

From GENERATION To GENERATION

Living lessons from our esteemed Sukkos guests

You are certainly aware of the Ushpizin brought down in the Zohar, and in addition to those mentioned there, the Chassidisher Ushpizin that the Frierdiker Rebbe introduced. But are the two special guests of each day merely together by default, by some technical consequence? Absolutely not!

Everything is precise with Hashgocha Protis and the Rebbe sought to explain the connection between each and every pair.

Our Yomim Tovim in general, and specifically Sukkos, are called times of happiness and joy. A happy person naturally wants to share his joy with others. Inner satisfaction may be felt alone, but exuberant celebration can be experienced only in the company of others¹. As an expression of our happiness, our Chazal stressed the importance of sharing the joy of Yom Tov by inviting guests to our Seudos. This *mitzvah* is especially important on Sukkos, “*Zman Simcho-seinu.*”

The *Zohar* teaches that our Sukkos guests include not only those who visibly partake of the Seudos, but also guests from the spiritual realm. On Sukkos we

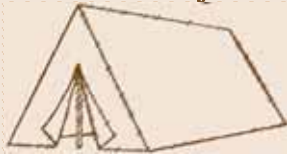
are joined in the *sukkah* by seven *Ushpizin* (“honored guests”): Avraham, Yitzchok, Yaakov, Moshe, Aharon, Yosef, and Dovid Hamelech².

In addition, the Frierdiker Rebbe taught that our Sukkos are also visited by chassidisher *Ushpizin*. In fact, he would actually point to particular places in his Sukkah and say³, “Here sits the Baal Shem Tov; here, the Maggid of Mezritch; here, the Alter Rebbe; here, the Mittlerer Rebbe; here, the *Tzemach Tzedek*; here, the Rebbe Maharash; and here, the Rebbe Rashab.”

Although these *Ushpizin* visit our Sukkos together on every day of Yom Tov, on each of the days of Sukkos the influence of one of the *Ushpizin* is dominant, and his qualities teach us lessons to apply in our Avodas Hashem.

Adapted from MiMaayanei HaYeshuah, sec. 3.
Originally translated and published by Kehos.

First Day



Avraham Avinu and The Baal Shem Tov

The *Ushpizin* of the first day, the Avraham Avinu and the Baal Shem Tov, share certain characteristics. Each of them initiated a new stage in the relationship between man and Hashem. Avraham was the founder of the Jewish

faith, and the Baal Shem Tov, of Chassidus. Furthermore, both Avraham and the Baal Shem Tov traveled from place to place in order to reveal Hashem's presence within the world.

On the Possuk, "And he called (*vayikra*) upon the name of Hashem, the eternal Hashem," Chazal comment, "Do not read *vayikra* ('and he called') but *vayakri* ('and he caused others to call...'), for Avraham made all the wayfarers [he encountered] call upon the name of Hashem."

Chassidic explains this a little deeper. The Hebrew word *olam* in the above phrase Keil-Olam means both "eternal" and also "world". Since Avraham re-

vealed the complete unity between Hashem and the world, the Possuk does not use the phrase Keil-**Ha**Olam ("Hashem of the world"), which would imply that the world is a separate entity over which Hashem rules, but rather, Keil-Olam, which implies that the two are fused in perfect unity.

Like our father Avraham, the Baal Shem Tov sought out the common people. He would ask them about their health, jobs, and other material concerns in order to elicit the grateful response, *Baruch HaShem*. In doing so, he demonstrated that Elokus is part of even the most mundane dimensions of our existence.

Second Day



Yitzchak Avinu and The Maggid of Mezritch

The characteristic shared by these two *Ushpizin* is alluded to by the Possuk, "Do

not abandon your place." In contrast to the other Avos, Yitzchak never left *Eretz Yisroel*. Similarly, in contrast to the other Rebbeim who journeyed from place to place, the Maggid never left Mezritch after assuming leadership of the chassidic movement.

The essence of every person is his *Etzem Haneshoma*. This, and not any geographical location, is every person's true place and that which defines his being. The Yitzchak Avinu and the Maggid of Mezritch taught that one should focus on penetrating to this core and bringing it to the surface, instead of seeking to grow

from outside influences. Thus, the Torah describes Yitzchak as digging wells, searching for the source of flowing water and allowing it to surface.

Focusing on one's own place does not diminish the significance of others. Chassidus explains that the revelation of a powerful light has an elevating influence even on far-removed places. For example, the light of the *Beis HaMikdash* was diffused throughout the world, spreading holiness to the extent that people in distant places, such as the Queen of Sheba, were motivated to journey to Jerusalem.

Third Day



Yaakov Avinu and The Alter Rebbe

Both *Ushpizin* of the third day are especially associated with Torah study. The Torah describes Yaakov as "a simple man, dwelling in tents," which our

Chazal understand as a reference to "the tents of Shem and Eiver," the leading houses of study of that age.

The Alter Rebbe's connection to Torah study is hinted at in his first name, Shneur, which can be read as *Shnei Or* ("two lights"), in allusion to the light of *Nigleh*, the revealed dimension of Torah law, and *P'nimiyus HaTorah*, the hidden, mystical dimension of the Torah. These two modes of spiritual illumination shine forth in the Alter Rebbe's two classics, the *Shulchan Aruch* and the *Tanya*.

Everyone has his share in the Torah, and this connection should be expressed

in our daily conduct. Thus, we are taught, "[The example of] Hillel obligates the poor and [the example of] Rabbi Elazar ben Charsom obligates the rich [to study Torah]." Although Hillel was a poor man who labored hard for his livelihood, he studied Torah diligently, while Rabbi Elazar ben Charsom, who was extremely wealthy, did not allow his thriving business concerns to divert his attention from Torah study. Regardless of one's financial status, everyone has both the potential and the responsibility to devote himself to the study of the Torah.

Fourth Day



Moshe Rabbeinu and The Mittler Rebbe

The *Ushpizin* of the fourth day are also associated with Torah study. Moshe “received the Torah from Sinai and transmitted it” to the entire Jewish people. Indeed, the Torah is associated with his name to the extent that the Neviim refer to it as “the Torah of Moshe, My servant.”

Moshe’s connection to the Torah was twofold: (a) he served as the intermediary who communicated the Torah to the Jewish people; (b) he interpreted the Torah, developing the approach of abstract argumentation within Torah law which is referred to as *‘Pilpula De’oraysa’*. Significantly, he also sought to communicate this dimension of Torah to others.

Like Moshe Rabbeinu, the Mittler Rebbe served as both transmitter and interpreter, for the Mittler Rebbe was renowned for his detailed explanation of the philosophical concepts of Chassidus. While the Alter Rebbe laid the foundation for an understanding of chassidic thought, he revealed his ideas as essential points, flashes of lightning. The Mittler

Rebbe amplified these ideas, explaining them with examples and analogies, and developing a conceptual frame-work which allowed them to be internalized — grasped intellectually.

Though the *Ushpizin* of the third day are also connected with Torah study, those of the fourth day, Moshe Rabbeinu and the Mittler Rebbe, show how our Torah study can be amplified. Their divine service demonstrates that everyone shares a connection not only with the fundamentals of Torah study, but also with a comprehension of its depth and breadth. And with regard to this dimension as well, neither poverty nor wealth can excuse one from the responsibility of applying oneself to this task.

Fifth Day



Aharon Hakohen and The Tzemach Tzedek

The *Ushpizin* of the fifth day teach a lesson of love and harmony among all

men. Aharon is the epitome of this approach, because he “loved peace, pursued peace, loved created beings, and drew them near to the Torah.”

The use of the term “created beings” instead of “people” implies that Aharon would reach out to individuals whose only redeeming virtue was the fact that they were Hashem’s creations. Aharon’s concern for his fellow man was all the more impressive because of his exalted position as Kohen Gadol. Leaving the Mishkan where the Shechina was openly revealed to him, he would reach out to people who had no other virtue than being created by Hashem.

Also significant is the phrase, “drew them near to the Torah.” This implies that Aharon first concerned himself with the difficulties that confronted them, in the hope that ultimately, this would “draw them close to the Torah.”

The *Tzemach Tzedek* represents the development of harmony among the scholars and leaders of the Jewish community. Under his leadership, unity was established between chassidim and other sectors of the Jewish community. The *Tzemach Tzedek* met with the leaders of all contemporary factions and was able to develop a united front that emphasized the mutual purpose shared by all.

Sixth Day



Yosef HaTzaddik and The Rebbe Maharash

The qualities shared by the *Ushpizin* of the sixth day are expressed by a renowned saying of the Rebbe Maharash, *Lechat’chilah ariber*: “People say, ‘If you can’t crawl under, try to climb over.’ And I say, ‘From the outset, climb right over the top!’” Apparent difficulties are waiting to be taken confidently by the horns and overcome.

This is not a theoretical concept, but a truth that can be practically applied — as

witness the life of Yosef, who rose from imprisoned slave to viceroy of Egypt.

The lessons of Yosef’s life are relevant to everyone. Though we are in Gollus, no individual should feel hampered or handicapped. We have the potential for the highest levels of achievement in *Ruchniyus*, and this *Ruchniyus’dike* success may even be reflected in the advancement of our material concerns.⁵

Seventh Day



Dovid Hamelech and The Rebbe Rashab

The attribute shared by the *Ushpizin* of the seventh day is royalty, the ultimate

expression of which will come in Yemos HaMoshiach. Dovid Hamelech is particularly identified with royalty, for “once David was anointed, he acquired the crown of kingship, which [thereafter] belongs to him and his male descendants forever.” Similarly, Dovid Hamelech is identified with the ultimate monarch; Moshiach, who will be one of his descendants. Furthermore, as the *Rambam* points out, the Nevuos in the Torah which allude to the coming of Moshiach, speak about two anointed kings, Dovid and Melech HaMoshiach.

These qualities are shared by the Rebbe Rashab, as is hinted at in the name of the year in which he was born — 5621 (תרכ"א). These Hebrew letters spell the Aramaic word *kisra* (“crown”), the symbol which reflects a king’s unique status.

The Rebbe Rashab also shares a connection with Moshiach, as is highlighted by his conception of the students of Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim, the yeshiva he established in Lubavitch, as “soldiers of the House of David” whose primary goal is to bring about the coming of Moshiach.

Shemini Atzeres

Shlomo Hamelech and The Frierdiker Rebbe

The *Ushpizin* associated with Shemini Atzeres, Shlo-mo Hamelech and the Frierdiker Rebbe, follow the *Ushpizin* of the previous day, for they continued and enhanced the contributions made by their respective fathers, Dovid Hamelech and the Rebbe Rashab.

Though Dovid Hamelech established the hereditary monarchy, his own reign was torn by strife and war; in the words of the *Novi*,

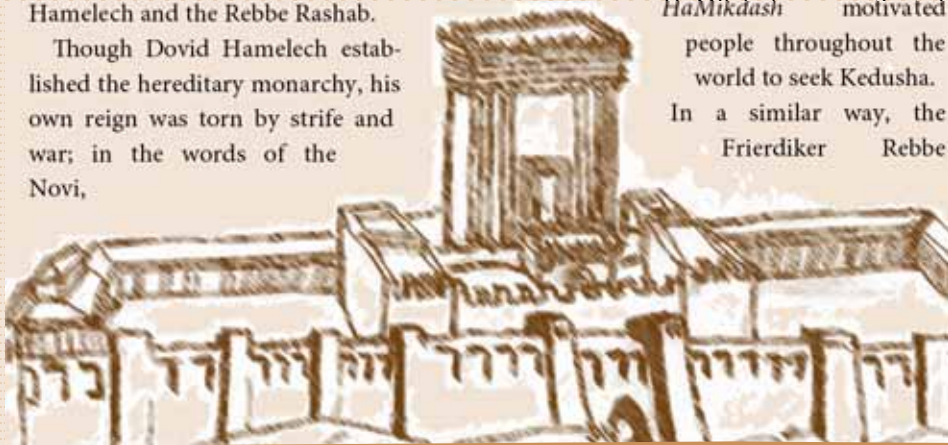
“You have shed blood.” As to the reign of his son and successor King Shlomo, however, Hashem promised, “I will grant peace and tranquillity to Israel during his days.” And indeed, throughout his reign, “Israel dwelled in safety, every man under his vine and under his fig tree.”

In this atmosphere of peace, Shlomo Hamelech built the *Beis HaMikdash*, a permanent dwelling place for Hashem within our material world. This enabled the entire world to be refined, since the light generated by the *Beis HaMikdash* motivated people throughout the world to seek Kedusha. In a similar way, the Frierdiker Rebbe

enhanced the achievements of his father, spreading the teachings of Chas-sidus throughout the world, thereby preparing the world for the coming of Moshiach. No place was too far removed, nor any individual too estranged for the Frierdiker Rebbe to reach out to him, and connect him with the teachings that herald and prepare us for the coming of Moshiach.

This is the legacy left to our present generation, and the goal to which all our efforts must be directed: to make the coming of the Redemption a tangible reality. The coming of that era is not a matter of the distant future, but a present concern. For the time for Moshiach has arrived.

May this promise be realized in the immediate future and may we then join in celebration with all the *Ushpizin* in *Eretz Yisrael*, in Yerusholayim, and in the *Beis HaMikdash*. ■



1. See *Rambam, Mishneh Torah, Hilchos Shvivas Yom-Tov* 6:18, where inviting guests is described as the ultimate expression of the rejoicing associated with a Yom Tov.

2. The above series follows the order given in the *Zohar* (III, 103:), which enumerates the *Ushpizin*

according to the sequence of the *Sefiros* which they represent. Elsewhere, significantly, the *Zohar* (I, 261.) enumerates the *Ushpizin* in chronological order. In a third place (III, 255.), the *Zohar* substitutes King Shlomo for Yosef.

3. See *Sefer HaSichos* 5697, p. 161, and the *Sichos* of the first night of Sukkos, 5703.

4. *Igros Kodesh* of the Frierdiker Rebbe, Vol. I, p. 617.

5. In fact, the saying *Lechat'chilah ariber* was first used by the Rebbe Maharash in connection with commercial enterprise.