



Sukkot



English version

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THE POWER TO BE HAPPY

Built into Judaism is a life-long workshop that prepares us to become superhuman beings. From nursery to nursing home, Judaism teaches us patience and trains us to delay self-gratification. It teaches you to wait 6 hours between meat and milk, to avoid relationships with the other gender until you find your spouse. To hold off work until you learned something after morning prayers. Judaism teaches us that life is more important than the most important things, like keeping Shabbat, fasting on Yom Kippur, or attending synagogues.

Judaism teaches admittance on our High Holidays. On Rosh Hashana, Judaism teaches us Who is Boss, that we are powerless, that there is a Power that is greater than ourselves, and that the most extraordinary people are those who are most humble. On Yom Kippur, it teaches us to forgive, to forget, and let go. To make lists to all we harmed and to make amends. To admit to ourselves, G-d, and others, and fix broken relationships, no matter how broken they are, or how long.

Judaism teaches emotional intelligence on Sukkot. *וְשִׂמְחָתָם בְּתַגְלָהּ... וְהִיטָה אֶת שִׂמְחָהּ* It challenges us to be happy, to rejoice, no matter what challenges us. Your emotions are your choice, to be aware and take control of how you feel, and to be resiliently happy. Happiness is a multi-billion-dollar industry, and 99% of happiness being 'sold' is fake happiness. Judaism teaches that real happiness is not what you have, but what type of person you are and how you perceive your world.

There are three relationships in the world. Between Man and G-d, Man and others, Man and himself. All happiness and sadness emotions exist in between that space between those relationships. Happier people have better relationships, and sadder people have worse relationships. Judaism teaches that the key to happiness is to improve relationships. This is why both on Purim and Sukkot, the times we are to be happy and rejoice, the Mitzvoth of the day revolve around these three relationships. On Purim, we read Megillah, give Mishloah Manot, Matanot LaEvyonim, and enjoy a Purim feast. On Sukkot, we eat lavish meals in the Succah, sit with G-d, invite others, dance with them, and buy our loved ones present before the holiday. We realize how little we need to be happy, and how G-d does not ask a lot from us, to consider that we are doing a lot. Sitting in the Succah, shaking Lulav and Etrog, is equal to doing 613 Mitzvoth, each! (Rokeach; Piyut of R Klir)

If you rejoice during Succot, you will have the power to be happy all year long. Not including holidays, there are 348 days in the year. The Torah commands us to rejoice on Succot, and then *וְהִיטָה אֶת שִׂמְחָהּ*. The word *שמחה* is the numerical equivalent to 348 because if you are happy on Succot, you will obtain the power of happiness for the rest of the year. How so?

On Succot, we invite the Patriarchs and greatest men of our nation to sit with us in the Succah, and we reconnect with our rich heritage. With Avraham, Yitzhak, Yaakov, the men who we refer to as "Yesharim." Yesharim, "straight hearted," is a



key to happiness, as we say during Kol Nidrei before Shehechyanu of Yom Kippur, אֲזַרְזָרְעֵ לְצַדִּיק וְלִישְׁרֵי-לֵב שְׂמֵחָה: A light is sown for the righteous, and for the straightforward of heart, joy. (Tehillim 97:11) To be happy, you need to have a straightforward heart. What does that mean, a straightforward heart? We know that Bereshit's book is referred to as Sefer Hayashar, for the Patriarchs were all straightforward. G-d, Himself, is referred to as א-ל אמונה ואין עול צדיק וישר הוא. G-d Himself is righteous and straightforward. What does it mean to be straightforward, and how does that bring about happiness?

The word ישר at its root is straightforwardness or seeing through with one thought from the beginning to the end, not diverting attention, losing focus. It is the power that our Forefathers used to become who they became and pass the tests they passed. At the age of three, Avraham realized that the world has a Creator, Who is continuously leading Nature. But it was not until the age of 40 that Avraham recognized G-d. What did Avraham do from 3 until 40?

From age 3 to 40, Avraham was going straight in thought, single-mindedly and mindful of His Creator. He first realized that there is a Creator, and did not stop there... "If there is a Creator, One who leads Nature and gives me all that I have... I can have a relationship with Him! I can pray to Him, and He will answer me! The way I can have a relationship is to learn from His ways, His kindness, and follow Him!" And from that clear thinking, Avraham became the kindest person ever to walk the face of the Earth. With the power of mindfulness and focused thought, Avraham was able to fathom the laws of the Torah and keep them. פְּקֻדֵי יְקֻנָּה יִשְׂרָיִם מִשְׂמַחֵי-לֵב. *The orders of the L-rd are straightforward, causing the heart to rejoice.* What does this mean?

A straightforward Jew does not stay the same Jew at 40 as he was at 3. In a straight direction, he

Selfie Steps to Happiness

1. All unhappiness is a result of a lack. Lack of acceptance; hope; faith; courage; honesty; patience; humility; loving others; integrity; self-discipline or lack of serving your Creator. Realize what you

progresses to the goal of connecting with his Creator, and Olam Haba. When a person has direction, when a person is progressing, this brings happiness. According to their strengths and virtues, each of our forefathers went straight, each in their unique way, to bring about G-dliness in this world. This is G-d's way, to be Yashar, א-ל אמונה ואין עול. צדיק וישר הוא. He does not stop, He keeps bringing the world closer to its purpose, and He keeps getting you closer to your purpose.

This mindfulness of straightforward thinking is the elementary step to humility. (Malbim) If you want to access humility, you need to keep focus. As Mordechai Shapiro sings in his new song, *"You think you got it under control, you are on a roll, living it up, living your dreams. But when it all goes bust at the seams, then you scream and cry, to the One on high... He's been there from the beginning when you felt like you were winning. He was calling all the shots; He gave you all that you've got. So when your low, just you know, He is up above and down below, so shout it out aloud... Ein Od Milvado!"* It is so hard to keep thinking straight, when you are winning. You forget where you came from, and you follow all the people who are not straight, the people running after social status, wealth, fancy cars, vacations, brand names, honor, respect, and fame. But then you ask, Hey! I am not happy! My family is not happy! What is wrong?

This is the message of Succot, כַּל-הָאָזְרָח בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל יֵשְׁבוּ, בַּסֻּכּוֹת. No matter where you are in life, how rich you are ... get into a temporary Succah! Realize that G-d gave you another year just a few days ago, and He wants you to remember Who took you from zero to hero, and Who gave you a roof, A/C, and heat. He wants you to focus on the message of the Succah: this world is temporary, and a distraction to the straight line to the permanent world to come. When you reframe your life perspective in this way, you obtain happiness by default, as you are straight in line with your life's purpose.

are lacking, and fix that. G-d makes us happy creatures at the core, but we tend to confuse ourselves. *עָשָׂה הָאֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאָדָם יָשָׁר וְהִמְיָה בְקִשּׁוֹ הַשְּׂבִנוֹת רַבִּים for God made man straight, but they sought many calculations. (Kohelet 7;29)*

2. Work on all three relationship types. When one of the three relationships are hurting for too long, it will reflect in one or both of the other two types.
3. Want nothing more than simplicity. Stop the happiness trap of running after happiness. Instead, learn humility and acceptance, and learn to discover meaning in life and satisfaction in the small things.
4. Pay attention to your strengths, and don't focus on what you perceive as weakness. Try to remember and savor the good times and memories and look past the times and memories that make you suffer and disrupt your sense of calm. Adopt an optimistic look at life. Problems are not as permanent, pervasive, or personal as we tend to make them.
5. Be kind to your family, friends, and neighbors. And most importantly, be kind to yourself.
6. Stick to your life's goals, the life you desire, and the self-actualization you aspire for.

SUKKAH CONTRADICTION

Sukkot has some sort of paradox in it. On the one hand, we are to go out to the hut and live a temporary lifestyle for a week, to internalize the lesson of temporariness in this world. On the other hand, there is a concept of *תִּשְׁבוּ כַעֲיֵן תְּדוּרוֹ* – the sukkah needs to be livable, as if one could live in it permanently. If the Sukkah is not livable, it is forbidden to make a Beracha on it. There is even a law that one is to bring all of his fancy household items into the Sukkah and make the Sukkah somewhat luxurious. So, what lesson are we to get out of this? Temporariness, or Lavishness?

I heard the answer to this question this morning at a Brit, by a student from Yeshivat Kol Torah. His name is Avraham Aryeh. I did not want to forget it, for it has a powerful message. Yes, the point of the

Sukkah is to teach us the concept of temporariness in the world. So why are we to bring our luxurious utensils out into the Sukkah? Because if your life accessories are too luxurious to bring out to the Sukkah, if you have so many worldly possessions that your Sukkah cannot contain them, your lifestyle may be more materialistic than spiritual. Your materialistic lifestyle might contradict the temporary approach to this World that Judaism holds by. So yes, you need to have a lifestyle of *תִּשְׁבוּ כַעֲיֵן תְּדוּרוֹ*, a lifestyle in which the physical conditions are livable. But you also need it to be distanced from all the material objects that magnetize one towards fantasizing permanence in this World.

THINGS vs. RELATIONSHIPS

There is a secret in happiness that is hidden in Sukkot. On Sukkot, we are commanded to be happy. But what if I am not? There is a mitzvah in Sukkot to make our families happy. There is a mitzvah on Sukkot to be happy with G-d. But what

if I am just not happy? What am I supposed to do, force myself to have a smile?

Well, Sukkot is the lesson, that if you are dependent on a nice cozy house for happiness, then you have no idea what happiness is. Because



happiness is not dependent on things, it is dependent on relationships, and whatever relationships entail. Sukkot is not only about being happy with the minute, the simple things in life. It is about being so happy with relationships, such as our relationship with G-d, relationships with our family, that all those things that people covet, are just small stuff. Take a branch and a hut, and be happy with it. אז ירננו כל עצי יער – *Then, all the trees of the forest will exalt*. The Meiri (Sukkah 37) states that the reason why we shake the Lulav like we do in the shul, during the time when we say the parts of Hallel that thank Hashem, and during the time that we ask for a salvation, is because we are shaking, and even dancing, out of happiness – with a branch.

What are we happy about? Shaking a branch? Sitting in some hut? Yes. We are happy that G-d accepted out Tefillot, that G-d forgave us on Yom Kippur. That G-d accepted us, and that we have Someone to pray to and to pour out our hearts. Acceptance is the key to love, and love = happiness. That even after a fight, even after the sin of the Calf, G-d accepts us and loves us so much that He forgives even the worst.

Rabbi Geisler taught this to me, the day after Yom Kippur. I was discussing with him the importance of relationships. He told me that he would ask his Talmidot, “What has more importance in your lives, Relationships or Things?” Every last student voted relationships.

“Okay,” said Rabbi Geisler, “What would happen, if your groom would tell you during your engagement, that his parents can buy you the nice, fancy engagement rings. And then he expresses his feelings about buying your ring. ‘But I do not want my engagement ring to come from them. I want the ring that I am going to give you bought with my own, hard earned money. This ring means a lot to me. I want to take all the money I made in camp, all the money I made tutoring, all the money I saved from my allowance, and with that money I want to buy you your ring. Are you okay with that?’”

All of the Talmidot said, “Of course!”

Then Rabbi Geisler threw at them the curve ball. “Now, you’re sitting with all your friends, who are Kallahs, and everyone is showing off their ring. Each friend’s diamond is bigger than the next! And your diamond is so small! You need a magnifying glass to notice it on the ring. Would you stick out your ring finger to show off your diamond?”

The Talmidot said, “No way!”

“Why not? Aren’t relationships more important than things?”

It seems, that even though we value relationships more, but Things keep getting in the way of our happiness and contentment, they become bigger than life. So much bigger, that the value of relationships become forgotten.

The Lulav is not just a branch. It is our symbol that G-d allowed us to win; He tipped the Scale in our favor. It is our sword that we hold up, victorious, as we claim, יהודו לה' כי טוב. It is what we fight the Satan with, as if we stick it in his eye. (Sukkah 37, see Sfat Emet) It is not just a Thing that we shake in shul; it is about our relationship with G-d, our trust in G-d, that He fights our battles for us and we can take on even the biggest enemies, with just a spiky Lulav branch/sword, and our faith that He accepted us.

Sukkah is not a hut. It is a hug. Two walls and a bit, as if an arm is hugging with a hand – the hug of G-d. (Arizal) If someone says to you, casually, “I wish G-d would, I do not know, just hug me or something”, invite him to your Sukkah. That’s when and where G-d hugs. משכני אחריו גרועה הביאני המלך חזריו (Shir Hashirim 1, 4) (see Gra)

This is the secret of happiness. It is not the things; it is what they represent. Most people believe, more things = more happiness. This is the biggest “con job” of marketing. If only you had “more”, you could be happier. But it is not having things that brings you your happiness; it is relationships. If we could learn to focus on the deeper meaning of things in life, then we would be able to find



happiness. If we would recognize G-d's love and care, then we could celebrate life, even if our living quarters were some hut, and even if we just danced around Shul with a branch, a few twigs, and a fruit.

And one more point. On Sukkot, it is not only a mitzvah to be happy. On Sukkot G-d *judges us* as to how much rain we are going to have on the basis of how happy we are. Living in the Sukkah, shaking that branch and twigs, Simchat Beit Hashoevahs, making our wives and kids happy with whatever. What is the connection between rain and happiness? G-d waited to bring the first

rain, until Adam was around, because G-d will not bring rain without appreciation. The more appreciation one has, the more happiness one has. Many shy away from giving recognition for something they should appreciate, for they do not want to feel that they owe anything to any source outside themselves; but still, appreciation equals happiness. Your relationships depend upon your appreciation. And we are judged on Sukkot as to how much rain we are going to get, by our expression of happiness over 'some branch'. This happiness is the secret to being זוכה בדיון, to passing Judgment, safely!

The Sukkot Festival – *Zman Simchateinu*

The Torah emphasizes that Sukkot is a joyous holiday. Indeed, it commands us not once, but twice, to be joyful on Sukkot: “Rejoice in your festival...and be totally joyous” – ושמחת בחגך...והיית – אך שמח ; and “Rejoice before the Lord, your G-d, for seven days” – ושמחתם לפני ה' אלוהיכם שבעת ימים – (*Devarim* 16:14-15 & *Vayikra* 23:40). Let us try to put our finger on the source of this joy, and explore together some classical insights into the Festival of Sukkot and the mitzvah of dwelling in the sukkah.

The Talmud (*Sukkah* 11b) records an interesting difference of opinion among our great Sages about what exactly the Torah means when it tells us why we are to dwell in the sukkah on Sukkot: *For you should know throughout the generations that I placed the Jews in sukkot when I took them out of Egypt.* (*Vayikra* 23:43). Rabbi Eliezer understood that the sukkot mentioned in the *passuk* refer to the Clouds of Glory that G-d sent to envelope and protect the Jews during their years in the desert. Rabbi Akiva, however, understood this literally as a reference to actual sukkot – similar to the temporary “huts” we use today. Although the accepted opinion is that of Rabbi Eliezer, the *Pri Megadim* writes that one should have the interpretations of both Sages in mind while fulfilling the mitzvah of sukkah.

Now, we may find it a bit difficult to fully appreciate the opinion of Rabbi Akiva because the

Torah itself tells us that G-d enveloped the Jews with miraculous Clouds of Glory. Why does Rabbi Akiva insist on a literal understanding?

The *Chatam Sofer* (דרישות ג') clears up the mystery by explaining that among the Jewish people were lepers and other ritually impure individuals who were disqualified from dwelling in the confines of the camp. They were the ones who dwelt in actual sukkot outside of the Clouds of Glory. Thus, the *Chatam Sofer* explains, the two opinions of our Sages can be reconciled:

On the one hand, the righteous and pure merited the Clouds of Glory. On the other hand, the lepers and other impure individuals had to suffice with actual sukkot made for them by G-d.

If we think about it, this awareness can enhance our own fulfillment of the mitzvah of sukkah. Those of us who were worthy on Yom Kippur to be cleansed and inscribed in the *Book of the Righteous* can enjoy the sukkah as it is described in the Zohar: to be the shade of *Emunah* (faith and trust in G-d) , similar to the Clouds of Glory. But those who were less fortunate can also find joy and consolation in the sukkah. They can feel that leaving their comfortable houses and entering the sukkah is a kind of exile which will bring them the atonement that they did not merit on Yom Kippur. This is hinted at in the plural name of the festival –



Sukkot – since the sukkah serves two different functions.

The Zohar notes that this temporary dwelling place which requires two walls and a bit of a third symbolizes an arm that is hugging(וימינו תהבקיני) . It is, symbolically, the “Arm” of G-d – the “Arm” that continues to hug us in our exile. Whether we as individuals are in symbolic exile in the sukkah, or whether we as a nation are in exile and Diaspora, we still can bring G-d’s Glory into our lives. Indeed, G-d treasures our ability to remain joyous as we retain a permanent relationship with Him despite the constantly changing conditions and lack of permanence of Jewish life in Exile. G-d loves us as we project to ourselves and others that the Jew’s happiness is not due to wealth or material luxury. Rather, it is our ability to sit in the sukkah together with our ancestors, and connect to a pleasure in life that luxury cannot offer: the pleasure of being in G-d’s shade, and following Him throughout difficult times. It is no coincidence that in the end of days, G-d will refute the gentiles’ claim of loyalty to G-d by testing them specifically with the mitzvah of sukkah. For only a Jew has the ability to remain close to G-d despite difficulty and exile.

This is because he appreciates that there is no greater pleasure than being close to G-d. As Rabbi Noach Weinberg *zt”l* explained, this pleasure is greater than the other four types of pleasures available to man, beginning with sensual pleasure – such as steak, luxury cars, good music. It is greater than the pleasure of love – such as love for a child or a spouse. (The sensual level of pleasure is the lowest on the list. One would not give up even one unit of this pleasure of love such as giving up a child for all the sensual pleasures in the world.) It is greater than the pleasure derived from a cause. (A cause is a higher level of pleasure than love. People are willing to do so much for a cause – sometimes even at the expense of their loved ones.)

It is even greater than the pleasure of creativity – such as creating a family or a new concept.

Beyond all these worldly pleasures is the pleasure of having a relationship with G-d, and recognizing and appreciating that He is the source of all we have, and has always been our Savior and Protector. Rabbi Weinberg noted that it is difficult to tap into this pleasure while running after the pleasures of the senses.

Under the leaves of the *schach* (sukkah roof) and the blue sky, the Jew can readily feel this pleasure of a relationship with his Creator. Out of his comfortable home, inside his humble sukkah abode, the Jew can tap into this unsurpassable pleasure which brings unlimited happiness. It is a relationship that even an exile of 2,000 years cannot diminish.

Inside the sukkah, we sense that we are in a different world. We are in a world where the pleasure of G-d’s presence is tangible, and can be felt as more pleasurable than all worldly possessions. We project this joy during the time of plenty and harvest, and thereby fortify ourselves for the upcoming journey through the long, cold winter ahead.

Post Script

In the Land of Israel, the Festival of Sukkot falls during the harvest. A successful harvest can easily swell the ego of the individual gathering in so much bounty. Thus, the Rashbam tells us, we leave our sturdy houses for a flimsy sukkah specifically at this time of year in order to humble ourselves (*Vayikra* 23:23). We are to remember that there was a time when our nation dwelled in the desert in simple huts. And we are to remember that it is not our strength that gave us our wealth, but rather the kindness of G-d. This awareness only strengthens our feeling of closeness to the One who provides for all of our needs, always.



ARBA'AT HA'MINIM:

THE FOUR SPECIES AS SYMBOLS

Sometimes we are so busy doing *mitzvot* that we do not have enough time to delve into their deeper meaning or symbolic significance. Since we find ourselves now just before the Festival of Sukkot, I would like to explore with you some of the secrets of the Four Species that we wave during the Festival. Did you know that the Four Species hint at all 613 mitzvot of the Torah? We see this in the numerical value of the etrog (610), coupled with the three other Species – lulav, hadassim, and aravot. $610 + 3 = 613$. Looked at another way, the Four Species hint at the Seven Heavens: one etrog, one lulav, three hadassim, and two aravot. $1 + 1 + 3 + 2 = 7$. With these seven mitzvah items, we can pierce the Seven Heavens with our prayers!

The etrog is used as a *segulah* for easy childbirth (אלף המגן' סי' תר"ם ס"ו). This is how it works: A pregnant woman nearing childbirth takes an etrog which had been used for the mitzvah of the Four Species, and bites off the *pitom* (after Hoshana Rabba). She then says: "Master of the Universe, Chava ate the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge – the etrog – and brought upon humanity death and birth pangs! Master of the Universe, just as I refrained from eating of the etrog during the days of Sukkot while the mitzvah was being done with it, I would have also refrained from eating the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge. Please accept my prayer that neither I nor my child get hurt during childbirth..."

There is another level of symbolism to the Four Species, this one connected with four important organs of the human body. The lulav symbolizes the spine; the etrog – the heart; the hadassim – the eyes; and the aravot – the lips. This is one reason we are especially careful about purchasing a beautiful etrog, with not even a small part missing (*chaser*). A pure heart, a 100% feeling heart, is indispensable in our quest for self-perfection. By controlling all four of these key parts of the body, and doing *teshuvah* with them over the forty days leading up to Yom Kippur, we hope to merit a successful new year. We do *teshuvah* by bending

over (bending the spine) while banging on our heart and confessing our sins with our lips in *viduy*. *Teshuvah* is done by a regretful heart, and eyes that perceive clearly, but don't wander where they shouldn't. Our lips both verbalize how we wronged G-d and man, and also control what we say and how we say what we must.

Incidentally, it is not surprising that the etrog – symbolic of the heart – was the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge since the Torah calls the heart the place of one's knowledge, as in the expressions: *binat ha'lev* and *chacham lev*.

The custom of circling the *bimah* – *hakafot* – has several levels of significance. On the simple level, it is intended to remind us of the circling around the Altar in the Temple. But the circle also symbolizes that which is eternal and never-ending – unlike the line, which has a beginning and an end. When we make our circular *hakafot* with the *Sefer Torah* on Simchat Torah, we are saying that the Torah itself is eternal and never-ending. In a similar way, the (Ashkenazi) custom of the bride circling the groom under the *chupah* symbolizes a relationship and love between husband and wife that is to be never-ending. The wife will always be there for the husband, and the husband will look at no other woman. Indeed, the *hakafot* on Sukkot also hint at our permanent relationship with our "Groom" who is always there to save us and bring about our salvation.

Whether we need G-d to send rain (which we pray for while holding the Four Species which require a great deal of water to grow) or whether we need G-d to help us do *teshuvah*, He is there for us eternally. He never fails us. He never looks to other nations to choose another "Bride." And we circle the *Sefer Torah* to proclaim that we would like to be fulfilling all His mitzvot all year long as well.

Our Rabbis also tell us that by putting all of the Four Species together, we show the underlying



unity of the four different types of Jews. Those who study Torah, but do not have mitzvot, are similar to the lulav – which has taste (the dates), but no fragrance. Hadassim are fragrant, but lack taste – similar to those who do mitzvot, but do not study Torah. Aravot lack both fragrance and taste, like those who do not perform mitzvot nor study Torah. The etrog, which has both fragrance and taste, represents those who study Torah and fulfill the Commandments as well. If one has the most beautiful etrog lulav and hadassim, but has no lowly aravot, he cannot fulfill the mitzvah. All four types are necessary to fulfill the mitzvah.

Similarly, the Jewish People is comprised of all four types of Jews, and we cannot do without anyone of them.

The happiness that the Torah specifically commands us to reach on the Sukkot Festival can only be achieved through Jewish unity. This is the happiness of the *Simchat Beit Hashoevah*. And this is why the Haftarah of Shabbat Chol HaMoed about the final Redemption is so appropriate. If we would only recognize how very much we all need one other, we would be able to bring the final Redemption within reach.

WHAT MAKES YOU THINK THAT YOUR PARENTS LOVE YOU?

Have you ever noticed how many people today just do not “feel loved”? I always wondered as to exactly why humanity feels this way. A feeling that was never felt before to this degree. The Chida in Rosh David writes a beautiful explanation on the Sukkot Holiday that may just help us understand the unloved homo sapiens of today.

The Sukka that we eat and sleep in for a week’s time each year is a remembrance of the Clouds of Glory, or Sukkot, that G-d made for us in the desert. The Chida asks: if we are meant to remember G-d’s concern over us in the desert, why do we not make a remembrance of the Manna or the Well of Miriam? Isn’t G-d’s concern for our food and drink in the desert worthy of mentioning once a year as well? Why do we commemorate only the shade and make a whole holiday of it, whereas we make no such commemoration for the other two expressions of G-d’s love for us?

There are a number of answers to this question. However, the Chida gives us an answer that is pertinent to our everyday living, and answered what I always wanted to know. The food and water in the desert were not luxury; rather, these are basic necessities without which one cannot get along. Portable shade, on the other hand, is a luxury for a traveler in the desert. This is something that G-d gave us, showing us that he is concerned not only with our survival, but also with our comfort. This

shows, expresses and almost even shouts that He loves us. This is love that we *felt*. Of course, giving us food and water also shows us that he loves us. But the recipient of love does not feel loved when the one who is “responsible” for him takes care of *needs*. Only when they take care of the “wants” is the love felt. Sometimes, through this feeling of love, when the recipient gets his “wants”, it opens his eyes to the “needs” that he has received, and feelings of appreciation for them begin to surface, as well.

Another answer brought by the Chida is that we received the other two, the manna and the Well of Miriam, only after testing G-d. We received the shade, however, without asking, and when someone is thought about without having to ask or demand, he will often feel even more loved.

When talking to children ranging between the ages of 2 – 99, I have discovered that when I ask them if and when they felt their parents’ love, the answer would always relate to getting their “wants”. Whether the child says that he feels his parent loves him because he got a candy, or because the parent agreed to paying for his cigarettes as part of his allowance, or that the parent watched over his children – the answer always reflects being given something “extra.” For some reason, the answer is rarely, “I feel that my parents love me because they gave me food, clothes or shelter.” Love is felt in



wants, and being that our generation has become a society in which so many wants have become needs, and the wants have reached such a high level on the expectation scale, people are not happy. They do not feel loved. Even if they are. So, we move into a Sukka, a temporary dwelling, to recognize how many things which we have in our possession that are really just bonuses for survival. Then, we can truly feel happy with what we have. And then, hopefully, we will appreciate G-d's love to us in all that he has showered upon us.

This may be the difference in our prayers, morning and night, between the two blessings we bless before the Recital of Shma, the first for the sun, moon and Creation, the other we make a blessing for receiving the Torah. When we bless for the

Torah, we mention and stress G-d's love for us. In the blessing for the sun, stars and Creation, we do not make such mention about G-d's love for us. The reason is the same: In regard to Creation, we need the Sun, Moon etc. for our survival, and it is almost understood that G-d "has" to provide us these things in order for humanity to exist. But in regard to the Torah, which is not needed for basic survival, we feel more love by receiving it from G-d. Being that we need the Creation for our existence, we do not feel the love of G-d through it, despite the fact that we received our existence only through G-d's Will.

We would, of course, be much happier people if we were to realize that we are loved through being provided with our "needs", as well.

**To support this publication, or receive it by e-mail, please email me at
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IN LOVING MEMORY OF SONNY AND IRENE GINDI A"H

