

# SICHA STORY

PROJECT LIKKUTEI SICHOS | 5783 - YEAR OF HAKHEL



*Likkutei Sichos, Volume 23*

## Behaalosecha, Sicha 1 (Second Sicha of the week)

- Rabbi Yossi Nemes, Metairie, Louisiana

*Seif Ches explains why Moshe and Aaron did not ask Hashem to bring the Korban Pesach, as making this request, and having it granted, would emphasize the Jews indifference to this mitzvah, over the final 38 years in the desert. Moshe and Aaron, as true Jewish leaders were willing to forgo their personal elevation and inspiration, that would come with the Korban Pesach, to protect the dignity of the Jewish people. We bring two stories connected to this theme, one about the Baal Shemtov and one about an anonymous seventh-generation Chasid.*

*Seif Tes discusses the connection to Pesach Sheni. The message of Pesach Sheni empowers someone who has wandered from the right path to experience Teshuva and to connect to Hashem, beyond the regular Seder-order, as עַם אִיז נִיטאָ קײן פֿאַרפֿאַלען. We share a Pesach Sheni story as told by Reb Yoel Kahn, A"H.*

### An Inclusive Sukkah in Brodi!

One Sukkot the leaders of Brodi (those that opposed the Baal Shem Tov) came to the Baal Shem Tov and claimed that his Sukkah was not kosher according to Jewish law. The Baal Shem Tov debated the issue with them, trying to prove to them that his Sukkah was indeed kosher – to no avail. The Baal Shem Tov then placed his head in his hands for a few moments. Upon opening his hand, he held a note of parchment that stated, "This

Sukkah of the Baal Shem Tov is kosher.” [Signed by the angel] Matat, the Minister of the Interior.”

Why in the first place did the Baal Shem Tov not build a Sukkah impeccably kosher, by the highest standards acceptable to everyone?

By sitting in a questionable Sukkah, the Baal Shem Tov aligned himself with the simplest of Jews, who use Kosher but imperfect Sukkot. The Besh”t demonstrated that even this type of Sukkah – which may not be of the highest standard – is kosher beyond any doubt, thus including, in his mitzvah, even the Jews who are on lower levels.

*Sefer Baal Shem Tov on Sukkot explained by the Rebbe on the second day of Sukkos, 5725; 5727*

### פרי עץ הדר Chasidic A

*Rabbi Yehuda Clapman shared this story:*

One year before Succos, Reb Elye Gross asked me if I already bought an Esrog? When I replied not yet, he suggested that I go to a certain individual to purchase an Esrog from him, because this Jew really needs the income. I obliged and I went to the home of this merchant to search for a nice Esrog.

I looked around but could not find any Esrog that pleased my fancy. While there, another individual came to pick an Esrog, asked how much, paid the generous sum, and turned to leave. I joined this individual on his way out and as we exited the house, I asked, what type of Esrog did you find? I was looking for a good while and could not find anything Hadar.

He replied: For me, a Mehuderdiike Esrog (an Esrog of the highest quality) is an Esrog that helps a Jew with Parnassa for Yomtov! I was most impressed by his answer.

On Yomtov we met in shul, and in my curiosity, I checked to see what Esrog he was using, I assumed for sure he bought himself a beauty of an Esrog elsewhere (as he was quite capable of doing), and that the Esrog that I saw him buy, he bought just to support the

merchant for Yomtov. When I saw the Esrog that he was using I was astonished, he was actually using the Esrog I witnessed him buy. I was so touched by what I witnessed!

Somewhat hesitatingly I went to the Rebbe's office, and I asked the secretary if it would be appropriate to write this story to the Rebbe. The Mazkir (secretary) was not pleased with my question, and he responded: Every day the Rebbe gets all kinds of letters full of negativity and sadness, and here you have a beautiful story of pure Ahavas Yisroel, which would give the Rebbe so much pleasure, and you are hesitating to write?

I got the message, and so I asked someone who had beautiful handwriting and was a masterful writer to write this story for the Rebbe. On special paper, he wrote the story with gorgeous lettering and style, and off I went to give the letter to the Rebbe. The next day I got a call from the Rebbe's Mazkir, he said I have no answer for you from the Rebbe, but I will describe to you what happened with your letter.

I put your letter on top of the pile of letters I brought to the Rebbe, I wanted your letter to be the first letter the Rebbe saw so he can read it first, and sure enough the Rebbe took your letter immediately. The Rebbe started reading, and I noticed that he was not reading it as fast as he usually did, but rather the Rebbe was concentrating and reading your letter word by word, and as he progressed in reading your letter line by line, I saw the Rebbe's smile grow bigger and bigger and bigger!

Your letter caused the Rebbe much Nachas!

**"It is never too late" has no expiration date!**

*Reb Yoel Kahn shared the following story connected to the theme of Pesach Sheni:*

In the early 80s, there were Yeshiva students from Williamsburg that began learning Chabad Chassidus and were greatly inspired by it. When they transferred to Monroe, in Upstate New York, there wasn't an opportunity to study Chassidus, in this rural Satmar Yeshiva.

To compensate for this the boys would go on Motzi Shabbosim to the dormitory room of the Yeshiva “outcast” who had a radio. In this particular Yeshiva to have a radio was not just against the rules of the Yeshiva, it was a clear statement of not conforming with the values and program of the Yeshiva.

Why did they gather in this room weekly, after Shabbos? To listen to the half-hour radio program on WEVD radio, led by Rabbi Yossel Wineberg. The program consisted of 15 minutes Tanya, and a 15-minute review of a talk by the Rebbe, from that Farbrengen of that very day. If there had been no Farbrengen that Shabbos, he would review an edited Sichah on the Parsha, from previous years.

On a particular mid-Sivan Saturday night, they came to the room and noticed that their “host” was feeling down. In response to their inquiring as to what was wrong, the host explained that one of the staff in the Yeshiva had called him out for his conduct and his lack of fear of Hashem. He told this young man that he was wasting his time in the Yeshiva and he would not amount to much in life. As a result, this Bachur was feeling quite dejected.

During the last 15 minutes of the program, that night, Rabbi Wineberg said, as there was not a Farbrengen today, he will repeat something the Rebbe shared a few weeks ago, at a Pesach Sheni farbrengen. The theme of that talk was all about second chances and that it’s never too late, the primary lesson of the second Pesach. Don’t ever give up for as long as we’re alive, we can correct things and make things better.

This was a moving talk of the Rebbe, which Rabbi Weinberg gave over with his usual clarity and warmth. The boys noticed that their ‘host’, who usually hardly pays attention, was intently listening. It was like a new life was breathed into him and he became inspired. The Rebbe’s talk raised his spirits and gave him hope. He made certain resolutions, that night, to get more involved in Yeshiva life and in his Judaism in general and followed through with these Hachlatos!

Word of this got back to Rabbi Kahn and he let Rabbi Wineberg know the positive effect that his radio program had on these Bocherim and especially on their ‘host’.

Rabbi Wineberg sent in this “good news” to the Rebbe, and he also commented that it was divine providence that he gave over this talk, which was exactly what that student needed to hear. Ordinarily, Rabbi Wineberg wrote, I don’t broadcast a message from the Rebbe that was said weeks earlier, especially, if said during a weekday Farbrengen, where there was a mic and recording devices. Despite this, Rabbi Wineberg felt compelled to share this Pesach Sheni Sicha. Rabbi Wineberg concluded that he feels blessed to have been the vehicle to inspire this young man.

The Rebbe responded that he was pleased to hear the effect of the broadcasts and encouraged him to go from strength to strength. The Rebbe continued that he was surprised, however, that Rabbi Wineberg originally even considered this talk about Pesach Sheni as not being ‘current’, as if it came with an expiration date. The entire message of the talk was that it is never too late and there is ALWAYS a second chance. In fact, the entire holiday of Pesach Sheni represents the belief that one can always turn things around!

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