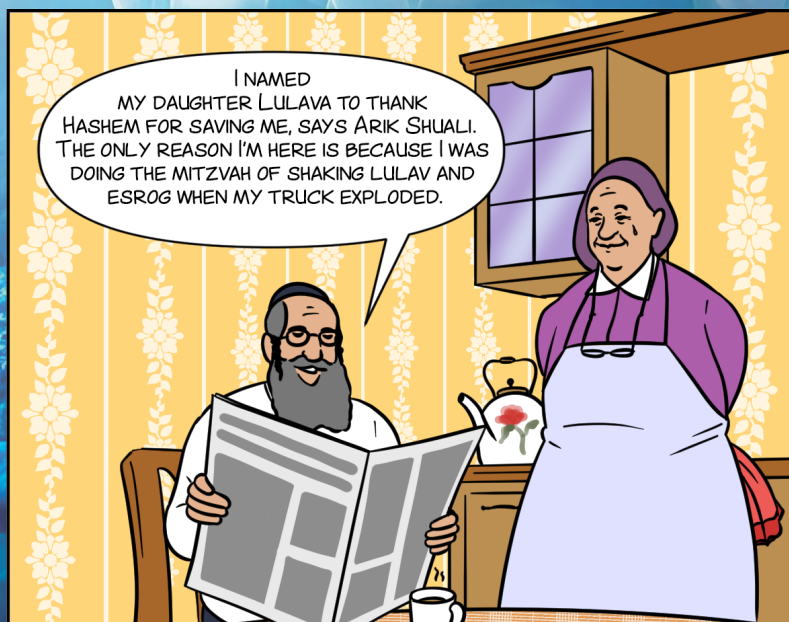
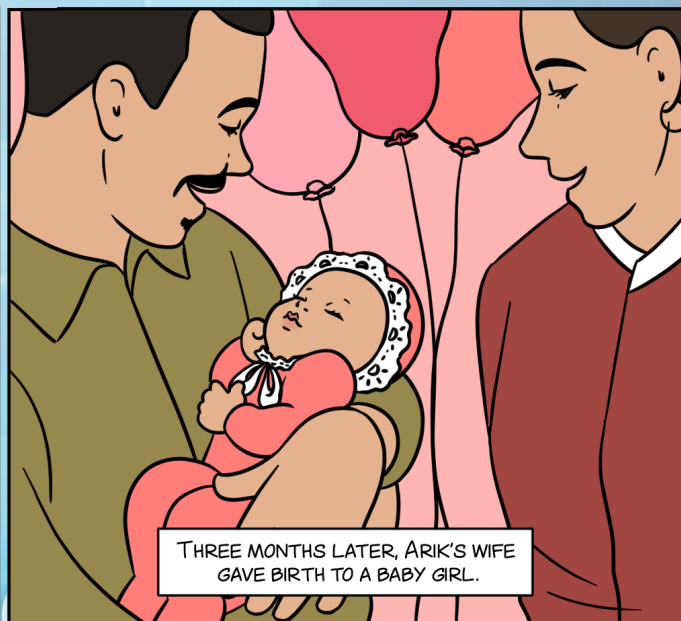
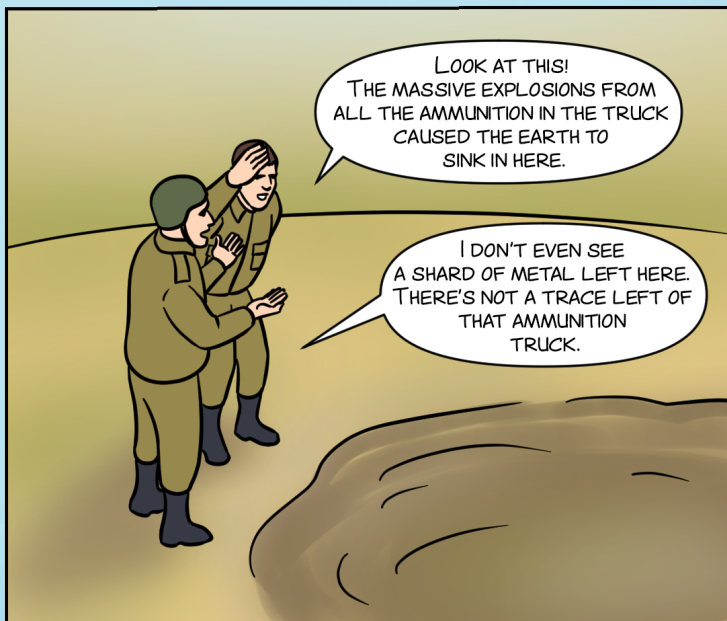
YOU'RE SAYING
IT'S MY LAST CHANCE?
AH, OKAY. I'M JOINING
THE LINE.

YOUR
TRUCK CAN WAIT
A FEW MINUTES,
EH?

YOU CAN GO AHEAD
AND SAY THE BRACHA
NOW.

BARUCH ATAH...
AL NETILAS LULAV!

AFTER A LONG WAIT, IT WAS FINALLY ARIK'S TURN TO SHAKE THE LULAV AND ESROG.



PART 29: BEYOND ENGLISH: ARTSCROLL SPEAKS TO THE WORLD

When Rav Meir Shapiro introduced and popularized his pioneering Daf Yomi initiative, he said that it would help unify Jews throughout the world. If a Polish Jew came to Brazil, they would be united in discussing the same *blatt Gemara*. He surely did not mean that a Jew from Cracow and a Jew in Rio de Janeiro would discuss Tosafos in Portuguese, or that a New Yorker in Warsaw would debate a Maharsha in Polish. In the 1920s, when Daf Yomi was becoming popular, Yiddish was the international language of Ashkenazi Jews, especially among *bnei Torah*. Not only the *blatt*, but the language as well, was universal.

Times have changed. As we once quoted Rav Yaakov Kamenetsky in these pages, “In its time, Ladino became a language of Torah; and in its time, Yiddish became a language of Torah; and today, English is a language of Torah” as proven by the need for, and success of, the more than 3,000 ArtScroll/Mesorah titles.

Actually, we are not the first to present the Torah in multiple languages. Moshe Rabbeinu, too, recorded the Torah in many languages, making its teachings accessible to those who wished to drink from it.

In the *Midbar*, Jews who had been prevented from offering the Korban Pesach protested, “*Lamah nigara* — Why should we be left out?” Following ArtScroll’s presentation of Torah in English, speakers of other languages made the same plea: Why should we be left out? Why shouldn’t our native tongue become a language of Torah?

An executive of the Edmond J. Safra Foundation approached us. Mr. Safra, a Syrian, French-speaking Jew, had been one of the world’s premier bankers. After his untimely death, his foundation wished to dedicate a French edition of ArtScroll’s Schottenstein Talmud in his memory. The resulting 73-volume Edmond J. Safra Edition is nearly complete, thanks to the Foundation and other dedicators, along with the Edmond J. Safra French Chumash and more than a dozen other ArtScroll titles. French, too, has become a language of Torah.



Interestingly, the precedent for translating the Torah classics into French can be traced back to the “father of commentators,” Rashi. Throughout his commentaries on Tanach and the Talmud, Rashi includes more than 3,000 *laazim*—translations of obscure words and expressions into the Champagne dialect of Old French. In fact, Rashi’s *laazim* remain one of the primary sources used by modern linguists in their study of Old French.

Our next language to conquer was Spanish. A young leader of Panama City’s vibrant Jewish community offered to assemble sponsors for a Spanish ArtScroll Chumash in memory of Rabbi Sion Levy, the community’s legendary architect and leader for nearly half a century. The project spurred Spanish editions of dozens of ArtScroll works, including Mishnah, liturgy, Haggadah, and more.



The ArtScroll Library also created demand for Hebrew translations of its English elucidations — not classic Rabbinic *Lashon Kodesh* and not modern *Ivrit*, but a Hebrew accessible to those raised in both the yeshivah and Chassidic worlds and understandable to a broad Israeli readership. Our writers and editors had to bridge that linguistic gap while remaining accurate and graceful.

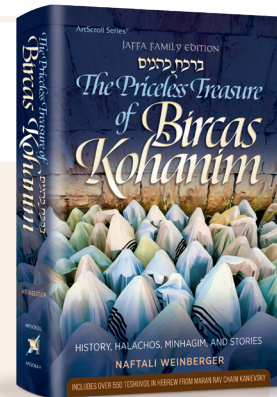
Baruch Hashem, their efforts have met with phenomenal success. A growing array of ArtScroll classics, including Bavli and Yerushalmi, Midrash Rabbah, Sefer HaChinuch, Onkelos, and Mishnah, have become as successful in Hebrew as they are in English. The latest addition, *The Schottenstein Edition* רש"י המבואר, which is the Hebrew edition of the Schottenstein Rashi Elucidated on Chumash, is now being released to widespread acclaim.

With a host of books in other languages, including Yiddish, Russian and Portuguese, ArtScroll’s boundaries continue to expand, enabling an ever-wider swath of Jews to taste the sweetness of Torah in the languages they know best.

UP NEXT: Jewish History à la Wein

ASHKENAZIM IN CHUTZ LAARETZ: BENEFITING FROM THE BERACHAH

The Priceless Treasure of Bircas Kohanim by Naftali Weinberger



Does the daily Bircas Kohanim performed in Eretz Yisrael extend to those in *chutz laAretz* who do not have the benefit of this *berachah* every day?

R' Moshe Chagiz writes: "People living outside Eretz Yisrael who are supporting those who live in the Land, enabling them to fulfill the mitzvah of *yishuv Eretz Yisrael*, will be rewarded by being included in the Bircas Kohanim that is recited there. It is considered as though the Kohanim have in mind to bestow the *berachah* upon them, and as though they have in mind to receive the *berachah* (as we find with regard to all *berachos*, that the intention of both, the person reciting the *berachah* and the person who is receiving it, is necessary).

Most *poskim*, however, are of the opinion that Bircas Kohanim is not effective for those in another country, and definitely cannot "spread" overseas.

R' Moshe Feinstein (*Igros Moshe*, O.C., vol. 2, #31) states unequivocally that the *berachos* of a Kohen in one city do not extend to another city. He writes: "The Gemara (*Sotah* 38b) says that in a congregation that consists entirely of Kohanim, all of them should *duchan* together. The Gemara then asks: To whom is their blessing addressed, if no other congregants are pres-

ent? And the Gemara answers: It is addressed to their brethren who are working in the fields and cannot be present. Now, why doesn't the Gemara simply answer that the blessing is addressed to the entire Jewish people? The obvious conclusion is that the *berachah* is exclusively for those who live in the same city, as implied by the fact that the Gemara — as well as *Rambam* and *Shulchan Aruch* — mentions the fields, which refers to the surrounding local area."

R' Shlomo Zalman Auerbach is quoted (*Halichos Shlomo*, *Hilchos Tefillah* 10:7) as saying that the "people in the fields" include only those who are presently in the same country. Thus, those who reside outside of Eretz Yisrael cannot receive the *berachah* through Kohanim in Eretz Yisrael. Even if a Kohen has in mind to bless someone who is in a different country, it would not be effective. (While this is similar to the opinion of R' Moshe Feinstein, R' Moshe specified that Bircas Kohanim extends only to the same city, but R' Shlomo Zalman said it extends to the same country — a remarkable *chiddush*.)

New Cycle

KITZUR SHULCHAN ARUCH YOMI

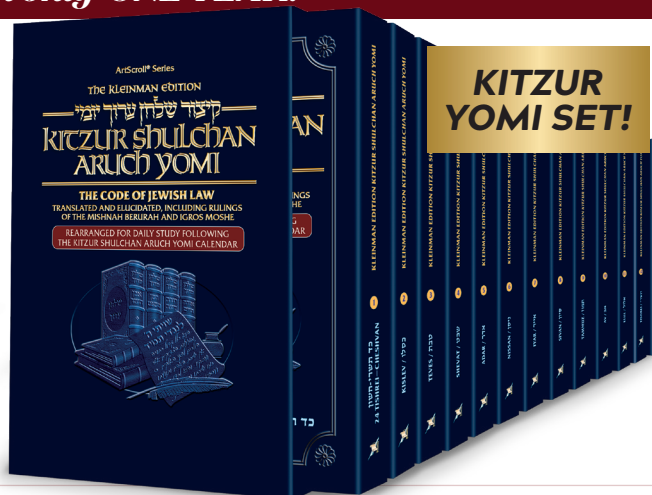
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