

Waving the Lulav

Before reciting Hallel during Chol Hamoed Sukkot,
we take up the lulav and etrog and recite this blessing:

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

After performing the mitzvah for the first time in
a given year on any day of the festival, say:


בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁהַחֲיָנוּ וְקִיַּמְנוּ
וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזֶמַן הַזֶּה.

Hallel

Hallel is recited on Rosh Chodesh, during Chol Hamoed
and on every day of Chanukah, as well as on all major festivals. Some
congregations also recite it on Yom Ha'atzma'ut.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ
בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ לְקַרְאֵת אֶת הַהֵלֵל.

Psalm 113

הַלְלוּיָהּ הַלְלוּ עַבְדֵי יְהוָה, הַלְלוּ אֶת שֵׁם יְהוָה.
יְהִי שֵׁם יְהוָה מְבֹרָךְ, מֵעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם. מִמְזֶרֶח
שָׁמֶשׁ עַד מְבוֹאוֹ, מִהַלָּל שֵׁם יְהוָה. רָם עַל כָּל
גּוֹיִם יְהוָה, עַל הַשָּׁמַיִם כְּבוֹדוֹ. מִי פִיהוּ
אֱלֹהֵינוּ, הַמִּגְבִּיהִי לַשַּׁבָּת, הַמְשַׁפִּילֵי לְרֵאוֹת
בַּשָּׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ.  מִקִּימֵי מֵעַפָּר דָּל,
מֵאֲשַׁפֹּת יָרִים אֲבִיוֹן. לְהוֹשִׁיבֵי עִם גְּדִיבִים, עִם
גְּדִיבֵי עַמּוֹ. מוֹשִׁיבֵי עֵקֶרֶת תְּפִיֹּת, אִם הַפְּגִים
שְׂמִיחָה, הַלְלוּיָהּ.



Tractate Sukkah in the Mishnah can be easily divided into two parts: the first three chapters, which cover the two great ritual areas of the festival as they pertain in our own day: the construction and use of the sukkah and the use of the "four kinds," i.e. the lulav and etrog (including the willow branches and myrtle twigs), and the last two chapters, which discuss the way the festival was observed in Temple times. Here, we give the first three chapters in a fresh translation with some amplification by the editor. The other two chapters appear elsewhere in this volume.

Chapter One

A sukkah that is more than twenty cubits (that is, about 30 feet) tall is invalid for use, although Rabbi Judah considers it acceptable. And also invalid are a sukkah that is less than ten handbreadths tall, one that lacks three walls, and one that is so sparsely covered with foliage that its roof lets in more sunlight than it casts shadow. An old sukkah is the subject of controversy between the School of Shammai and the School of Hillel: the former declare it invalid, but the latter consider it appropriate for use. And what exactly is an old sukkah? Any that was put up more than thirty days before the festival (i.e., of Sukkot). However, this law does not apply to a sukkah that was specifically built for use during the festival. In such a case, even one built as early as the first days of the year is universally deemed acceptable for use.

One who builds a sukkah under the foliage of a tree might as well have built it inside his home. Similarly, should a sukkah be built atop a different sukkah, only the upper one is appropriate for use, but the lower one is not deemed acceptable. Rabbi Judah, however, rules that the lower sukkah is acceptable for use if the upper one has no one living in it.

A sukkah is unacceptable for use if one spreads a sheet over its sekhakh (that is: the foliage that

serves as its roofing) to shield its occupants from the sun or beneath the sekhakh to keep leaves from falling on them, and it is also unacceptable to spread a sheet over a four-posted bed inside the sukkah (because one would be, in effect, creating a tent inside the sukkah). However, one could acceptably spread a sheet over the single crossbar of a two-posted bed (since doing such would not create a tent with a real roof inside the sukkah).

(The foliage that forms the roof of the sukkah must be made of material detached from the earth.) If, therefore, one trains a vine or the runner of a pumpkin or ivy over the top of the sukkah and then puts the sekhakh on top of that vine, runner or ivy, the sukkah is deemed unacceptable for use. However, if there was much more valid sekhakh than any of the above, or if the plants mentioned above were severed from the earth, then the sukkah is deemed acceptable for use. The general principle is that one may not use as sekhakh anything that is capable of becoming contaminated with tumah (i.e., impurity) and that does not grow from the earth. And the inverse is also so: one may use as sekhakh anything at all that is not susceptible to contamination with tumah and which does grow from the earth.

One may not use bundles of straw, logs or twigs as sekhakh. If the bundles are untied, however, the use of any of the above is acceptable. Even tied together, however, they may be used to construct the walls of the sukkah.

Rabbi Judah teaches that one may use wooden planks as sekhakh, but Rabbi Meir considers their use unacceptable. If one places a board as wide as four handbreadths over the sekhakh, the sukkah is deemed acceptable for use with the proviso that one not sleep directly below the board.

Rabbi Judah teaches that the situation of a sukkah provided with a ceiling consisting solely of wooden planks, and no plaster at all, was the subject of a controversy between the School of Shammai and the School of Hillel, the former holding that such a sukkah is acceptable for use if the planks are all detached and one between every other two is removed and the latter ruling that only one of these conditions need be met: either

Waving the Lulav

Before reciting Hallel during Chol Hamoed Sukkot, we take up the lulav and etrog and recite this blessing:

Blessed are You, A our God, Sovereign of the universe, Who, sanctifying us with divine commandments, has commanded us regarding the ritual use of the *lulav*.

After performing the mitzvah for the first time in a given year on any day of the festival say:

Blessed are You, A , our God, Sovereign of the universe, Who has kept us in life and sustained us, thus enabling us to reach this season.

Hallel

Hallel is recited on Rosh Chodesh, during Chol Hamoed and on every day of Chanukah, as well as on all major festivals. Some congregations also recite it on Israel Independence Day.

Blessed are You, A our God, Sovereign of the universe, Who, sanctifying us with divine commandments, commanded us to recite the Hallel.


Psalm 113

Hallelujah.

Praise, O servants of A , praise the name of A .

May the name of A be blessed from now on and forever more.

From the place where the sun rises to the place where it sets, may the name of A be praised. A is exalted over all the nations; the glory of God is over the heavens.

Who is like unto A , our God, Who, enthroned on high, will yet stoop down low enough to see all that happens in the heavens and on earth, Who will lift up a poor person from the dust or an indigent from a pile of refuse and seat him among nobility, even among the nobles of his people,  Who will take a barren woman and make her the happy mother of children?

Hallelujah!

בַּצֵּאת יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּצְרַיִם, בֵּית יַעֲקֹב
 מֵעַם לֵעָז. הִיָּתָה יְהוּדָה לְקֹדֶשׁוֹ, יִשְׂרָאֵל
 מִמִּשְׁלוֹתָיו. הַיָּם רָאָה וַיִּנָּס, הַיַּרְדֵּן יָסַב
 לְאַחֹר. הַהָרִים רָקְדוּ כְּאֵילִים, גִּבְעוֹת
 כְּבָנֵי צֹאן. מִה לָּךְ הַיָּם כִּי תִגּוֹס, הַיַּרְדֵּן
 תִּסָּב לְאַחֹר. הַהָרִים תִּרְקְדוּ כְּאֵילִים,
 גִּבְעוֹת כְּבָנֵי צֹאן. מִלְּפָנֵי אֲדוֹן חוֹלֵי אֶרֶץ,
 מִלְּפָנֵי אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב. הַהַפְּכֵי הַצֹּר
 אֲגַם מַיִם, חֲלַמֵּי־שׁ לְמַעֲיָנוּ מַיִם.

*This passage, Psalm 115:1-11, is omitted on Rosh Chodesh
 and during the last six days of Passover.*

לֹא לָנוּ, יְהוָה, לֹא לָנוּ כִּי לְשִׁמְךָ יְתֹן כְּבוֹד, עַל חֲסִדֶּךָ עַל
 אֲמוֹתֶיךָ. לָמָּה יֹאמְרוּ הַגּוֹיִם, אֵיךְ נָא אֱלֹהֵיהֶם. וְאֵלֵהֶינוּ
 בְּשִׁמְיִם, כֹּל אֲשֶׁר חָפֵץ עָשָׂה. עֲצִבְיָהֶם כִּסֶּף וְזָהָב, מַעֲשֵׂה
 יְדֵי אָדָם. פֶּה לָהֶם וְלֹא יִדְבְּרוּ, עֵינַיִם לָהֶם וְלֹא יִרְאוּ.
 אֲזַנָּיִם לָהֶם וְלֹא יִשְׁמְעוּ, אֶף לָהֶם וְלֹא יִרְיֹחוּ. יְדֵיהֶם וְלֹא
 יִמְיִשּׁוּן, רַגְלֵיהֶם וְלֹא יִהַלְכוּ, לֹא יִהְיוּ בְּגִרוֹנָם. כְּמוֹתָם
 יִהְיוּ עֹשִׂיהֶם, כֹּל אֲשֶׁר בִּטָּח בָּהֶם. יִשְׂרָאֵל בִּטָּח
 בַּיהוָה, עֲזָרָם וּמִגְּנָם הוּא. בֵּית אֶהְרֹן בִּטְחוּ בַיהוָה, עֲזָרָם
 וּמִגְּנָם הוּא. יִרְאִי יְהוָה בִּטְחוּ בַיהוָה, עֲזָרָם וּמִגְּנָם הוּא.

the planks must all be loosened or one between every other two must be removed. Rabbi Meir, however, is of the opinion that it is necessary to remove a plank between every other two and that there is no need to loosen them at all.

If one creates a roof for one's sukkah out of skewers or bed staves, the sukkah is deemed acceptable for use if there is a space between each of the skewers or the staves equal to its own width. It is, however, deemed wholly unacceptable to attempt to create a sukkah by hollowing out the inside of a haystack.

If one starts to create the walls of a sukkah from the roof downwards, then the sukkah is deemed invalid for use if the walls stop at a distance of more than three handbreadths from the ground. If, however, one starts in the opposite direction, building them from the ground up, then once they are ten handbreadths high, the sukkah is deemed acceptable for use even if they do not actually reach the roof. Rabbi Yossi teaches, however, that the same figure of ten handbreadths pertains in both situations: just as it is enough for the walls to be ten handbreadths in height if one starts from the bottom and works up, it is also acceptable for them to stop as much as ten handbreadths from the ground if one starts building from the top and works down. If the sekhakh, however, stops more than three handbreadths from the walls of a sukkah, it is not deemed acceptable for use.

If a house collapses and one places sekhakh where the roof once was, the resultant structure is not considered to be an acceptable sukkah if there are more than four cubits (that is, about six feet) between the walls and the sekhakh. Similarly, the same law applies if one attempts to place sekhakh over a courtyard surrounded by a balustrade. A large sukkah that is covered with acceptable sekhakh that is surrounded by unacceptable sekhakh is not deemed appropriate for use if there is a space of four cubits (that is, about six feet) between the walls of the sukkah and the acceptable sekhakh material.

Rabbi Eliezer teaches that one who creates a sukkah that looks like a hut (because it has two walls that lean towards each other and meet), or

one that has a roof built to lean against a pre-existing wall, has not created a valid sukkah for use because the structures so created have no flat roofs. The sages, however, consider such structures to be valid sukkot. If one sleeps on a large reed mat, it is deemed susceptible to contamination with tumah (i.e., impurity) and, as such, cannot be used as sekhakh. If, however, it was created as sekhakh in the first place, it can be used and is not deemed susceptible to contamination. Rabbi Eliezer teaches that there is no difference in this matter between a large and a small mat: if such was made to be slept upon, it is deemed susceptible to contamination with tumah and is not acceptable for use as sekhakh. If, however, it was created as sekhakh in the first place, it can be used and is not deemed susceptible to contamination.

Chapter Two

If someone were to sleep under the bed placed in a sukkah, that individual would not be fulfilling the mitzvah of dwelling in the sukkah. Rabbi Judah, however, recalled that it had been the custom (i.e., when he was younger) to sleep under the bed in the sukkah in the presence of the elders (i.e., elders knowledgeable in the law) and they did not protest. Rabbi Simon noted that it once happened that Tabi, the servant of Rabban Gamliel, took to sleeping under the bed in the sukkah. Noting this, Rabban Gamliel himself said to the elders, "You can see what great sage my servant Tabi is—for he clearly knows that slaves are exempt from the obligation to dwell in the sukkah and so he sleeps under the bed instead." Thus, albeit incidentally, we learn that one (i.e., one who has the obligation to fulfill the commandment to dwell in a sukkah) cannot fulfill the mitzvah by sleeping under the bed in a sukkah.

If one builds a sukkah but needs to use the legs of a bed to support the walls, the sukkah is deemed acceptable. Rabbi Judah, however, feels that it is unacceptable if it could not stand up on its own. A sukkah that is disheveled is acceptable, as long as there is more shade than sunlight inside it. If the roof is as thickly thatched as the roof of a


Psalm 114

When Israel left Egypt, when the House of Jacob left a foreign land, Judah became God's sanctuary and Israel, God's dominion.

The sea saw and fled; the Jordan turned backwards.

The mountains danced like rams and the hills, like sheep.

Why are you fleeing, O sea? Why are you turning back, O Jordan? Why are you dancing like rams, O mountains, and you hills, like sheep?


Indeed, you do right to tremble, O earth, in the presence of your Ruler,  in the presence of the God of Jacob, who can turn a rocky crag into a lake of water or a flint into a fountain of water.

This passage, Psalm 115: 1–11, is omitted on Rosh Chodesh and the last six days of Passover.


Give honor not to us, א , not to us—but to Your own name, because of Your mercy and Your truth.

Why, after all, should the nations ask, "Wherever is their God?", since even though our God dwells in heaven, the Almighty nevertheless does anything that divine will dictates; indeed, it is *their* idols that are made of silver and gold and which are the work of human hands. They have mouths, but they cannot speak. They have eyes, but cannot see. They have ears, but cannot hear. They have noses, but cannot smell. They have hands, but cannot feel. They have feet, but they cannot walk. They cannot even clear their throats!


May those who make them, and all who trust in them, be just like them.

 May Israel trust in א , for God is their help and their shield. May the House of Aaron trust in א , for God is their help and their shield. May all who fear א trust in א , for God is their help and their shield.


Psalm 115:12-18

יְהוָה זָכְרָנוּ יְבָרֵךְ, יְבָרֵךְ אֶת בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל, יְבָרֵךְ אֶת בֵּית אֱהָרֹן. יְבָרֵךְ יִרְאֵי יְהוָה, הַקְּטָנִים עִם הַגְּדֹלִים. יִסֹּף יְהוָה עֲלֵיכֶם, עֲלֵיכֶם וְעַל בְּנֵיכֶם. בְּרוּכִים אַתֶּם לַיהוָה, עֲשֵׂה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ.  הַשָּׁמַיִם שָׁמַיִם לַיהוָה, וְהָאָרֶץ נָתַן לַבְּנֵי אָדָם. לֹא הַמֵּתִים יִהְלְלוּ יְיָ, וְלֹא כָּל יִרְדֵי דוּמָה. וְאַנְחָנוּ נְבָרֵךְ יְיָ, מִעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם, הַלְלוּיָהּ.

This passage, Psalm 116:1-11, is omitted on Rosh Chodesh and the last six days of Passover.

אֶהְבֵּתִי כִּי יִשְׁמַע יְהוָה אֶת קוֹלִי תַחֲנוּנָי, כִּי הִטָּה אָזְנוֹ לִי וּבִימֵי אֶקְרָא. אֶפְפוּנֵי חֲבִלֵי מוֹת, וּמְצָרֵי שְׂאוּל מִצְאוּנֵי, צָרָה וַיְגוֹן אֶמְצָא. וּבִשְׁם יְהוָה אֶקְרָא, אָנָּה יְהוָה מַלְטָה נַפְשִׁי. חַנוּן יְהוָה וְצַדִּיק, וְאַלְהֵינוּ מֵרַחֵם. שִׁמְר פְּתָאִים, יְהוָה, דְּלוֹתַי, וְלִי יְהוֹשִׁיעַ. שׁוּבֵי נַפְשִׁי לְמִנוּחֵיכִי, כִּי יְהוָה גָּמַל עֲלֵיכִי. כִּי חֲלַצְתָּ נַפְשִׁי מִמוֹת, אֶת עֵינַי מִן דְּמֹעַת, אֶת רַגְלֵי מִדְּחִי. אֶתְהַלֵּךְ לִפְנֵי יְהוָה, בְּאַרְצוֹת חַיִּים. הֶאֱמַנְתִּי כִּי אֲדַבֵּר, אֲנִי עֲנִיתִי מֵאֵד.  אֲנִי אֶמְרֵתִי בַחֲפְזִי, כָּל הָאָדָם כֹּזֵב.

Psalm 116:12-19

מָה אֲשִׁיב לַיהוָה, כָּל תַּגְמוּלוֹהֵי עָלַי. כּוֹס יְשׁוּעוֹת אֲשָׂא, וּבִשְׁם יְהוָה אֶקְרָא. גְּדַרֵי לַיהוָה אֲשַׁלֵּם, נִגְדָה נָא לְכָל עַמּוֹ. יִקָּר בְּעֵינַי יְהוָה הַמּוֹתָה לַחֲסִידָיו. אָנָּה, יְהוָה, כִּי אֲנִי עֲבָדְךָ, אֲנִי עֲבָדְךָ בְּן אִמְתְּךָ, פִּתְחַתְּ לְמוֹסְרֵי. לֵךְ אֲזַבַּח זֶבַח תּוֹדָה וּבִשְׁם יְהוָה אֶקְרָא.  גְּדַרֵי לַיהוָה אֲשַׁלֵּם, נִגְדָה נָא לְכָל עַמּוֹ, בַּחֲצֵרוֹת בֵּית יְהוָה, בְּתוֹכְכִי יְרוּשָׁלַיִם, הַלְלוּיָהּ.

thatched cottage, it is acceptable even if one cannot see the stars through the roofing.

If one builds a sukkah atop a cart or on the deck of a ship, it is acceptable for use and, furthermore, one may climb up to it on the festival. If one builds a sukkah in the foliage of a tree or on the back of a camel, it is acceptable, but one may not climb into it on the festival day. If two walls of a sukkah are formed by a tree and one is man-made, or if two are man-made and one is formed by a tree, it is acceptable for use, although one may not go into it on the festival day. If three of its walls are man-made and one is formed by a tree, it is acceptable and one may enter it on the festival day. The general principle is this: if the sukkah that utilizes a tree as one or several of its walls could stand on its own (i.e., without the presence of the tree), it is acceptable for use and one may enter it on the festival day.

If one builds a sukkah between several trees so that the trees are the walls of the sukkah, it is acceptable. Individuals attending to the performance of a (different) commandment are exempt from the mitzvah of dwelling in the sukkah. Sick people and those who attend to them are similarly exempt. Also, it is permitted to eat and drink casually outside the sukkah.

It once happened that some cooked food was brought to Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai for him to taste, and, at the same time, two dates and a flask of water were brought to Rabban Gamliel. They instructed that the food be brought up to them in the sukkah. However, when food constituting less than the bulk of a single egg was brought to Rabbi Tzadok, he took it with a cloth (i.e., and not with his bare hand), ate it outside the sukkah and did not recite a benediction afterwards.

Rabbi Eliezer states that one is obliged to consume fourteen meals in the sukkah, one each day and one each evening of the festival. The sages, however, say that there is no specific number of meals required, and, indeed, the only obligatory meal is dinner on the first night of the festival. Rabbi Eliezer also said this: if one fails to eat a meal (i.e., in the sukkah) on the first night of the festival, one can make up for it by dining (i.e., in the sukkah) on the

evening of the closing festival (that is, Shemini Atzeret, when it is normally not required that one eat in the sukkah). The sages, however, say, that one cannot compensate for missing a required meal in that fashion, and it was that kind of situation that the Bible addresses when it makes mention of “something broken that cannot be fixed, something lacking that cannot later be supplied (Kohelet 1:15).”

The School of Shammai ruled that one who is seated in such a way that his head and most of his body are in the sukkah, but the table at which he is seated is in the house, has not fulfilled his obligation, but the School of Hillel teaches that he has performed the mitzvah after all. The students of the School of Hillel said to the students of the School of Shammai, “Did it not once happen that the elders of the School of Shammai and the elders of the School of Hillel together went to visit Rabbi Yochanan ben Hachorani and they found him in just that situation: his head and most of his body in the sukkah, but the table itself inside the house? And is it not so that they said to him not a word about it?” The students of the School of Shammai responded, “That’s your proof? What they said to him was this: ‘If this is how you eat in the sukkah, then you have never performed the mitzvah of dwelling in the sukkah in your entire lifetime.’”


Women, slaves and children are exempt from the mitzvah of dwelling in the sukkah, although a child who no longer needs his mother’s constant attention is obliged to perform the mitzvah. It once happened that the daughter-in-law of Shammai the Elder had a child and he went so far as to break through the ceiling and put some sekhakh over the hole he had made directly over the child’s bed so he could fulfill the mitzvah.

All seven days of the festival, one must consider the sukkah to be one’s “real” residence and one’s home to be a mere temporary shelter. If it should begin to rain, when is it permissible to leave the sukkah? If it is raining hard enough to spoil a pudding. This point is best illustrated with a parable. What is the situation like (i.e., if it begins to rain during a meal in the sukkah?) It is as though a master, whose slave came forward to fill his cup, took the contents of the jug and pitched it in the slave’s face.

Psalm 115:12–18

A remembers us and shall bless us all: the House of Israel, the House of Aaron, the Fearers of A, both young and old alike.

May A grant that you increase, both you and your children.


May you be blessed unto A, Maker of heaven and earth,  for the heavens are the heavens of A, but God gave the earth to humankind. And although neither the recent dead nor those who have long since gone down to the world of silence can praise B, we, the living, shall indeed bless B now and forever.

Hallelujah.


This passage, Psalm 116:1–11, is omitted on Rosh Chodesh and the last six days of Passover.

I love when A listens to my voice and hears my supplications, for God has indeed inclined a divine ear to me whenever I have cried out. As the bands of death surrounded me, the straits of Sheol found me; I found naught but pain and agony. And so in the name of A, I called out, “A, I beg You, save my soul.” A is merciful and just; our God is the very essence of compassion. A must take special care of fools, for although I was cast down low, God saved me nevertheless. Return to your restful state, O my soul, for A has acted kindly toward you.

And so indeed did You save my soul from death, my eye from tears, my foot from slipping.

I walked about before A in the land of the living; I believed my own words as I spoke them, saying, “I am suffering greatly.”  I said in haste, “All people lie about God’s ability to save the wretched.”

Psalm 116:12–19

And now, what can I return unto A in exchange for all that God has done for me? I shall lift the cup of salvation and call out in the name of A; I shall fulfill all my vows to A in the presence of the people of God. Precious in the eyes of A is the “death” of pious worshipers. A, I am Your slave, the son of Your maidservant. You loosed my bonds, and so I shall offer up a thanksgiving sacrifice to You and continue to call out in the name of A.  I shall fulfill all my vows to A in the presence of the people of God, in the courtyards of the House of A, in the very center of Jerusalem.

Hallelujah!

Psalm 117

הָלְלוּ אֶת יְהוָה כָּל גּוֹיִם, שִׁבְחֻהוּ כָּל הָאֲמִיּוֹת.
כִּי גָבַר עָלֵינוּ חַסְדּוֹ, וְאַמֶּת יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם, הַלְלוּיָהּ.

Psalm 118:1-20

הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה כִּי טוֹב, כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ.
יֹאמְרוּ נָא יִשְׂרָאֵל, כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ.
יֹאמְרוּ נָא בֵּית אֲהֲרֹן, כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ.
יֹאמְרוּ נָא יְרֵאֵי יְהוָה, כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ.

מִן הַמִּצֵּר קָרָאתִי יְהוָה, עָנְנִי בַמִּדְבָּר יְהוָה. יְהוָה לִי
לֹא אִירָא, מִה יַעֲשֶׂה לִּי אָדָם. יְהוָה לִי בַעֲזָרִי,
וְאֲנִי אִרְאֶה בְשִׁנְאֵי. טוֹב לַחֲסוֹת בַּיהוָה, מִבְּטָח
בְּאָדָם. טוֹב לַחֲסוֹת בַּיהוָה, מִבְּטָח בַּגְּדִיבִים. כָּל
גּוֹיִם סִבְבוּנִי, בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה כִּי אֲמִילָם. סִבְבוּנִי גַם
סִבְבוּנִי, בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה כִּי אֲמִילָם. סִבְבוּנִי כְּדַבְרֵים
דַּעְכוּ כְּפֶאֶשׁ קוֹצִים, בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה כִּי אֲמִילָם. דָּחָה
דָּחִיתַנִּי לַגֶּפֶל, וַיְהוֶה עֲזָרֹנִי. עֲזֵי וּזְמַרְתִּי יְהוָה,
וַיְהִי לִי לִישׁוּעָה. קוֹל רִנָּה וּישׁוּעָה בְּאֶהְלִי
צְדִיקִים, יְמִין יְהוָה עֲשֶׂה חַיִּל. יְמִין יְהוָה רֹמְמָה,
יְמִין יְהוָה עֲשֶׂה חַיִּל. לֹא אָמוּת כִּי אֶחְיֶה, וְאֶסַּפֵּר
מַעֲשֵׂי יְהוָה. יִסֹּר יִסְרֹנִי יְהוָה, וְלַמּוֹת לֹא נִתְנַנְנִי.
פִּתְחוּ לִי שַׁעֲרֵי צְדָקָה, אָבֹא בָם, אֲוֹדָה יְהוָה.
זֶה הַשִּׁיעַר לַיהוָה, צְדִיקִים יִבְאוּ בוֹ.

Chapter Three

A stolen or withered lulav is not acceptable for use. A lulav fashioned of leaves from an asherah (i.e., a tree used in idolatrous worship) or taken from a city condemned because a majority of its residents gave themselves over to idolatry is not acceptable for use. If the tip of the lulav is snapped off or if the leaves become separated from it, it is not acceptable. If, however, the leaves merely separate from each other (i.e., but remain attached), it is acceptable. Rabbi Judah says that it is customary to bind the lulav at the top (i.e., as well as at the bottom). Using palm branches from the thorny palms of Iron Mountain is acceptable. A lulav is acceptable if it is at least three handbreadths long, which is the minimum necessary to wave it properly.

A stolen or dried out myrtle branch is unacceptable for use on Sukkot (as one of the "four kinds" bound together in the bundle popularly called the lulav). If it comes from a myrtle tree that was an asherah or if it was taken from a city condemned because a majority of its residents gave themselves over to idolatry, it is not acceptable for use. If its tip has been snapped off or its leaves become detached from the branch, or if the branch under consideration had more berries than leaves, it is not acceptable. If one reduces the number of berries, it is then acceptable for use. They may not, however, be reduced on the festival.

A stolen or dried out willow branch is unacceptable for use on Sukkot (as one of the "four kinds" bound together in the bundle popularly known as the lulav). If it comes from an asherah tree or from a city condemned because a majority of its inhabitants have given themselves over to idolatry, it is unacceptable. If its tip is snapped off or its leaves become detached, it is not acceptable, and neither are the branches of a tzaftzafah tree (sometimes called a willow popularly, but not actually a willow tree). If the willow branch is shriveled up, or if some of its leaves fall off, or if it grew in a field (and was not watered by a stream, but by rain water), it is nonetheless acceptable.

Rabbi Ishmael taught that the proper way to take up the "four kinds" is to use three myrtle


twigs, two willow branches, a single palm frond and a single etrog. With respect to the myrtle twigs, it is acceptable even if two are damaged and only one is not. Rabbi Tarfon teaches that it is acceptable even if all three twigs are damaged. Rabbi Akiba teaches, however, that just as one needs only one palm frond and one etrog, so is the minimal requirement of the law that there be just one single myrtle twig and one willow branch.

A stolen or dried out etrog is unacceptable for use. If the etrog came from an asherah tree or if it came from a city condemned because a majority of its inhabitants gave themselves over to idolatry, it is not acceptable. If it comes from a tree less than three years old, it is unacceptable. If it comes from produce offered as terumah to a kohen, then subsequently contaminated with impurity, it is not acceptable. If it is terumah that has not been contaminated, it still should not be used. If, however, it is used, it is deemed acceptable. The School of Shammai teaches that an etrog of uncertain status with respect to terumah and tithes is not acceptable for use, but the School of Hillel permits it. A similar law applies to an etrog that constituted its owner's second tithe (which had to be consumed, or its value spent, in Jerusalem): it was not to be used as one of the "four kinds," but if one did so anyway, it was considered acceptable.

If the kind of growth called chazazit covered most of the surface of the etrog, it is considered unacceptable for ritual use, and the same applies to an etrog that is missing its stem or that is peeled or split in two or pierced in such a way that it ends up missing some of its original fruit. If chazazit is covering only less than half its surface area, or if the stalk (but not the stem) is missing, or if it is pierced, but not in such a way that it is actually missing any fruit, it is acceptable for ritual use. An Ethiopian etrog and one as green as a leek are the subject of a dispute: Rabbi Meir considers them both acceptable, but Rabbi Judah considers them both unacceptable.

The smallest acceptable size for an etrog is, in the opinion of Rabbi Meir, the size of a nut, but Rabbi Judah feels that it must have at least the size

Psalm 117

Praise A , all nations. Adore God, all peoples.
 For the mercy of God has overwhelmed us and the truth of A is forever. Hallelujah!

Psalm 118:1-20

 Give thanks unto A for God is good, for divine mercy endures forever.

May Israel say, ". . . for divine mercy endures forever."

May the House of Aaron say, ". . . for divine mercy endures forever."

May all who fear A say, ". . . for divine mercy endures forever."

From dire straits I called out to B , Who answered me with the generosity of B . As faith in A is mine, I have no fear; what can a mere mortal do to me? If A is among my helpers, I can stare down my enemies. It is better to trust in A than to trust in mortals; it is even better to trust in A than to trust in the powerful.


Alien nations surround me, but I shall overcome them in the name of A . They swarm about me, surrounding me completely, but I shall overcome them in the name of A .

They swarm around me like bees, spreading like fire through dried-out thorns, but I shall overcome them in the name of A .

You shoved me hard that I might fall, but A helped me; B is my strength and my song, and will always be the source of my salvation.

The sound of joy and salvation is always heard in the tents of the righteous, for the right hand of A is mighty.

Indeed, the right hand of A is exalted; the right hand of A is mighty. I shall not die, but live to tell the works of B ; although B afflicted me with grievous suffering, God did not put me to death.

 Open the gates of righteousness for me, that I might pass through them and give thanks to B . This is the gateway to A ; the righteous alone may enter therein.

Psalm 118:21-29

Each of these verses or half-verses is recited twice.

אוֹדֶה כִּי עֲבִיתָנִי, וַתְּהִי לִי לִישׁוּעָה.

אוֹדֶה כִּי עֲבִיתָנִי, וַתְּהִי לִי לִישׁוּעָה.

אָבֵן מֵאֲסוֹ הַבּוֹנִים, הִיְתָה לְרֹאשׁ פֶּנֶת.

אָבֵן מֵאֲסוֹ הַבּוֹנִים, הִיְתָה לְרֹאשׁ פֶּנֶת.

מֵאֵת יְהוָה הִיְתָה זֹאת, הִיא גִפְלֹאת בְּעֵינֵינוּ.

מֵאֵת יְהוָה הִיְתָה זֹאת, הִיא גִפְלֹאת בְּעֵינֵינוּ.

זֶה הַיּוֹם עָשָׂה יְהוָה, נִגְיְלָה וְנִשְׁמְחָה בּוֹ.

זֶה הַיּוֹם עָשָׂה יְהוָה, נִגְיְלָה וְנִשְׁמְחָה בּוֹ.

אֲנִי, יְהוָה, הוֹשִׁיעָה נַא.

אֲנִי, יְהוָה, הוֹשִׁיעָה נַא.

אֲנִי, יְהוָה, הַצְּלִיחָה נַא.

אֲנִי, יְהוָה, הַצְּלִיחָה נַא.

בְּרוּךְ הַבֹּא בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה, בִּרְכֹנֹכֶם מִבֵּית יְהוָה.

בְּרוּךְ הַבֹּא בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה, בִּרְכֹנֹכֶם מִבֵּית יְהוָה.

אֵל יְהוָה וַיָּאֵר לָנוּ,

אֲסְרוּ חַג בְּעֵבְתֵימָּה עַד קָרְנוֹת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ.

אֵל יְהוָה וַיָּאֵר לָנוּ, אֲסְרוּ חַג בְּעֵבְתֵימָּה עַד קָרְנוֹת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ.

אֱלֹהֵי אֲתָהּ וְאוֹדֶה, אֱלֹהֵי אֲרוֹמְמוֹךָ.

אֱלֹהֵי אֲתָהּ וְאוֹדֶה, אֱלֹהֵי אֲרוֹמְמוֹךָ.

הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה כִּי טוֹב, כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסִדוֹ.

הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה כִּי טוֹב, כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסִדוֹ.

of an egg. Rabbi Judah also teaches that an etrog is too big for use if one could not hold two similarly sized etrogim in one hand. Rabbi Yossi, however, feels that it would be enough if one could hold two of them in both of one's hands.

Rabbi Judah teaches that the lulav can only be bound with ties fashioned from its own species, but Rabbi Meir says that one can even use string to bind it together. Rabbi Meir further noted that it once happened that the people of Jerusalem seized on the idea of binding their lulavim one year with bands of gold. (This seems to support his view, but they told him that it only appeared that they were binding it with golden bands and so) they said to him, "Beneath (the gold), they bound it with its own species."

When did they wave (i.e., when did they wave the lulav during the recitation of Hallel?) According to the School of Hillel, they wave the lulav at the beginning and end of "Give thanks unto א" and then at "We beseech You, א, save us!" According to the School of Shammai, they also wave it at "We beseech You, א, grant us success!" Rabbi Akiba said, I was once watching Rabban Gamliel and Rabbi Joshua (during the recitation of Hallel) and I noted that, regardless of when the congregation waved its lulavim, they themselves only waved their lulavim at "We beseech You, א, save us!" If someone is on a journey without a lulav with which to perform the mitzvah, that person may perform the mitzvah when seated at his own table when he gets home. If one fails to perform the mitzvah of taking up the lulav in the morning (when it is usually performed), one may do it in the afternoon, for the entire day is acceptable for the performance of the mitzvah of taking up the lulav.

Anyone who can only recite the Hallel if a slave, a woman or a child feeds him the words line by line, can fulfill his duty in that way—but may such (an ignoramus) be cursed! If, however, an adult man reads for him (with whom he shares the identical obligation, he need not repeat every word), but can simply respond Hallelujah after the person assisting him.


In places where it is customary to repeat certain verses in the Hallel, one must do so. Where it

is customary to recite those verses only one single time, one must act accordingly. Similarly, in places in which it is customary to recite a blessing after the Hallel (and not just before it), one must do so. Everything follows the custom of the place in which one is. If one acquires a lulav from someone during the sabbatical year, one must acquire the etrog that comes along with it as a gift, since one may not purchase the latter during the sabbatical year (but one may receive it as a gift).

Originally, the lulav was used in the Temple all seven days of Sukkot, and elsewhere one single day. Once the Temple was destroyed, Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai enacted an ordinance according to which the lulav would be used everywhere all seven days, as a memorial to the usage that prevailed in the Temple. And Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai also issued another takanah, to the effect that no new grain may be eaten the entire day on which the omer is brought as a grain offering in the Temple (even though, in theory, one could eat of it as soon as the offering was made).

(In Temple days, when) the first day of Sukkot fell on Shabbat, all would bring their lulavim to the synagogue on the eve of the Sabbath. The next day, they would all rise early and go to the synagogue. Each recognized his own lulav and used it to perform the mitzvah. This, they did because the sages said that one may not fulfill one's obligation on the first day of the festival by using a lulav that belongs to another. On the other days of the festival, however, this is permitted.

Rabbi Yossi teaches that one is exempt (i.e. from having to bring a sin-offering) if, on the first day of the festival in a year when that day falls on Shabbat, one forgets that it is the Sabbath and brings one's lulav out into the public domain, because one was acting legitimately (if incorrectly).

A woman may take the lulav from her husband or her son and replace it in water on Shabbat. Rabbi Judah also teaches that on Shabbat it may only be replaced, (i.e., but no extra water added). On a festival day, however, he notes that water may be added. And during the intermediary days of the festival, the water may be changed. A child who knows how to shake the lulav is obliged to do so. 

Psalm 118:21-29

Each of these verses or half-verses is recited twice:

I am thankful when You answer me,
when You become the source of my salvation.

*I am thankful when You answer me,
when You become the source of my salvation.*

A stone the builders
despised has become a cornerstone.
A stone the builders despised has become a cornerstone.

Wondrous in our eyes,
this can only have come from A .
Wondrous in our eyes, this can only have come from A .

This is truly the day A has wrought,
let us rejoice and be glad on it.
This is truly the day A has wrought, let us rejoice and be glad on it.

We beseech You, A , save us.
We beseech You, A , save us.

We beseech You, A , grant us success.
We beseech You, A , grant us success.

Blessed be those who come in the name of A ;
we bless you from the House of A .
Blessed be those who come in the name of A ;
we bless you from the House of A .

A is God and shall grant us light; loose the festival offering
from its bonds and bring it up to the horns of the altar.

A is God and shall grant us light; loose the festival offering
from its bonds and bring it up to the horns of the altar.

You are my God and I give thanks to You,
my God Whom I exalt.

You are my God and I give thanks to You, my God Whom I exalt.

Give thanks to A for God is good,
for divine mercy endures forever.

Give thanks to A for God is good, for divine mercy endures forever.



יְהַלְלוּךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ כָּל מַעֲשֵׂיךָ, וְחִסְדֵיךָ צְדִיקִים עוֹשֵׂי
 רְצוֹנָךָ, וְכָל עַמֶּךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּרַבָּה יוֹדוּ וַיְבָרְכוּ וַיִּשְׁבַּחוּ
 וַיְבָאֲרוּ וַיְרַמְמוּ וַיַּעֲרִיצוּ וַיִּקְדְּשׁוּ וַיִּמְלִיכוּ אֶת שְׁמֶךָ מִלְּפָנֶיךָ,
 כִּי לָךְ טוֹב לְהוֹדוֹת וּלְשַׁמֶּךָ נֶאֱמָר לְזִמְרָה, כִּי מֵעוֹלָם
 וְעַד עוֹלָם אַתָּה אֵל. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, מֶלֶךְ מְהַלְל בְּתִשְׁבָּחוֹת.

*Hallel is followed by the Half Kaddish on Chanukah (except for the day or days of Rosh Chodesh) and by the Full Kaddish at other times.
 After Kaddish, we continue with the Torah Service on page 140.
 A special version of the Torah Service for Hoshana Rabba may be found on page 352. The text of the Half Kaddish may be found above on page 138.*

The Full Kaddish

יִתְגַּדַּל וַיִּתְקַדַּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא בְּעַלְמָא דִּי בְּרָא כְרַעוּתָהּ,
 וַיִּמְלִיךָ מַלְכוּתָהּ בְּחַיִּיכוֹן וּבְיוֹמֵיכוֹן וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל בֵּית
 יִשְׂרָאֵל, בְּעַגְלָא וּבְזִמְן קָרִיב, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

The congregation joins the cantor or baal tefillah in reciting this line.

יְהִיא שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעָלַם וּלְעַלְמֵי עַלְמֵיָא.

The cantor or baal tefillah continues:

יִתְבָּרַךְ וַיִּשְׁתַּבַּח, וַיִּתְפָּאֵר וַיִּתְרוֹמַם וַיִּתְנַשֵּׂא וַיִּתְהַדָּר
 וַיִּתְעַלֶּה וַיִּתְהַלַּל שְׁמֵהּ דְקֻדְשָׁא בְרִיךְ הוּא לְעַלָּא מִן כָּל
 בְּרַכְתָּא וְשִׁירָתָא, תִּשְׁבַּחְתָּא וְנַחֲמְתָּא, דְאִמְרוּן בְּעַלְמָא,
 וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

תִּתְקַבַּל צְלוֹתְהוֹן וּבְעוּתְהוֹן דְכָל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל קָדָם
 אֲבוּהוֹן דִּי בְשַׁמְיָא, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

יְהִיא שְׁלָמָא רַבָּא מִן שַׁמְיָא, וְחַיִּים, עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל
 יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמִרוֹמָיו, הוּא יַעֲשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל
 יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.


In the third section of the Guide for the Perplexed, Maimonides turns to an elaborate exposition of the mitzvot of the Torah according to fourteen different classes of commandments he perceives to exist. The material covering the tenth and eleventh categories, pertaining to the Temple and its sacrificial system of worship, is given here in a slightly abridged and edited version of the 1904 translation of Michael Friedländer.

Chapter 45

... It is known that idolaters selected the highest possible places on high mountains where to build their temples and to place their images. Therefore Abraham, our father, chose Mount Moriah, being the highest mount in that country, and proclaimed there the unity of God. He selected the west of the mount as the place toward which he turned during his prayers, because (he thought that) the most holy place was in the west; this is the meaning of the saying of our Sages, "The Shechinah" (the Glory of God) is in the west" (BT Baba Batra 25a) and it is distinctly stated in Tractate Yoma in the Talmud that our father Abraham chose the west side, the place where the Holy of Holies was built. I believe that he did so because it was then a general rite to worship the sun as a deity. Undoubtedly all people turned then to the east (worshipping the sun). Abraham turned therefore on Mount Moriah to the west, that is, the site of the sanctuary, and turned his back toward the sun; and the Israelites, when they abandoned their God and returned to the early bad principles, stood "with their backs toward the Temple of A and their faces toward the east, and they worshipped the sun toward the east (Ezekiel 8:16)." Note this strange fact. I do not doubt that the spot which Abraham chose in his prophetic spirit, was known to Moses our Teacher and to others, for Abraham commanded his children that on this place a house of worship should be built. Thus the

Targum says distinctly, "And Abraham worshipped and prayed there in that place, and said before God, 'Here shall coming generations worship א (Genesis 22:14).'" For three practical reasons, the name of the place is not distinctly stated in the Torah, but indicated in the phrase "to the place which א will choose (Deuteronomy 12:11 and many other verses)." First, if the nations had learnt that this place was to be the center of the highest religious truths, they would occupy it, or fight about it most perseveringly. Secondly, those who were then in possession of it might destroy and ruin the place with all their might. Thirdly, and chiefly, every one of the twelve tribes would desire to have this place in its borders and under its control; this would lead to divisions and discord, such as were caused by the desire for the priesthood. Therefore it was commanded that the Temple should not be built before the election of a king who would order its construction, and thus remove the cause of discord. . . .

It is known that the heathen in those days built temples to stars, and set up in those temples the image which they agreed upon to worship because it was in some relation to a certain star or to a portion of one of the spheres. We were, therefore, commanded to build a temple to the name of God, and to place therein the Ark with two tablets of stone, on which there were written the commandments "I am א , etc. (Exodus 20:2 and Deuteronomy 5:6)." and "You shall have no other God before me (Exodus 20:3 and Deuteronomy 5:7)." Naturally the fundamental belief in prophecy precedes the belief in the Torah, for without the belief in prophecy there can be no belief in the Torah. But a prophet only receives divine inspiration through the agency of an angel. For example, consider the verses "The angel of א called . . ." (Genesis 22:15), "The angel of א said unto her . . ." (ibid. 16:11), and other innumerable instances. Even Moses our Teacher received his first prophecy through an angel: "And an angel of א appeared to him in the flame of fire (Exodus 3:2)." It is therefore clear that the belief in the existence of angels precedes the belief in prophecy, and the latter precedes the belief in the Torah. The pagans, in their

May all Your creatures ever praise You, א , our God, and may the righteous who do Your will, and the entire House of Israel, the people of God, ever joyfully affirm their faith in You. May they bless You and laud You, declaring You splendid and above all, awesome and holy. And may they declare You their Sovereign, using Your holy name, O Sovereign,  for it is good to render praise unto You and it is pleasant to sing hymns to Your name, for You are God from everlasting to everlasting. Blessed are You, א , Sovereign ever lauded with hymns of praise.

Hallel is followed by the Half Kaddish on Chanukah (except for the day or days of Rosh Chodesh) and by the Full Kaddish at other times. After Kaddish, we continue with the Torah Service on page 141. A special version of the Torah Service for Hoshana Rabba may be found on page 352. The text of the Half Kaddish may be found above on page 139.

The Full Kaddish

Magnified and sanctified be the great name of God in this world created according to divine plan, and may God's sovereignty be established speedily and soon during the days of our lives and the lives of all members of the House of Israel, and let us say, Amen.

The congregation joins the cantor or baal tefillah in reciting this line.
May God's great name be blessed forever and throughout all eternity.

The cantor or baal tefillah continues:
May the name of the Holy One, source of all blessing, be blessed, adored, lauded, praised, extolled, glorified and venerated in language more exalted than any blessing, hymn, ode or prayer recited by the faithful in this world, and let us say, Amen.

May the prayers and supplications of all Israel be acceptable before their heavenly Parent, and let us say, Amen.

May we, and all Israel, be blessed with great peace that comes to us directly from heaven, and with life, and let us say, Amen.

May God Who brings peace to the heavens grant peace to us and to all Israel, and let us say, Amen.