



Sukkot Seder

Rabbi Eliezer said: "Why are 70 offerings brought on Sukkot?

For the (merit of the) 70 nations of the world." (Sukkah 55b)

Created by Rabbi Shoshana Leis and Beth Kaufman Miller



Welcome to our Sukkot Seder!¹

CANDLE-LIGHTING BLESSING:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, אֱלֹהֵינוּ רוּחַ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוֵּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שֶׁל יוֹם טוֹב.

*BARUCH ATAH ADONAI ELOHEINU MELECH HA OLAM ASHER KIDSHANU
B"MITZVOTAV VITZIVANU LIHADLEEK NER SHEL YOM TOV.*

Blessed are You Eternal One our God, Spirit of the World, You make us holy through the mitzvah of kindling the festival lights.

SUKKOT SEDER PLATE

Place an etrog on the seder plate, alongside a "first fruit" of local harvest.

OUR STORIES: What object(s) would you include on the Sukkot seder plate to represent your family's and your people's stories?

NATURE AND ITS CYCLES: What is a special place in nature for you? What would you include on the seder plate to represent this place?

PRI ETZ HADAR, "fruit of a beautiful tree" or "beautiful fruit of a tree": this is the Etrog
YOUR OFFERINGS OF THANKS FOR THE EARTH'S BOUNTY: these are the First fruits

OUR ANCESTORS and GUESTS: "Ushpizin" is aramaic for "guests"

What would you include to honor those who came before us?

What other guests would you want to include in our Sukkah tonight?

IMPERMANENCE and VULNERABILITY: The Sukkah itself



¹ This Sukkot Seder Haggadah was adapted from one that was developed by Beth Kaufman Miller



THE FIRST CUP: GRAPE JUICE/WINE, A SYMBOL OF JOY

Be joyful at your festival—you, your sons and daughters, your male and female servants, and the Levites, the foreigners, the fatherless and the widows who live in your towns. For seven days celebrate the festival to the Adonai your God at the place the Lord will choose. For God will bless you in all your harvest and in all the work of your hands, and your joy will be complete. - Deuteronomy 16:14-15

One of the other names for the Festival of Sukkot is *Z'man Simchateinu*, “the time of our rejoicing.”

Who is rich? One who is happy with what one has been given. - Ben Zoma

The temporary Sukkah reminds us of how precious our homes, possessions, food, etc. are to us.

Please remove 10 drops of grape juice to symbolize those whose joy has been lessened due to:

- Gun violence and other violent acts ~ Poverty, homelessness, food insecurity
- Systemic racism, xenophobia, homophobia ~ Death of a loved one
- Lack of purpose, direction or meaning
- Sickness and physical pain ~ Addiction
- Abuse ~ Interpersonal conflict
- Lack of Love , Connection and Community

KIDDUSH BLESSING FOR THE GRAPE JUICE/WINE:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגָּפֶן.

BARUCH ATAH ADONAI ELOHAYNU MELECH HA-OLAM BOREI PRI HAGAFEN.
Blessed are You Eternal One our God, Spirit of the World, who creates the fruit of the vine.

BLESSING OF GRATITUDE FOR LIFE:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁהַחַיִּינוּ וְקִיָּמְנוּ וְהִגִּיעַנוּ לְזִמְנֵי הַזֶּה:

*BARUCH ATAH ADONAI ELOHEINU MELECH HA OLAM SHEHECHIANU VE
KIEMANU VE HEGIANU LAZMAN HAZEH.*

Blessed are You Eternal One our God, Spirit of the World, who gave us life, kept us strong, and brought us to this time.



BLESSING FOR SITTING IN A SUKKAH:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר
קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ לֵישֵׁב בַּסֻּכָּה.

*BARUCH ATAH ADONAI ELOHEINU
MELECH HA OLAM ASHER KIDSHANU
B"MITZVOTAV VITZIVANU LESHEYV
BASUKAH.*

Blessed are You Eternal One our God,
Spirit of the World, You make us holy through the mitzvah of dwelling in a sukkah.

FOUR QUESTIONS

QUESTION #1: WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THE SUKKAH?

Live in temporary shelters for seven days: All native-born Israelites are to live in such shelters so your descendants will know that I had the Israelites live in temporary shelters when I brought them out of Egypt. I am the Adonai your God. - Leviticus 23: 42-43

God went before them by day in a pillar of **cloud** to lead them on the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light.” (Exodus 13:21)

This holiday is the only time Jews are instructed to build a structure as part of a holiday. Each household builds a sukkah, a temporary shelter constructed only for the holiday. The sukkah comes from the time when agricultural workers would reside near their fields during the hectic autumnal harvest season. It also harkens back to the biblical Israelites who wandered in the desert for 40 years after the exodus from Egypt dwelling in sukkot -- temporary huts. The roof of the Sukkah is made of "schach" (same root as Sukkah), materials that grow from the earth. The *schach* represents the act of transforming a physical part of the universe into something holy, from which the sacredness does not depart. The *schach* enables us to see the stars, and to let the sun and the rain through and is more of an active filter than a roof, enhancing our limited connection with the sky and the heavens.²

QUESTION #2: WHAT ARE WE LOOKING FOR ON THIS JOURNEY?

While traveling in the desert, the Israelites were not wandering aimlessly from place to place. As a young Jewish nation, they were building a relationship with God as they ventured forth. There were times that they felt close to God and times when they wondered why they ever left Egypt, where at least they had roofs over their heads! Dependant entirely on God for food, safety, and direction, Sukkot is viewed as a beautiful and joyous time of bonding and loyalty between the people and God. The flimsy sukkah structures return us to this time and to a celebration of devotion to and dependence on God, who nurtures and cares for human beings.

A Question for Discussion: When do you feel most vulnerable and dependent on God or on another person? Why or how would you rejoice in vulnerability?

QUESTION #3: WHY DO WE DECORATE THE SUKKAH WITH FRUIT?

The fruit reminds us of the annual fruit harvest that was celebrated at this time. The Torah commands that on Sukkot, one of the three pilgrimage holidays, all Israelites were to bring their first fruit harvest to a national assembly. During Temple times the nation would gather together at the Temple to celebrate the harvest. Thus, once again ancient Israelites were traveling and dwelling in temporary homes.

A Question for Discussion: What are your "first fruits" - your best - that you can bring to our community or our world?

² <http://themodernrabbi.blogspot.com/2012/09/uncovering-meaning-of-sekhakh-sukkot.html>

QUESTION #4: WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THE LULAV AND THE ETROG?

We celebrate with Four Species (*arba'ah minim*), the four different plants which form an obligatory part of Sukkot according to the biblical commandment:

And you shall take on the first day fruit of majestic trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and you shall rejoice before the Adonai your God for seven days. ~ Leviticus 23:40

There is a commandment in the Torah for each person to take the fruit of a "goodly tree," later interpreted as a fruit called an etrog (citron). Along with this fruit, one must collect certain tree branches. We therefore take a palm branch and connect to it myrtle twigs and willow branches. The four species represent the festival's universality. They symbolize nature, rain, and the cycle of the seasons – things common to all humanity.



LULAV BLESSING:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ
בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ עַל נְטִילַת לֻלָּב.

*BARUCH ATAH ADONAI ELOHEINU MELECH
HA OLAM ASHER KIDSHANU B"MITZVOTAV
VITZIVANU AL NETILAT LULAV.*

Blessed are You Eternal One our God, Spirit of the World, You make us holy through the mitzvah of waving the lulav.

SONG #2: Spread over All of Us, Wings of Peace by Rabbi Aryeh Hirschfield

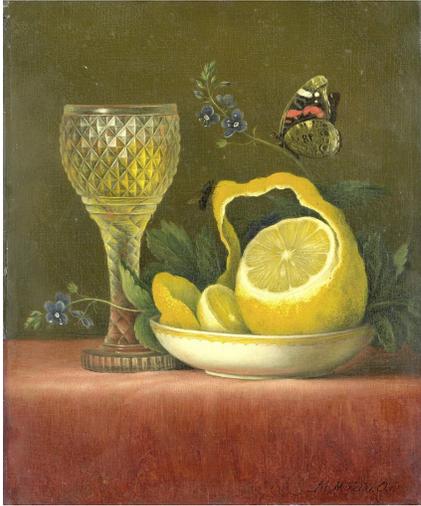
Ufros Aleinu Sukkat Shalom

Spread over All of Us, Wings of Peace, Shalom.

Draw Water in Joy from the Living Well. (2x)

Mayyim Chayyim, Waters Of Life, Shalom.

THE SECOND CUP: WATER, SOURCE OF LIFE



On [the] holiday [of Sukkot] we are judged regarding water. Talmud - Rosh Hashana 16a

Please remove one drop of water from your cup to symbolize the droughts that plague our earth, the many people who suffer from lack of clean drinking water and destructive floods.

Lift up your water and say together:

Wonderful is the day on which rain descends, because [a rainfall] is equal [in its marvelous character] to the whole of Creation. -Midrash Rabbah, Kohelet 1:14

Song/Dance #3: Ushavtem Mayim b'Sason- Joyfully Shall You Draw Water

Whoever did not see the Simchat Beit HaShoeva never saw real joy in their life. (Mishnah Sukkah 5:1)



THE THIRD CUP: THE JUICE OF THE ETROG, GRATITUDE FOR THE EARTH'S BEAUTY

Please remove one drop from your lemonade to symbolize the lessening of beauty in our world due to clear-cutting, lack of preservation, climate change, and other human acts of destruction.

Lift Up Your Juice And Say Together:

Wonderful and wondrous is the earth and the whole of creation, precious is the sap of the tree and each drop of juice from the fruit.



THE 4 “CHILDREN”

A traditional midrash explains that the four species also represent different types of people, with taste equated with learning and smell with good deeds. The etrog, which is both tasty and aromatic, represents those who study and do good deeds; the palm, which has no smell but produces tasty fruit, those who study but do not act; the myrtle, which has smell but no taste, those who do good deeds but do not study; the willow, with neither taste nor smell, represents those who neither study nor act. According to the midrash, all four types are necessary to a community.

The Wise Child (represented by the etrog – those who study and do good deeds) asks: What are the Sukkot activities all about? How can I learn from this? This child should be taught to build a sukkah, to wave their own lulav and etrog, and to invite guests into their sukkah for a festive meal. Through observing the rituals of Sukkot the wise child learns to embody the values of the holiday, to create personal meaning and relevance, and to share their wisdom with those around them.

The Rebellious Child (represented by the willow – those who neither study nor act) asks: Why do you bother with all of this?—I’m cold! I am getting bitten up by mosquitos! THERE ARE TOO MANY HOLIDAYS!!! This child should be told: It is because you are part of a story that links past present and future. The earth nurtures you so that you can benefit from its fruits. If you stop and take notice you will be able to make sure that YOUR children can live healthy, joyous lives.

The Simple Child (represented by the Myrtle – those who do good deeds but do not study) asks: What’s this about? Why are we doing this? This child should be told the facts. We get together every year to celebrate a time long, long ago when people dwelled in sukkot. There were times in the desert that they felt close to God and times when they felt far away from God, wondering why they ever left Egypt. Living in sukkot, as they did, reminds us of this time in our history. It helps us reflect on ways in which we can feel close to God ourselves.

The Child who doesn’t know how to ask (represented by the Palm – those who study but do not act) This child should be invited to “do Sukkot”: to dwelling in a sukkah, to singing and waving the lulav and etrog. Joyful participation, through dancing, feasting and gathering in the sukkah, is the first and most important step that one may take, often leading to deeper exploration and learning.

SONG #4:

וְשִׂמְחֶתָּ בְּחַגְךָ ...
וְהָיִיתָ אֶךְ שִׂמְחָה:

V’samachta b’hagecha v’hayeeta. And you shall rejoice in your Festival! Ach, Sameach! So Rejoice!



THE FOURTH CUP: APPLE JUICE, THE FUTURE TIME OF ABUNDANCE FOR ALL

We remove a drop from our apple juice and plant it in the earth... to symbolize all that has not yet become fruit. These are our seeds of possibility. What are your seeds? How will you nourish them?

Lift up your juice and say together: Joyous is the prayer of hope as we plant the seeds of possibility. With our acts of loving kindness, *g’milut chasidim*, we plant our seeds and contribute to a better earth and a better world.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְרֵי הָעֵץ
 BA’RUCH ATAH ADONAI ELOHAYNU MELECH HA’O’LAM BORAY P’REE HA’ETZ.
 Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the Universe, who creates the fruit of the tree.



SONG #4 - May the One Who Brings Peace by Elana Jagoda

Oseh shalom bimromav (*Hu Yaaseh/Hi Taaseh*) 3x *Shalom, Aleinu* May the One, may the One who makes peace, (bring peace down) 2x

A GLASS OF GRAPE JUICE IS POURED for our Ushpizin 'guests' as two participants get up and stand by the opening of the sukkah doorway to welcome them in.

לְשָׁנָה הַבָּאָה בִּירוּשָׁלַיִם!

L'Shanah Ha'Baah Be'Yerushalayim. And may we gather together again next year under the schach and under the stars with our loved ones in celebration.