



Parashat Sukkot 5771

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Chag Sameach from Yeshivat Ateret Yerushalayim

On Sukkot...

Laws of Dwelling in a Sukkah

Obligation:

1. During all seven days of Sukkot (eight days outside of Israel), one's house should serve as his temporary dwelling and his Sukkah as his permanent dwelling. He should eat, drink, sleep and live in the Sukkah, day and night, just as he does the rest of the year in his house (Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 639:1).
2. There is an obligation to sleep in the Sukkah, even for a nap. The law of sleeping in the Sukkah – for men – has a greater foundation in Halachah than does eating in the Sukkah. The basic halachah is that except for the first night (and the second night outside of Israel), there is no obligation to eat in the Sukkah unless one is eating foods made from flour such as bread, cakes or noodles. In contrast, there is an obligation to sleep in the Sukkah, even for a nap. Our Rabbi, Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah Ha-Cohain Kook, would remind his students of the importance of sleeping in the Sukkah. When he was in Switzerland in the cold and snow, he would not forgo even one night of sleeping in the Sukkah (Sefer Rabbenu - on the Life of Ha-Rav Zvi Yehudah Ha-Cohain Kook, p. 187).
3. Because of the great holiness of the Sukkah, it is proper to limit non-holy discussions and speak words of holiness and Torah in the Sukkah, and all the more so one must be cautious to refrain from speaking Lashon Ha-Ra (Mishnah Berurah ibid. #2).
4. At the beginning of the Laws of the Sukkah, the Bach explains that there are three mitzvot which one does not fulfill in the proper manner if he does not elucidate the reason for performing them. They are: Tzitzit, Tefillin and Sukkah. During Sukkot, Maran Ha-Rav

Kook would mention this idea and explain at the length the reason for dwelling in the Sukkah (Siddur Olat Re'eyah vol. 1, p. 11 in the notes of our Rabbi, Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah).

Eating in the Sukkah:

5. The order of Kiddush on the first night is: The blessing on the wine, the Kiddush, the blessing of "Leshev Ba-Sukkah" and Shehechyanu. On the second night outside of Israel, Shehechyanu is recited before the blessing of "Leshev Ba-Sukkah" since the Shehechyanu applies to the holiday and not the fulfillment on the mitzvah of dwelling in the Sukkot which was performed the previous night for the first time (ibid. 661:1 and in the Rama and Mishnah Berurah #1).
6. On the first night of the holiday (and the second night outside of Israel), one must eat an olive-size piece of bread in the Sukkah, just as one must eat an olive-size piece of matzah on the first night of Pesach. And similar to eating matzah, one should not eat on Erev Sukkot from noon onward in order to approach eating in the Sukkah with an appetite, one should not eat on the first night until it is definitely night-time and one should eat the bread before midnight (ibid. 639:3 and in the Rama).
7. It is forbidden to eat more than an egg-size piece of bread or foods made from flour such as cookies, cakes or noodles outside of the Sukkah. But if one eats meat, fruit or vegetables there is no obligation to eat in the Sukkah. One who glorifies the mitzvah to eat even snacks (not containing flour) in the Sukkah is praiseworthy (ibid. 2).

Those Exempt from Dwelling in the Sukkah:

8. Women and children are exempt from the Sukkah. A boy who reaches the age of education is obligated in the mitzvah of Sukkah so he can be educated about the mitzvot (ibid. 640:1).
9. One who is distressed is exempt from the Sukkah whether he is sick, too cold or too hot, bothered by the wind, flies, bees or mosquitoes, etc. as long as the Sukkah was not constructed in a place where there would certainly be a hardship. Therefore, if it is raining to the extent that the rain would spoil a cooked dish – even if you do not currently have such a dish there – one may go into his house. This applies to all days of Sukkot, but on the first night (and on the second night outside of Israel) one is required to eat an olive-size piece of bread in the Sukkah even if it is raining (ibid. 639:5 and in the Rama). If it is raining on the first night (and on the second night outside of Israel), some authorities say that it is proper to wait until midnight to see if the rain will cease. Others explain that one should wait an hour or two in order not to impinge on the joy of the holiday (Mishnah Berurah ibid, #35). If the rain does not stop, one should recite Kiddush, eat an olive-size piece of bread in the Sukkah without the blessing of "Leshev Ba-Sukkah" and eat in his house. If the rain stops during the

meal, he should go out to the Sukkah and finish it there (Shulchan Aruch and Rama ibid. and Mishnah Berurah #36).

During the remaining days of Sukkot, if one is eating in the Sukkah, and it begins raining so that he goes inside his house to eat, he may remain inside until the end of the meal, even if it stops raining (ibid. 6). If one is sleeping in the Sukkah, he need not wait until the extent that the rain would spoil a cooked dish in order to go inside his house since even a little rain is distressing when sleeping (ibid. 7 in the Rama). If he went to sleep at night in the house due to rain, he may remain in the house until the morning (ibid. 7).

10. It is permissible to take trips on Chol Ha-Moed Sukkot, and to sleep and eat outside the Sukkah, if a Sukkah cannot be easily found. One who is strict not to lose out on the mitzvah of Sukkah even once is praiseworthy (Shut She'eilat Shlomo of Ha-Rav Aviner 1:238 and 2:149).

Prayers in the Sukkah:

11. There is a custom to welcome in each night one of the seven spiritual guests called "Ushpizin." According to Ashkenazic tradition, the order of the Ushpizin is: Avraham, Yitzchak, Yaakov, Yosef, Moshe, Aharon and David. According to Nusach Sefard, the order is: Avraham, Yitzchak, Yaakov, Moshe, Aharon, Yosef and David.
12. When departing from the Sukkah at the end of Sukkot, some say: May we merit to dwell in the Sukkah of the Leviathan" (ibid. 667:1 in the Rama). And the Aderet – Ha-Gaon Ha-Rav Eliyahu David Rabinowitz Te'omim – the Rav of Jerusalem and Maran Ha-Rav Kook's father-in-law, would say: May we also merit in the coming year, may it be good for us, to fulfill the mitzvot of Sukkah and the Four Species, the rejoicing on Holiday and all of its parts according their proper halachic prescriptions, and fulfill all of the mitzvot from now until next year, may it be good to us and all Israel, amen (Tefillat David, p. 110 and Nefesh David, p. 197, 211).

Rav Aviner on... How to Daven without Bothering Others

If you are the one leading the davening

Do not daven slower or faster than what is acceptable. Do not place "a burden on the congregation." If you daven too slowly you will cause others who have to go to work to leave before the end of the davening, and you will delay the next minyan from starting on time. If the someone davens too quickly, do not admonish him in the middle of the davening and embarrass him. Talk to him as a friend after davening. If speaking to him gently does not work, do not ask him to lead the davening.

Shul is not an opera house

Use the accepted tunes of the community. Do not use tunes with which the community is not comfortable. This causes discomfort to the community in addition to the halachic question involved in acting this way. If the person leading the davening acts differently from the accepted practice, please do not embarrass him, as we said above. If you ask your guest to lead the davening, advise him of what is expected of him in order to prevent any unpleasantness.

Shul is not a day care center

Do not bring young children who cannot remain quiet. It is permissible to bring a quiet child. If he begins to make noise please take him out immediately, even in the middle of the Shemoneh Esrei, and especially in the middle of the Shemoneh Esrei.

Shul is not a club house

Please take an urgent conversation outside, and "Hashem, the Beneficent One, will forgive." If you talk inside and disturb others who are davening, however, it is not certain that they will forgive you. If the conversation cannot be delayed and it is impossible to take it outside, please whisper and "Hashem, the Beneficent One, will forgive."

Shul is not a carpenter's workshop

Close chairs and folding shtenders quietly without banging them.

Shul is not a place to create work for others

Please return siddurim to their places. The Gaba'im are not your slaves,

Shul is not a welfare office

Pay your dues and donations, and do not perform mitzvot with money that does not belong to you.

Shul is not a Chasidic Rebbe's court

Do not make a long "Mi She-beirach" to which no one listens. A blessing will come to someone who is strict to forgo a "Mi She-beirach." Donate money when you receive an aliyah, and I promise you that the Master of the Universe will bless you even without the Gabbai's announcement.

Shul is not a "Shteibel" If you are late, repent. Do not organize a private repetition of the Shemoneh Esrei which prevents others from leaving and places a "burden on the community."

Shul is not an election rally

Do not shout out "Yasher Koach" to people who receive an aliyah or led the davening. They will be happier to receive a personal "Yasher Koach" with a smile.

Shul is not Hyde Park in London

Try, as much as possible, to hang announcements on the bulletin board.

The Netilat Yadayim room is not a club house for Cohanim and Levi'im

Conversation and the usual "jokes" are usually at the expense of the repetition of the Shemoneh Esrei and others people's ability to concentrate.

The Silent Shemoneh Esrei is exactly that: Silent. Our Sages said that one should not daven the Shemoneh Esrei out loud in the presence of others, since a person is not permitted to increase his own concentration at the expense of another person's concentration. Do not clap your hand in the middle of the Shemoneh Esrei "to expel external distractions." Ask Mekubalim (mytics) how to attain this result without making noise.

If you see a new face in shul

Smile at him, extend a handshake and greet him. The usual crowd in shul should also be viewed as a new face.

If you have an obligation to lead the davening, forgo it

The merit of forgoing it will benefit the ascension of the soul of the deceased even more than the merit of prayer.

If you are looking for challenges in mitzvot between one person and another – come to shul. If you are looking for challenges in mitzvot between a person and Hashem, fulfill these mitzvot between one person and another. They are also the will of Hashem.

Kitzur Tefilat Amecha - #11

[adapted for middle-schoolers by Rabbi Shmuel Jablon from Rav Aviner's three-volume commentary on the siddur "Tefilat Amecha"]

We say "A person should always be G-d-fearing, privately and publicly." Yirat Hashem is a combination of fear and awe of Hashem as well as a desire to be close to Him. Fear of Heaven (Yirat Shamayim) isn't supposed to be a side point of our life. It is supposed to be the essence of who we are. We are supposed to at all times and all places have Yirat Shamayim. But before we can get to "Always be G-d-fearing," we need to be a person, be a mentch. First we need to have good Midot, a good heart and to be honest, good people. Then we can have Yirat Shamayim. Someone who is not a good person cannot possibly have real Yirat Shamayim if they don't also have good Midot.

Family Matters - Ha-Rav writes weekly for

the parashah sheet "Rosh Yehudi" on family relationships

A Child and the Inclination

Question: I heard that a baby has an evil inclination and not a good inclination, and that when s/he becomes bat/bar mitzvah the good inclination appears. Why?

Answer: First of all, a baby is defined by our Rabbi as one who has no sin. And, in fact, according to the Torah a child is not punished for his bad acts. He certainly does many stupid things, but they are not considered sin, since a sin is the result of intellect and an ethical decision. A young child is trapped by temptations and feelings. He is therefore not responsible for his actions. He is led by the evil inclination, i.e. different needs, temptations, desires, which come to satisfy him, but they are not considered sin. And little-by-little, we are obligated to educate him towards good and proper goals, to refine his desires and to overcome his evil inclination.

We need love and patience.

Text Message Responsa

Ha-Rav answers hundreds of text message questions a week. Some appear in the parashah sheets "Ma'ayanei Ha-Yeshu'ah" and "Olam Ha-Katan." Here's a sample:

Favorite Student

Q: I am a high school Rebbe. Is it proper if I love one student more than the others?

A: In your heart, it is okay. But not in practice.

Fallen Kippah

Q: What should I do if my Kippah falls off in the middle of Shemoneh Esrei?

A: Pick it up (Mishnah Berurah 104:2. Piskei Teshuvot ibid).

Maaser

Q: Is giving Maaser a mitzvah or minhag?

A: Minhag, but it is an important minhag and one should accept it – without taking an oath (Tur Yoreh Deah 331. Pischei Teshuvah ibid. #12. Shut She'eilat Yaavetz 1:6).

Non-Jewish Music

Q: Is there a problem to listen to non-Jewish music if one does not understand the words?

A: Yes. There must be kosher words, melody and singer (Commentary of the Rambam on Avot 1:17. Igeret Ha-Rambam to Sages of Aram Tzova, Mehdurat Ha-Rav Yitzchak Shilat p. 428. Shut Igrot Moshe, Even Ha-Ezer #96).

Bad in the World

Q: Why does Hashem cause bad things to happen to me, since as a result my mitzvah observance deteriorates?

A: Good comes from the bad, like a doctor who causes pain, and it is out of love. Overcome the trial!

Shemoneh Esrei

Q: Is it permissible to daven Shemoneh Esrei in a room where people are sleeping?

A: If there is no bad smell (Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim #103).

Shidduch Suggestion

Q: If one suggests a possible match, does he have to inform the person that the prospect had cancer at the age of three?

A: If the person has been completely cured and the risk is now no greater than any other person – one should not inform them (Re'im Ahuvim chap. 6).

Which Parents?

Q: We were married three months ago. With which set of parents should we celebrate the first holidays?

A: Where you are happy.

Marrying a Ba'al Teshuvah

Q: Is there a problem to marry a Kibbutznik who is a Ba'al Teshuvah?

A: There is no problem. Being a Kibbutznik is not a deficiency. Regarding the past transgression, the repentance completely erased them. Rambam, Hilchot Teshuvah.

Hallel

Q: Can a woman recite Hallel on the day on her wedding and on her wedding anniversary each year?

A: Certainly. Without a blessing. To express gratitude to Hashem.

Shehechyanu

Q: Is it permissible to recite Shehechyanu for a new T-Shirt which will be used primarily for pajamas?

A: Yes, if you are happy (Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 223:4).

Glatt

Q: Is it possible to cook for guests, who only eat Glatt meat, in utensils which were used for non-Glatt Kosher meat?

A: Yes, but ask the guests first (Shut Yabia Omer Yoreh Deah 5:3).

Selling Transgressions

Q: Does it help to sell one's transgressions to a non-Jew?

A: Nonsense.

Shidduch

Q: I met a man, and he lied about his age because he was afraid to tell the truth. Should I continue to see him?

A: This is a shortcoming, but don't break it off. There is no one on earth free of transgression.

Standing in Line

Q: Can I ask my daughter to stand in line with an empty shopping cart while I collect the groceries and bring them?

A: This is also cutting the line.

Special thank you to Fred Casden for editing the Ateret Yerushalayim Parshah Sheet



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