

## Daf Ditty Succah 37: Na'anuim



*Once, late on Hoshanah Rabbah night, he invited everyone for Hallel and hakafot the next morning. Off the cuff, he asked everyone to bring instruments. Suddenly, as if overwhelmed by the very idea, he said with great excitement that maybe since the time of the Temple no one had sung Hallel with full musical accompaniment. The next day's Hallel and hakafot lasted hours and was an experience never to be forgotten.<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> <http://ou.org.s3.amazonaws.com/publications/ja/5763/5763winter/CARLBACH.PDF>

גבה מכולן: **מתני'** יהיכן היו מנענעין  
 ברחו לה' תחלה וסוף ובאנא ה' הושיעה  
 נא דברי ב"ה וב"ש אומרין אף באנא ה'  
 הצליחה נא א"ר עקיבא צופה הייתי ברבן  
 גמליאל ור' יהושע שבל העם היו מנענעין  
 את לולביהן והם לא נענעו אלא באנא ה'  
 הושיעה נא: **גמ'** נענוע מאן דכר שמה  
 דתם קאי \* כל לולב שיש בו שלשה טפחים  
 כדי לנענע בו כשר וקאמר היכן מנענעין



לולב שיש בו שלשה טפחים כדי לנענע בו כשר  
 Which the Gemara on דף ל"ב ע"ב explained to mean  
 וכדי לנענע בו כשר  
 A Lulav that has three טפחים in length, PLUS at least another  
 טפח - by which the waving of the Lulav will be noticeable - is  
 Kosher.

מִתְנַיִ' וְהֵיכֵן הָיוּ מְנַעֲנְעִין? בַּ"הוֹדוּ לַה'" תְּחִילָה וְסוּף, וּבַ"אֲנָא ה' הוֹשִׁיעָה נָא" — דְּבַרֵי בֵּית הַלֵּל. וּבֵּית שְׁמַאי אוֹמְרִין: אַף בַּ"אֲנָא ה' הַצְּלִיחָה נָא". אָמַר רַבִּי עֲקִיבָא: צוּפָה הָיִיתִי בְּרַבִּין גַּמְלִיאֵל וְרַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ, שָׁפַל הָעַם הָיוּ מְנַעֲנְעִין אֶת לוּלְבִיָּהוּ, וְהֵם לֹא נִעְנְעוּ אֶלָּא בַּ"אֲנָא ה' הוֹשִׁיעָה נָא".

**MISHNA:** And where in the recitation of *hallel* would they wave the *lulav*? They would do so at the verse:

כַּט הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה כִּי-טוֹב: כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסֵדוֹ. 29 O give thanks unto the LORD, for He is good, for His mercy endureth for ever. {P}

Ps 118:29

**“Thank the Lord, for He is good”** that appears at both the beginning and the end of the psalm, and at the verse:

כֶּה אֲנָא יְהוָה, הוֹשִׁיעָה נָא; אֲנָא יְהוָה, הַצְּלִיחָה נָא. 25 We beseech Thee, O LORD, save now! We beseech Thee, O LORD, make us now to prosper!

Ps 118:25

**“Lord, please save us”** this is the statement of Beit Hillel.

And Beit Shammai say: They would wave the *lulav* even at the verse:

אֲנָא יְהוָה, הַצְּלִיחָה נָא.

**“Lord, please grant us success”**

Rabbi Akiva said: I was observing Rabban Gamliel and Rabbi Yehoshua and saw that all the people were waving their *lulavim*, and the two of them waved their *lulav* only at: **“Lord, please save us,”** indicating that this is the *halakha*.

והיכן היו מנענעין?

<p>בית שמאי אף באנא ה' הצליחה נא</p>	<p>בית הלל בהודו לה' תחילה וסוף ובאנא ה' הושיעה נא</p>
<p>א"ר עקיבא צופה הייתי ברבן גמליאל ור' יהושע שכל העם היו מנענעין את לולביהן והם לא נענעו אלא באנא ה' הושיעה נא</p>	

Therefore,  
משנה the זאגט  
והיכן היו מנענעין  
Where in Hallel do we wave the Lulav?  
בהודו לה' תחילה וסוף  
ובאנא ה' הושיעה נא דברי ב"ה  
During Hodu at the beginning and at the end of the chapter, and  
at אנא ה' הושיעה נא -  
וב"ש אומרין אף באנא ה' הצליחה נא  
Bais Shammai say that we also wave during אנא ה' הצליחה נא -  
א"ר עקיבא צופה הייתי ברבן גמליאל ור' יהושע  
שכל העם היו מנענעין את לולביהן  
והם לא נענעו אלא באנא ה' הושיעה נא  
and רבי יהושע רבן גמליאל says I was watching  
Hallel, and everyone was waving their לולבים during אנא ה'  
אנא ה' waved only during רבי יהושע and רבן גמליאל, but הצליחה נא  
הושיעה נא.

גַּמְ' נַעְנוּעַ מֵאֵן דְּכַר שְׁמִיָּהּ? הֵתָם קְאִי: כָּל לוּלָב שֵׁישׁ בּוֹ שְׁלִשָּׁה  
טַפָּחִים כְּדֵי לְנַעֲנֵעַ בּוֹ — כְּשֶׁר, וְקָאָמַר: הֵיכָן מְנַעְנְעִין.

**GEMARA:** The Gemara asks about the premise of the mishna. With regard to **waving, who mentioned it?** As no previous mention was made of waving the *lulav*, it is a non sequitur when the *tanna* begins discussion of the details of the custom. The Gemara answers: The *tanna* is **basing** himself on the mishna **there** (29b), which states: **Any lulav that has three handbreadths** in length, **sufficient** to enable one **to wave with it, is fit** for use in fulfilling the mitzva. As the custom of waving the *lulav* was already established there, here the *tanna* is **saying: Where would they wave the lulav?**

תָּנוּ הֵתָם: שְׁתֵּי הַלֶּחֶם וּשְׁנֵי כִבְשֵׁי עֶצְרַת פִּיצֵד הוּא עוֹשָׂה? מִנִּיחַ  
 שְׁתֵּי הַלֶּחֶם עַל גְּבֵי שְׁנֵי הַכִּבְשִׁין, וּמִנִּיחַ יָדוֹ תַּחְתֵּיהֶן, וּמִנִּיחַ וּמוֹלִיךְ  
 וּמְבִיא, מַעֲלָה וּמוֹרִיד. שְׁנַאֲמַר: "אֲשֶׁר הוֹנֵף וְאֲשֶׁר הוֹרֵם".

We learned in a mishna there (*Menahot* 61a): With regard to the two loaves and the two lambs offered on the festival of *Shavuot*, how does he perform their waving before the altar? He places the two loaves atop the two lambs, and places his hand beneath them, and waves to and fro to each side, and he raises and lowers them, as it is stated:

כִּז וְקִדְשָׁתָא אֵת חֲזָה הַתְּנוּפָה, וְאֵת  
 שׁוֹק הַתְּרוּמָה, אֲשֶׁר הוֹנֵף, וְאֲשֶׁר  
 הוֹרֵם: מֵאֵיל, הַמְּלֵאִים--מֵאֲשֶׁר  
 לְאַהֲרֹן, וּמֵאֲשֶׁר לְבָנָיו.

27 And thou shalt sanctify the breast of the wave-offering, and the thigh of the heave-offering, which is waved, and which is heaved up, of the ram of consecration, even of that which is Aaron's, and of that which is his sons'.

Ex 29:27

*"Which is waved and which is lifted"* indicating that there is waving to the sides as well as raising and lowering.

*The waving procedure*

מֵאֵיל-מִנְמוֹת  
 שְׁתֵּי הַלֶּחֶם  
 וּשְׁנֵי כִבְשֵׁי עֶצְרַת  
 were waved

...so too, are the  
 אֲבָבֵץ מִנִּיחַ  
 waved

מוֹלִיךְ וּמְבִיא  
 אֵת אֲבָבֵץ רִחוּתֵי אֵלוֹ  
 מַעֲלָה וּמוֹרִיד  
 כִּז אֲבָבֵץ מֵאֵילִים רִחוּתֵי



The Gemara now discusses the waving procedure, and cites a Mishnah in Menachot that the **שתי הלחם ושני כבשי עצרת** which were brought on Shavuot were waved – and so too, are the **ארבע מינים** waved – as follows, to symbolize two things:

מוליך ומביא למי שהארבע רוחות שלו

מעלה ומוריד למי שהשמים והארץ שלו

We wave them forward and back in all four directions for the sake of Hashem, to Whom all four corners of the world belong and we raise and lower them for the sake of Hashem, to Whom the Heaven and the Earth belong.

מוליך ומביא כדי לעצור רוחות רעות

מעלה ומוריד כדי לעצור טללים רעים

We wave them forward and back in all four directions so that Hashem hold off all harmful winds – and we raise and lower them so that Hashem hold off all harmful dews.

**And let him lift the etrog – תְּלַבְּתֶיהָ לְאַתְרוֹג:** Some add a rationale for this suggestion. Since the etrog is the first of the species listed in the verse, it stands to reason that the blessing would be recited over it (Rabbi Shmuel Shmelke Taubes).

**Waving the lulav – עֲנִנְתֶּהּ הַלּוּלָב:** Several reasons were provided for the practice of waving the lulav. On the simplest level, it is a means of inspiring happiness (Me'in). Therefore, one should not wave the lulav in a despondent manner; rather, one should do so with energy and alacrity, in fulfillment of the verse: "All my bones shall say: Lord, who is like You" (Psalms 35:10; Rabeinu Manoah). Waving the lulav is also a display of love for the mitzva (Rosh). The commentaries cite the Jerusalem Talmud: Why shake the lulav? It is in order to shake, undermine, and overthrow the authority of the Satan. The reason that the waving is performed while reciting: "Lord, please save us," is in fulfillment of the verse: "Then shall the trees of the forest sing

for joy... Give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good... Save us, God of our salvation" (I Chronicles 16:33–35). That alludes to the fact that when one recites: Save us, one shakes the lulav in the manner that the trees of the forest shake with joy (see *Tosefot Yam Tov*).

In terms of the manner of waving, the early authorities dispute whether it involves merely moving the lulav to and fro (Rav Hai Gaon) or whether it requires shaking and rustling the leaves of the lulav (see *Tosefot*, based on the Jerusalem Talmud).

**Beit Hillel and Beit Shammai – בֵּית הַלֵּל וּבֵית שַׁמַּי:** In tannaitic literature it is atypical for the opinion of Beit Hillel to be cited before the opinion of Beit Shammai (see *Eduyyot* ch. 4–5). Apparently, Beit Hillel's opinion is cited first here because Beit Shammai add to their statement and do not merely dispute the opinion of Beit Hillel (*Tosefot Yam Tov*). However, there is a

variant reading that appears in many of the early commentaries (*Or Zarua*) with the opinions cited in the standard order, i.e., the opinion cited first is that of Beit Shammai. According to that version, Rabban Gamliel and Rabbi Yehoshua attribute the first opinion cited in the mishna to Beit Hillel.

With regard to the opinion of Rabban Gamliel and Rabbi Yehoshua, Rabbi Ovadya Bartenura suggests that they waved the lulav only when reciting the verse: "Lord, please save us," and they did not wave at all when reciting the verse: "Thank the Lord, for He is good." That opinion is based on another variant reading of the mishna (see also *Tosefot Yam Tov*). Others explain that proof can be cited from here that the practice of different customs in the same congregation is not a cause for concern, as Rabban Gamliel and Rabbi Yehoshua acted differently from the rest of the congregation and yet they did not reprimand the congregation for following a different custom (*Benayahu*).

אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן: מוֹלִיךְ וּמְבִיא לְמִי שֶׁהָאַרְבַּע רוּחוֹת שְׁלוֹ, מְעַלָּה וּמּוֹרִיד לְמִי שֶׁהַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ שְׁלוֹ. בְּמַעֲרָבָא מְתַנּוּ הָכִי: אָמַר רַבִּי חֲמָא בַר עֻקְבָּא אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹסִי בְּרַבִּי חֲנִינָא: מוֹלִיךְ וּמְבִיא כְּדֵי לְעַצּוֹר רוּחוֹת רָעוֹת, מְעַלָּה וּמּוֹרִיד כְּדֵי לְעַצּוֹר טְלָלִים רָעִים. אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹסִי בַר אֲבִין וְאִיתִּמָּא רַבִּי יוֹסִי בַר זְבִידָא: זֹאת אוֹמְרָת,

**Rabbi Yohanan said: He moves them to and fro to dedicate them to He Whom the four directions are His. He raises and lowers them to He Whom the heavens and earth are His. In the West, Eretz Yisrael, they taught it as follows. Rabbi Hama bar Ukva said that Rabbi Yosei, son of Rabbi Hanina, said: He moves them to and fro in order to request a halt to harmful winds, storms and tempests that come from all directions; he raises and lowers them in order to**

halt harmful dews and rains that come from above. Rabbi Yosei bar Avin said, and some say that it was Rabbi Yosei bar Zevila who said: That is to say,

שְׂרִי מְצוּהַ מְעַכְבִּין אֶת הַפּוֹרְעָנוֹת. שְׂהִרִי תְּנוּפָה שְׂרִי מְצוּהַ הִיא —  
וְעוֹצֵרֶת רוּחוֹת וּטְלָלִים רָעִים. וְאָמַר רָבָא: וְכֵן בְּלוּלָב. רַב אֲחָא בְּר  
יַעֲקֹב מְמַטִּי לִיהַּ וּמֵיִתִּי לִיהַּ, אָמַר: דִּין גִּירָא בְּעֵינֵיהּ דְּסַטָּנָא. וְלֹא  
מְלֵתָא הִיא, מְשׁוּם דְּאֲתִי לְאִיגְרוּיִי בֵּיהּ.

non-essential aspects of a mitzva avert calamity, as waving is a non-essential aspect of the mitzva, since even if one failed to wave the loaves he fulfilled his obligation, and nevertheless it halts harmful winds and dews. And Rava said: And likewise one should conduct himself the same way with a *lulav*, i.e., one should wave it to and fro and raise and lower it for the same reasons. When Rav Aḥa bar Ya'akov would move the *lulav* to and fro, he would say: This is an arrow in the eye of Satan, as despite his best efforts, the Jewish people continue to joyously fulfill mitzvot. The Gemara notes: That is not a proper manner of conduct, as it will induce Satan to come to incite him to sin. Gloating due to his victory over the evil inclination will lead Satan to redouble his efforts to corrupt him.

And likewise with a *lulav* – וְכֵן בְּלוּלָב: Practically speaking, some say that it is sufficient to wave the *lulav* to and fro in two directions as well as up and down. They added that one who waves the *lulav* to and fro in four directions is suspected of heresy (see Ran and Rashba). Others say that on the contrary, one must make certain to wave the *lulav* to and fro in all four directions, as then it does not appear that he is forming a cross because the four directions plus up and down total six sides (Rosh). That is the common practice in recent generations.

An arrow in the eye of Satan – גִּירָא בְּעֵינֵיהּ דְּסַטָּנָא: Although the waving of the *lulav* is to negate aspects of evil in the world, e.g., harmful winds and dew, it is inappropriate to say so explicitly (Maharsha). It is noted elsewhere that Rav Aḥa bar Ya'akov was a pious, holy man who was accustomed to miracles, so he was able to speak in that manner. However, it would be inappropriate for others to do so. Furthermore, one who expresses himself in this manner is portraying himself as one who successfully overcame his evil inclination, when in fact God is assisting him (see *HaBoneh*).



## Summary

A new Mishna teaches about when we should wave the lulav during Hallel.<sup>2</sup> "Thank the Lord for he is good" and "Lord please save us", as Beit Hillel suggests? Or perhaps "Lord please grant us success", as Beit Shammai teaches. Rabbi Akiva decides that "Lord please save us" (*Hoshia na*) wins out, as he observed both Rabban Gamliel and Rabbi Yehoshua waving their lulavs only during that verse with all of the people taking that cue.

Why waving, asks the Gemara? Because 29b teaches that the lulav must have at least three handbreadths - enough to wave it. Where would they wave it? The rabbis turn to other Masechtot to better understand how to wave the lulav. Masechet Menachot 61a teaches about waving by the altar on Shavuot. And Exodus 29:27 teaches that waving includes upward and downward motions.

The rabbis use this opportunity to suggest different meanings that underpin the act of waving. Perhaps it affirms G-d's power over all of the directions; Heaven and earth (Rabbi Yochanan). Perhaps we request that G-d put a stop to the harmful winds from to and fro; the harmful dew from above and below.

Our rabbis use proof texts from halachot developed by other rabbis. The circular nature of the Talmudic reasoning is both frustrating and fascinating.

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### HALAKHA

**Binding of the lulav** – אָגַד הַלּוּלָב: Based on the principle: Beautify yourself before Him in the performance of mitzvot, there is a mitzva to bind three of the species together with at least one double knot. One may use any material to tie them,

but the custom for many generations has been to tie them with the leaf of a lulav. Some tie the species together with five knots, based on kabbalistic teachings (*Shulhan Arukh, Orah Hayyim 651:1*).

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### NOTES

**With a cord** – בְּמִטְיָחָה: A cord is mentioned here specifically because it is certainly less aesthetic (*Meleket Shlomo*). Some explain this term as referring to a red, silk string (Rav Natan, Head of the Yeshiva).

**Any *a fortiori* inference that you infer initially to be stringent, etc.** – כָּל דִּין שְׂאֵתָהּ דִּן תַּחֲלוֹתָ לְהַחְמִיר וְכוּ': See *Tosafot* and elsewhere (*Torat Kohanim, Parashat Tazria*), where it is

explained that the dispute between Rabbi Yehuda and the Rabbis is not only in this particular instance; rather, it is much broader. Is an *a fortiori* inference whose initial conclusion is a stringency, but may ultimately lead to a leniency, a legitimate inference or not? As the result runs counter to the objective of the inference, perhaps the inference is negated (see *Kappot Temarim* and others).

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<sup>2</sup> <https://dafyomibeginner.blogspot.com/2014/03/>



**Daf Shevui** writes:<sup>3</sup>

The mitzvah of taking the lulav involves waving it in six directions—to the directions of the four winds and up and down. The custom was and still is to waive the lulav the first time one takes it up, and then to waive it again in the synagogue at various points during the recitation of Hallel at the morning service. This is the background to our mishnah. Here we see that there is a debate about one of these wavings. According to all of the sages, one waves at the beginning of Psalm 118 and at the end, a Psalm that begins and ends with “Give thanks to the Lord.” Everyone agrees that there is also a waving in the middle of this Psalm, but they disagree as to the extent of the waving.

Bet Hillel says that one waves during the first half of verse 25, “O Lord, deliver us”, but not during the second half, “O Lord, let us prosper.”

Bet Shammai says that one also waves during the second half of the verse. Rabbi Akiva, who lived long after Bet Hillel and Bet Shammai were no longer really in existence, testifies that he saw all of the people waving at “O Lord, let us prosper” as Bet Shammai stated, while Rabban Gamaliel and Rabbi Joshua, two of Rabbi Akiva’s elders, waived only at “O Lord, deliver us,” as Bet Hillel posited. The halakhah is according to Bet Hillel. As an aside, while it is typical for the rabbis to follow Bet Hillel, it is interesting to note that in this case most of the people acted like Bet Shammai.

The Gemara is puzzled by the Mishnah seeming to discuss how one waves the lulav without first stating that one does wave the lulav. Our mishnah, in other words, seems to come out of nowhere.

**Rav Avrohom Adler** writes:<sup>4</sup>

The Mishna rules that we shake the lulav when reciting the words hodu laHashem and when reciting the words ona-Hashem. There is a dispute between Bais Shammai and Bais Hillel if one shakes the lulav when reciting the words ana HaShem hatzlicha na.

The Gemara states that the significance of shaking the lulav and esrog is that one shakes them outward and inward to demonstrate that Hashem owns all four directions of the world. One shakes them upwards and downwards to signify that the heavens and the earth belong to Hashem.

### **Smelling Hadassim**

The Gemara rules that one is prohibited from smelling and deriving pleasure from the fragrance of the hadassim that are used for the mitzvah. The Acharonim challenge this ruling from the Gemara that states that sound, sight and aroma are deemed inconsequential and one who inhales a fragrance from an item in the Bais HaMikdash will not have violated the prohibition of meilah. Why, then, is there a concern if one were to smell the hadas?

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<sup>3</sup> [https://www.sefaria.org/Sukkah.37b.7?lang=bi&p2=Daf\\_Shevui\\_to\\_Sukkah.37b.11-12&lang2=bi](https://www.sefaria.org/Sukkah.37b.7?lang=bi&p2=Daf_Shevui_to_Sukkah.37b.11-12&lang2=bi)

<sup>4</sup> [http://dafnotes.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Sukkah\\_37.pdf](http://dafnotes.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Sukkah_37.pdf)

HaRav Elyashiv Shlita explains that the above-mentioned principle only applies when one smells, sees or hears something incidentally and one was not intending for the smell, sight or sound. One who inhales the hadas for its aroma, however, is acting deliberately and this is forbidden.

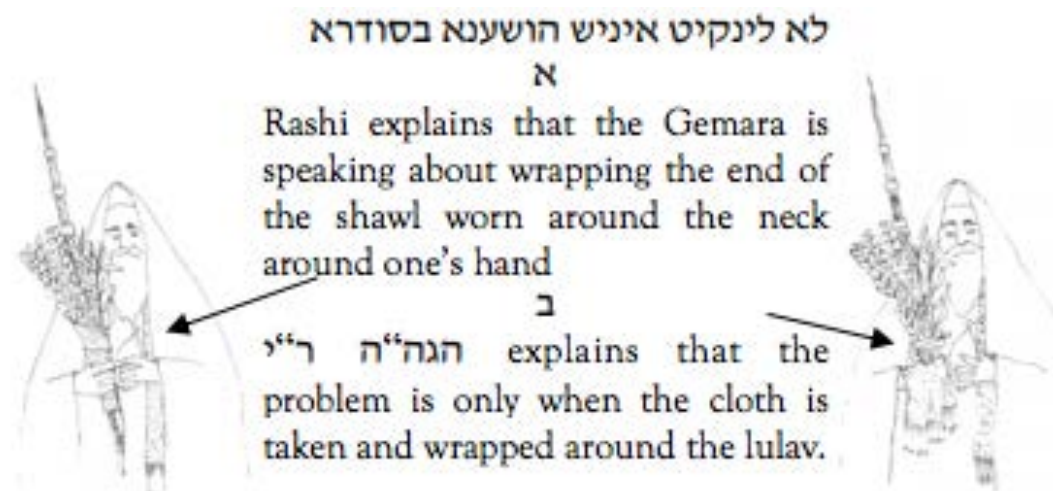
Harav Elyashiv cites a proof to this from the Gemara in Rosh Hashanah which discusses if one can fulfill his obligation of shofar with a shofar that one is forbidden to derive benefit from. The issue in the Gemara there is if the benefit that one derives while performing a mitzvah is deemed a prohibited benefit or not. Although sound is normally deemed inconsequential, regarding shofar it is obvious that he intends for the sound and this intention is thus taken into consideration.

### Foresight and Prophecy

The Mishnah states that Rabbi Akiva said, “*Tzofeh hayisi beRabban Gamliel*,” I was watching Rabban Gamliel. Why does the Mishnah use the word *tzofeh* and not the conventional word for sight, *roeh*? The word *tzofeh* is often associated with prophecy, as it is said in Yeshaya (52:8) *kol tzofayich nasu kol*, the voice of your lookouts, i.e. prophets, they raised their voice.

Perhaps Rabbi Akiva was alluding to the idea that although the Bais HaMikdash would be destroyed and salvation would appear distant, he saw in a form of prophecy that the words of the prophets who predicted the Ultimate Redemption would be fulfilled.

This idea is consonant with the Gemara in Makkos that records an incident where Rabbi Akiva and his colleagues passed by the site of the Bais HaMikdash. The rabbis cried and Rabbi Akiva laughed. Rabbi Akiva explained his enigmatic actions by quoting Scripture that foretells of the ultimate rebuilding of Jerusalem and the Bais HaMikdash.



## HOW TO WAVE THE LULAV

**Rav Mordechai Kornfeld** writes:<sup>5</sup>

The Mishnah discusses the parts of Hallel at which one should wave the Lulav ("Na'anu'im"). The Gemara describes how these Na'anu'im are performed. According to Rava, the Lulav is waved in the same way as the loaves of the Shte ha'Lechem are waved on Shavuos in the Beis ha'Mikdash: forward and back (Molich u'Mevi), and then up and down (Ma'aleh u'Morid).

The Yerushalmi (3:10) quotes a Beraisa that states, cryptically, that one must wave the Lulav "three times for each thing." Rabbi Zeira in the Yerushalmi questions whether the movement forward is considered one waving and the movement back is considered a second waving, or whether the full forward-back movement is considered one waving.

What does the Beraisa mean when it says that one must wave the Lulav "three times for each thing"? In addition, how does the Yerushalmi's description of the three Na'anu'im match the description of the Na'anu'im given by the Gemara here (Molich u'Mevi, Ma'aleh u'Morid)?

**TOSFOS** (DH Kedei), the **ROSH** (3:26), and the **TUR** (OC 651) explain that according to the Gemara here, one must point the Lulav towards six directions -- to the four directions (east, south, north, west), and up and down. The Yerushalmi adds that when one stretches his arms to each direction, he also must move his hands back and forth three times (making a smaller to-and-from movement). Rabbi Zeira's question in the Yerushalmi is whether one needs to move his hands back and forth only three times (back, forth, back), or six times (back-forth, back-forth, back-forth).

Tosfos, the Rosh, and the Tur rule that one should be stringent and perform six short wavings since there is no excessive effort involved. Accordingly, one waves the Arba'a ha'Minim a total of 36 wavings (six times in each of the six directions).

The **BA'AL HA'TTUR** (cited by the Rosh) and the **RITVA** (in the name of "Yesh Mefarshim") explain that the Bavli and Yerushalmi describe the same wavings but in different words. The Gemara here says that one should wave the Lulav "Molich u'Mevi, Ma'aleh u'Morid," and the Yerushalmi says that those constitute three movements -- "Molich u'Mevi" are two movements, and "Ma'aleh u'Morid" is one movement.

Rabbi Zeira questions whether the single series of "forward and back" (Molich u'Mevi) is considered two movements and thus it suffices to move the Lulav forward and back a single time, or whether the "forward and back" movement is considered only one movement and thus one must do two actions of "forward and back" (forward-back, forward back; or, alternatively, forward-back, side-to-side) in order to achieve two movements. The "up and down" movement is counted as only one movement because "down" is not counted as a separate movement (since it is not possible to go up without coming down).

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.dafyomi.co.il/sukah/insites/su-dt-037.htm>



The **RAMBAM** (Hilchos Lulav 7:10) rules that the Bavli and the Yerushalmi complement each other and note two different *types* of movements of the Lulav. The Bavli says that one should extend the Lulav to each direction (as well as up and down). The Yerushalmi adds that when one stretches out his arms, he must also make the top of the Lulav jiggle while his arms are outstretched. This is the Na'anu'a mentioned in the Mishnah earlier (29b). The question of Rabbi Zeira is whether one must also perform these short quivers of the Lulav when one brings his hands back to his body. Accordingly, the Yerushalmi describes an entirely different aspect of waving the Lulav than the Bavli. The Bavli describes moving the Lulav back and forth, and the Yerushalmi describes jiggling the Lulav.

The **RIF**, **RAMBAN**, **RITVA**, and **RAN** explain, like the Rambam, that the Bavli and Yerushalmi discuss two types of waving. However, according to these Rishonim, the two types of waving are done at two different times. After one performs the Bavli's set of forward and back, up and down, movements, one must jiggle the Lulav three times. This quivering, although much smaller than the forward and back movements, also involves a small forward and back motion. Rabbi Zeira's question is whether this forward and back quivering motion is considered two movements (forward and back), so that it suffices to perform three such movements (forward, back, forward), or whether it is considered one movement (forward-back), so that one must do six movements (forward-back, forward-back, forward-back).<sup>6</sup>

The **RAMBAN** and **RITVA** prove that the Bavli also requires that the Lulav be quivered, even though the Bavli does not explicitly say so. The Mishnah (29b, as explained by the Gemara on 32b) says that the Lulav must extend at least one Tefach beyond the height of the Hadasim and Aravos "in order to shake it." If there is no need to jiggle the Lulav, but only to move it back and forth, why is an extra Tefach on top necessary? It must be that the Bavli also understands that when the Mishnah says "Na'anu'a," it refers to jiggling the Lulav.

This proof can be refuted by the Rambam's explanation there (in Perush ha'Mishnayos). The Rambam explains that the Mishnah does not mean that there must be an extra Tefach on top of the Lulav, but rather that there must be an extra Tefach that extends *below* the Hadasim and Aravos, at the *bottom* of the Lulav. The purpose of this extra Tefach is to enable one to grasp the Lulav with his hands in order to move the entire bundle back and forth. "In order to shake the Lulav" means that the Tefach is needed so that one can hold the Lulav in order to move it back and forth. According to this explanation, there is no proof that the Bavli requires jiggling the Lulav (because the top of the Lulav does not extend beyond the Hadasim and Aravos).<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> (The last two opinions do not mention that the Lulav must be stretched out to all four directions in addition to up and down. Perhaps they maintain that it suffices to move the Lulav just forward and back (i.e., in two directions), besides up and down. The Ba'al ha'Itur (in (b) above), who maintains that this is the doubt of Rav Zeira in the Yerushalmi, also concludes that, l'Halachah, it suffices to wave the Lulav merely forward and back.)

<sup>7</sup> The **RAMBAM** in Hilchos Lulav, however, does mention the requirement to jiggle the top of the Lulav, as mentioned in (c) above. Perhaps the Rambam retracted the opinion he expressed in Perush ha'Mishnayos. Alternatively, perhaps the Rambam argues with the Ramban and Ritva and maintains that the top of the Lulav does not need to extend a Tefach in order for one to jiggle it; even if the top of the Lulav is level with the top of the Hadasim and Aravos, one still can jiggle it.

The **SHULCHAN ARUCH** (OC 651:9) seems to rule in accordance with the opinion quoted by the **TUR** in the name of his father, the **ROSH** (as explained by the Beis Yosef), who mentions major and minor back-and-forth movements to each of six directions. He does not mention jiggling.

The **REMA** adds that one must also jiggle the leaves of the Lulav *while* he moves it back and forth. In addition, although the Rema agrees with the Shulchan Aruch that one must move the Lulav forward and back three times (for a total of six movements), he argues that those movements are done by stretching out one's arms completely and then bringing the arms back to one's body; the movements are not short, forward and back movements that are done once the arms are outstretched, as the Shulchan Aruch rules (that is, according to the Rema, there are two sets of major movements and no minor movements).

**לְאִיזוֹת צֶדֶד מְנוּנָנֵב** – **In which direction does one wave** – The vast majority of authorities agree that one waves the *lulav* in the four directions and up and down; however, they disagree with regard to the sequence. Some say that the correct sequence is: East, south, west, north, up, and down, which is the custom prevalent among Ashkenazic communities. However, according to Rabbi Yitzhak Luria the sequence is: South, north, east, up, down, west, which is the custom of Sephardic and some Hassidic communities. According to most opinions, when waving the *lulav* downward, one does not point the top of the *lulav* down. In addition, some turn to face each direction as they wave the *lulav*, while others continue facing east. This is dependent on local custom (*Shulchan Arukh, Orach Hayyim 681:10*).

## Waving the Lulav

**Steinzaltz (OBM)** writes:<sup>8</sup>

Aside from the simple *mitzva* of picking up the *daled minim* (four species) on Sukkot, there is also a *mitzva* of *ni'anu'ah* - to wave or shake the *lulav* during prayers.

**Rabbi Yohanan said: He moves them to and fro to dedicate them to He Whom the four directions are His. He raises and lowers them to He Whom the heavens and earth are His. In the West, Eretz Yisrael, they taught it as follows. Rabbi Hama bar Ukva said that Rabbi Yosei, son of Rabbi Hanina, said: He moves them to and fro in order to request a halt to harmful winds, storms and tempests that come from all directions; he raises and lowers them in order to halt harmful dews and rains that come from above.**

Perhaps the simplest explanation of the *na'anu'im* is given by the Me'iri, who describes them as a show of joy appropriate for the Sukkot holiday. This idea is developed by Rabbeinu Mano'ah who says that the shaking must be done with strength and vigor to fulfill the passage that commands that a person must praise God with his entire being (*Tehillim 35:10*), and by the Rosh who explains that it is to show particular love for the *mitzva*.

The explanation that appears in the Jerusalem Talmud is that waving the *lulav* is an act of defense – an attempt to ward off the prosecuting angel. Moreover, the Mishna instructs this shaking or

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.steinzaltz-center.org/home/doc.aspx?mCatID=68446>

waving of the *lulav* at specific points during *Hallel* – the prayer of thanksgiving. Based on the passage in *Tehillim* (96:12) that the trees of the forest sing out in praise of God, we are commanded to shake the symbolic trees as we praise God with our recitation of the *Hodu* prayer (*Tehillim* 118:1) and the plea *Hoshi'a na* (*Tehillim* 118:25).

### *The role of the Jew in the world*

למי שהשמים והארץ שלו

*Rabbi Yochanan explained that one waves them...in acknowledgement of Him to Whom are heaven and earth. In Eretz Yisrael they taught... He waves them...in order to restrain harmful winds, and up and down in order to restrain harmful dews.*

When the Arba Minim are waved about, its movement is designed to counter the threatening forces which undermine our existence.<sup>9</sup>

R' Chaim Korb, zt"l, explains that the “damaging winds” which must be diminished refer to the enemy forces which attack us and deny our right to live and survive. Dew is desirable and necessary. Rashi points out (Devarim 32:1) that dew is something in which everyone rejoices. The “harmful dew” which must be stopped refers to the seemingly pleasant and friendly welcome which we sometimes enjoy in our host countries in the exile. It is not that we wish for the hospitable conditions to end, but we must be aware that the relaxed religious atmosphere which accompanies such conditions must be identified for the danger which they represent.

This is why the waving about of the species is effective only when the four species are bound together. As the Midrash expounds, each of the four kinds correspond to a different category of Jew. When all are taken together, this symbolizes Jewish unity. This is the formula for triumph over all types adversaries.

The Gemara (Sukka 55a) ascribes the total of seventy bullocks which were brought as part of the musaf offerings of Sukkos as paralleling the seventy nations of the world. The one bullock which is then offered on Shmini Atzeres corresponds to the one Jewish nation. The message is that although many of the world's inhabitants have often mistreated us, we are concerned for the welfare of the world at large.

Nevertheless, world peace and prosperity are a goal of ours. Our destiny and our mission remains distinct, however, and we therefore have our own festival to commemorate our unique role in the world. On Shmini Atzeres we bring the single bullock to celebrate our private day with Hashem.

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<sup>9</sup> <https://dafdigest.org/masechtos/Sukkah%20037.pdf>



### *Taking the Lulav Before Davening*

והיכן היו מנענים בהודו לה' תחילה וסוף

Where did they shake [the lulav?] At the beginning and end of  
"Hodu."

Rav Yosef Karo (1) cites this Mishnah as support for the position of Rabbeinu Yaakov Ba'al HaTurim (2) that although the mitzvah of lulav can be performed any time during the day, the ideal time to fulfill the mitzvah is during Hallel. The proof is derived from the Mishnah's response that the shaking of the lulav was performed during Hallel, thus indicating that this is the primary time to fulfill the mitzvah. Rav Yechiel Michel Epstein (3) challenges this ruling. How can Rabbeinu Yaakov Ba'al HaTurim and Rav Yosef Karo write that the primary time to perform the mitzvah is during Hallel when they previously wrote that זריזים are quick to perform the mitzvah in the morning after sunrise (4)?

It is evident from Rav Epstein's question that it is preferable to perform the mitzvah of lulav as early as possible. This is also the opinion of Rav Avrohom Avli Gombiner (5) citing a quote of the Arizal that he would make the bracha on his lulav before he went to shul so he could perform the mitzvah in the sukkah.

Rav Moshe Shternbuch (6) challenges the practice of performing the mitzvah at home in the sukkah before davening, because the shaking of the lulav during Hallel is supposed to be a continuation of the mitzvah. Therefore, there should not be such a long delay between the fulfillment of the mitzvah, at home in the sukkah, and the waving of the lulav during Hallel, which takes place later.

The reason the Arizal made the brachah before davening was to be able to recite the brachah in the sukkah, but the primary time to recite the brachah is after Shemone Esrei. Nowadays, concludes Rav Shternbuch, when many Shuls have a sukkah, the ideal way to fulfill the mitzvah is for people to go out to the sukkah before Hallel and recite the brachah there and then return inside for the recitation of Hallel with the additional shaking of the lulav.

1. ב"י אר"ח סי' תרנ"ב ד"ה ומ"ש ועיקר
2. טור אר"ח סי' תרנ"ב
3. ערוה"ש שם סעי' ג'
4. ע' בב"י שם ד"ה ומ"ש שמצותו מעלות השחר כ"כ דעיקר זמן המצוה אינה אלא משתנף החמה ע"ש
5. מג"א שם סק"ג
6. מועדים וזמנים ח"ב סי' קט"ז ■

**Waving the Lulav**  
אמר רבי יוסי ברבי חנינא מוליך ומביא כדי  
לעצור רוחות מעלה ומוריד כדי לעצור  
טללים רעים

Rav Yechezkel Abramsky, zt”l, once asked: “How does waving the lulav stop the bad winds from blowing and the harmful dew from falling?” He explained, “Waving the lulav in a particular direction is an expression of thanks to Hashem for all the good that He bestows upon the world from that season. Gratitude and praise to Hashem for all the good is such a strong force that it can mitigate harsh winds and precipitation. It also causes a bounty of goodness to rain upon us instead. But it isn’t the physical shaking of the lulav that can accomplish this—it is the intention one has while doing the shaking!”

During World War I, the Chofetz Chaim, zt”l, was exiled to a distant Russian town along with the rest of his yeshiva. As Sukkos approached, the Jews of that area tried their best to procure a set of the מנינים ארבע, but no one succeeded. On the festival itself, one person finally managed to obtain what was clearly a sub-standard set. The fortunate man hurried to the Chofetz Chaim to offer the gadol the very first opportunity to make a blessing on the מנינים ארבע. The Chofetz Chaim held them with obvious pleasure but would not shake them.

When asked why, he explained: “Every year, everyone here is accustomed to doing the נענועים, but this year it is obviously impossible. We all need to share this precious lulav, and it is so frail that if everyone were to jostle it, it would be destroyed. Imagine what distress the rest of the people here would feel if I shook the lulav and they could only watch, knowing that they wouldn’t be able to take the liberty for fear of rendering it posul for the others? The נענועים are only a custom. Causing another Jew’s distress is an outright דאורייתא איסור”

**Rabbi Elliot Goldberg** writes:<sup>10</sup>

Some years, in advance of the holiday of Sukkot, the Transportation Security Agency will release guidance along these lines:

*“Observant Jewish travelers may carry four plants — a palm branch, myrtle twigs, willow twigs, and a citron — in airports and through security checkpoints. These plants are religious articles and may be carried either separately or as a bundle. Jewish travelers may be observed in prayer, shaking the bundle of plants in six directions.”*

I don’t know about you, but I am pretty impressed that the TSA seems to be aware of the mishnah on today’s daf:

***And where in the recitation of Hallel would they shake the lulav? They would do so at the verse: “Thank the Lord, for He is good” (Psalms 118:1, 29) that appears at both the beginning and the end of the psalm, and at the verse: “Lord, please save us” (Psalms 118:25); this is the***

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<sup>10</sup> Myjewishlearning.com

*statement of Beit Hillel. And Beit Shammai say: They would wave the lulav even at the verse: “Lord, please grant us success” (Psalms 118:25).*

While the TSA is in the know about shaking the lulav, the Gemara is taken aback, opening its discussion of the mishnah by asking, in essence: “*Shake the lulav? Who said anything about shaking the lulav?*”

The Gemara’s question is a sharp one because the mishnah began to talk about *when* you shake the lulav before establishing *that* you shake the lulav. In fact, the verse from the Torah (Leviticus 23:41) from which the mitzvah of lulav is derived says you should “take” the lulav, but does not mention shaking at all: “*On the first day you shall take the product of hadar trees, branches of palm trees, boughs of leafy trees, and willows of the brook, and you shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days.*”

To answer its question, the Gemara cites a mishnah from Sukkah 29:

*Any lulav that has three handbreadths in length, sufficient to enable one to shake with it, is fit for use in fulfilling the mitzvah.*

The mishnah’s requirement that the lulav be at least three handbreadths is based upon the need for it to be of sufficient length for shaking. Although this is not a direct statement about the source for the practice of shaking the lulav, the Gemara suggests that this mishnah is the antecedent for the one on our page.

Now we know that we shake the lulav, and when during the Hallel service the shaking should be done, but why six directions? The TSA doesn't explain this practice, but the Talmud does.

One explanation suggests that the six directions symbolize that God is everywhere:

*Rabbi Yohanan said: One moves them to and fro to dedicate them to God, Master of the four directions (i.e. shakes east, south, west, north) and one raises and lowers them (i.e. shakes up and down) to God, Master of the heavens and earth.*

A second explanation suggests that shaking in six directions provides protection from harmful weather:

*In the West (i.e. the rabbis in the land of Israel) they taught it as follows. Rabbi Hama bar Ukva said that Rabbi Yosei, son of Rabbi Hanina, said: He moves them to and fro in order to request a halt to harmful winds, storms and tempests that come from all directions; he raises and lowers them in order to halt harmful dews and rains that come from above.*

The second explanation is especially fitting because Sukkot begins the winter rainy season in Israel — which is both essential, because of the water it provides, and potentially dangerous if storms are too violent and cause damage to buildings and crops.



Storms also have the ability to disrupt air travel. But neither the TSA nor the Talmud suggest that shaking your lulav can help ensure an on-time departure.

**Rabbi Johnny Solomon** writes:<sup>11</sup>

In the Mishna (Sukkah 3:9) towards the end of *our daf* (Sukkah 37b), we are informed of the different sections of Hallel when the lulav bundle is waved, and though Beit Shammai and Beit Hillel disagree on the matter, the Mishna concludes (and the custom is codified – see Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 651:8) that while the lulav is waved when we say אָנָּהּ ה' הוֹשִׁיעָא נָּא – ‘*Please, Hashem, save now*’, it is not waved when saying the parallel line of אָנָּהּ ה' הַצְלִיחָה נָּא – ‘*Please, Hashem, bring success now*’.

And why is this significant? Because, as Rav Yitzchak Hutner once explained (see Rabbi Paysach Krohn’s ‘Along the Maggid’s Journey’<sup>12</sup>), we can learn a profound lesson from here which can be applied to all forms of decision making.

A father and his teenage yeshiva student son once came to Rav Hutner to seek advice. In general, the boy liked his Yeshiva teacher and felt a warm camaraderie with his classmates. The father, however, felt that his son was not fulfilling his potential and was sure that he would do better in another yeshiva. Consequently, they decided to ask Rav Hutner what he thought they should do.

Having discussed some of the pertinent details and options with them both, Rav Hutner turned to the father and asked him, “*Is your son’s learning in jeopardy? Is the situation such that you feel you would be saving him by taking him out of the yeshiva? Or is it only that you just feel that he could have more success in another yeshiva?*”.

“*It’s the latter,*” replied the father, “*I’m believe he could accomplish more somewhere else.*”

Rabbi Hutner smiled and said, “*During Hallel on Sukkot, when we say אָנָּהּ ה' הוֹשִׁיעָא נָּא – ‘Please, Hashem, save now,’ we shake the Lulav and Etrog in all directions. But when we say אָנָּהּ ה' הַצְלִיחָה נָּא – ‘Please, Hashem, bring success now,’ we do not make any movement. For salvation, people do everything possible. But merely for more success, one should stay put.*”

Since reading this advice from Rav Hutner over twenty years ago, I’ve applied this insight on countless occasions, and whenever I’ve felt pulled in different directions, I’ve simply asked myself: “*Is this something that I need to be saved from? Or is it something that needs greater*

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<sup>11</sup> [www.rabbijohnsolomon.com](http://www.rabbijohnsolomon.com)

<sup>12</sup> Along the Maggid's Journey: A Collection of All New Inspirational Stories and Parables from Around the World

*success?*". If the former - I move away from the situation, and if the latter - I stay with it and work harder.

Especially as we reflect on life decisions and personal change this Ellul, it is important for us to consider whether there are things in our life from which we need salvation and therefore require from us that we move away from them, and which need greater success and require that we continue to focus on them for the sake of improving them.



**Rabbi Jay Kelman** writes:<sup>13</sup>

*"A child who knows how to shake [the lulav] is obligated to take the lulav"* (Sukkah 42a). As we noted in our first "daily daf" on masechet sukkah here, the mitzva of *chinuch*, training children in the proper observance of mitzvot only begins when the mitzva can be done completely. So while one fulfills the mitzva of lulav immediately upon picking it up (even if we don't shake it) we only begin training our children in the mitzva of lulav when they know how to properly shake it.

While it may seem simple enough when to shake the lulav it is a matter of Mishnaic debate[1]. *"And where is the lulav to be waved? At the beginning and at the conclusion of "hodu lashem ki tov", give thanks to G-d for He is good (Psalm 118), and at "anna Hashem hoshiah na" (ibid), please G-d, save us. These are the words of Beit Hillel. Beit Shammai says [it should] also [be waved] at "anna Hashem hatzliacha na, please G-d grant us success" (Sukkah 37b). The Mishna does not explain why we shake the lulav nor is any source given for this shaking - one that has no scriptural basis - at least regarding Sukkot.*

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<sup>13</sup> <https://torahinmotion.org/discussions-and-blogs/sukkah-38-shake-the-lulav>

"And the priest shall wave them with the bread of the first-fruits for a wave-offering before the Lord, with the two lambs; they shall be holy to the Lord for the priest" (Vayikra 23:20). The holiday of Shavuot marks the beginning of the wheat harvest and to celebrate, two loaves of bread, *shteï halechem*, were offered as *bikkurim lashem*[2], the first offerings to G-d. As the bringing of the *korban haomer*, celebrating the barley harvest on the second day of Pesach allowed one to eat from the "new" grain planted since last Pesach, the *shteï halechem* "bread of the first fruits" was the trigger to allow the new wheat to be used in the *korbanot mincha*, the flour offerings in the Temple.

These loaves of bread were to be waved together with the *kivsei atzeret*, the two lambs offered as a peace offering on Shavuot. The Gemara offers two very different reasons for the shaking of the bread and lambs on Shavuot - and the lulav on Sukkot. "Rav Yochanan explained, [One waves them] to and fro [in honour of] Him to Whom the four directions belong, and up and down [in acknowledgment of] Him to Whom are Heaven and Earth. In the west (Israel)[3] they taught us thus: Rav Hama the son of Ukba stated in the name of Rav Yossi son of Rav Hanina, He waves them to and fro in order to restrain harmful winds; up and down, in order to restrain harmful dews" (Sukkah 37b).

Do we shake the lulav out of joy acknowledging G-d's dominion in the world or out of fear beseeching G-d to save us from the vicissitudes of nature? It appears the answer is both. When we shake the lulav at *hodu lashem*, as we praise G-d, we rejoice that we may serve the Master of the universe. But when we shake the lulav at *anna hashem hoshina na* we beseech G-d to protect us amidst the dangerous world the surrounds us.

The shaking of the lulav is "*shaiarei hamitza*", the leftovers of the mitzva. "This teaches (lit. says) that even the dispensable parts of a commandment prevent calamities; for the waving is a dispensable part of the commandment, and yet it shuts out harmful winds and harmful dews" (Ibid 38a). It really is the little things that so often matter most.

[1] Later day commentaries debate the exact order of directions in which to shake the lulav and whether it is to actually be shaken or just moved back and forth in each direction.

[2] As we read last week (Vayikra 6:10) one was not allowed to bring a *korban mincha* containing chametz. We are slaves to G-d and can't relax and take our time in the service of G-d. The *shteï halechem* on Shavuot were an exception symbolizing that with the acceptance of the Torah on Shavuot our freedom was completed. The *kivsei atzeret* was the only *korban tzibbur*, communal offering that was a *korban shelamim*, thus the only public offering where the public can actually partake of the meat of the animal. This seems to reflect a similar idea and perhaps these lambs should be seen as a "*korban pesach*" for the community serving as another link between these two holidays.

[3] Rav Yochanan was also in the west, the leading Sage in the land of Israel. "In the west they taught" is likely a popular teaching said by many.

## Why Do We Shake the Lulav?

*Why do we shake the lulav in different directions? What is the significance of it?*<sup>14</sup>

We shake the four species in six directions altogether – the four directions, up and down. The most common custom is to first wave towards the east, then to continue with the directions in a clockwise manner, then to wave upwards and then downwards. An alternate custom, based on the Kabbalistic teachings of Arizal, is south, north, east, up, down, west. This is the practice of many Hassidic and Sephardic Jews. In general, these six directions represent all of physical space.

*Our Daf* (Sukkah 37b) gives two reasons why we wave the four species in these directions: to praise the God of the heavens and the entire earth (its four directions), and as a prayer that God withhold "bad winds" (from the four directions) and "bad dew" (from above to below). Meaning, we ask that the natural forces of the world function in harmony with man rather than destructively. Since Sukkot falls at the start of the rainy season (in Israel), the four species are brought as a way of entreating God that the winter be wet and bountiful. The shaking of them – asking for beneficial winds and dew, adds further to this prayer.

It's interesting to note that the only other instance in which there is a mitzvah to wave is while holding parts of the Temple sacrifices, and the Talmud gives the identical reasons for those wavings as well. We thus find a fascinating correlation between the sacrifices and the Four Species. Perhaps the notion is as follows.

Very often, Temple offerings serve the purpose of harmonizing the spiritual realm with the physical. They enable God's beneficence to flow unobstructed from the upper spheres to the lower. On Sukkot as well, we take the Four Species to supplicate God for rain – that God's goodness descend from the Heavens to grant us physical blessings as well. Thus, both mitzvot include a special mitzvah of waving them. We recognize that the same God of the Heavens is the God of the earth and all reality. This enables Him to shower the physical world with the blessings of the spiritual.

## The Importance of Shaking the Lulav During Hallel

**Mordechai Safrai**<sup>15</sup> writes:<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> <https://www.aish.com/atr/Why-Do-We-Shake-the-Lulav.html>

<sup>15</sup> Based on a shiur by Harav Aharon Lichtenstein

<sup>16</sup> <https://etzion.org.il/en/holidays/sukkot/importance-shaking-lulav-during-hallel>



The standard procedure on Sukkot is to recite the blessing over the lulav and etrog, shake it ("na'anuim"), and then say Hallel with a minyan, shaking the lulav while saying, "Hodu LaShem ki tov" and "Ana HaShem hoshia na." In a situation where not everyone has a lulav and etrog, it is not always possible to both say Hallel with a minyan and shake the lulav during Hallel at the appropriate points. What does one do in such a situation? In other words, what is to be preferred if one is confronted by two options:

1. saying Hallel with a minyan but without the four species in hand;
2. or saying Hallel privately with the four species?

## **THE ISSUES**

The answer demands dealing with three central questions:

- A. What is the status of shaking the lulav in general, and specifically during Hallel?
- B. What is the halakhic advantage of saying Hallel with a minyan?
- C. When there is a conflict between these two halakhot, shaking the lulav and saying Hallel with a minyan, which of them is preferable?

## **SHAKING THE LULAV**

Two general approaches to shaking the lulav present themselves:

1. Shaking the lulav is a custom instituted by the Sages, not an essential part of the mitzva of lulav. The Ba'al Ha-ittur compares shaking the lulav to searching for chametz, which is not an essential part of the mitzva - the mitzva is DESTROYING the chametz.

2. Shaking the lulav is part of the mitzva of taking the lulav. Whether it is an additional level of the mitzva or an essential element of the definition of the mitzva, a complete "netilat lulav" (taking the lulav) can only be achieved through both taking and shaking.

The mishna in Sukka (42a) says that a child who knows how to shake the lulav is obligated in the mitzva. In that context, the gemara (ibid.) compares the age when children begin shaking the lulav with the age when they begin wearing tzitzit. The age given for wearing tzitzit seems to be when the child is capable of performing the the act of the mitzva, i.e. wearing the tzitzit. We can therefore infer from the mishna's formulation ("a child who knows how to shake the lulav is obligated in lulav") that shaking the lulav is of the essence of the mitzva.

Is this true on a biblical level, or is this the rabbinic definition of the mitzva?

The mishna (Sukka 29b) says that only a lulav that has three handbreadths (tefachim) to shake is kosher. The gemara explains that the mishna means that besides three handbreadths, a kosher lulav must include an extra tefach for shaking. This clearly implies that shaking the lulav is an essential aspect of the mitzva; the dimensions for fulfilling the mitzva of lulav are determined based on the ability to shake it properly. This would seem to imply that shaking the lulav is part of the biblical definition of the mitzva, for all dimensions of mitzvot (shiurim) are of biblical status.

On the other hand, it is possible that the mitzva of ACTUALLY shaking the lulav is itself rabbinic, and on a biblical level all that is required is the lulav be long enough to shake. The dimensions of the lulav, though biblical, only demand the ABILITY to shake. This is the Ba'al Ha-ittur's approach; and we do not find any rishon who disputes it.

The gemara (Pesachim 7b) says that a person fulfills the mitzva of the four species merely through lifting them. A number of Rishonim ask: how we are able to make the blessing over the lulav after lifting it; are we not supposed to perform mitzvot only AFTER saying the blessing?

Tosafot answer that since after the blessing we are still INVOLVED in the mitzva through shaking the lulav during Hallel, our blessing is considered to be "before the performance of the mitzva." It is not clear what Tosafot believe: Do they see the shaking of the lulav as an essential part of the mitzva - and therefore we consider the blessing as having preceded the mitzva? Or do they understand the rule requiring blessings to precede mitzvot very loosely - even though the mitzva itself has already been fulfilled through lifting, the blessing is considered properly done as long as something related to the mitzva is still to come?

Tosafot in Sukka (39a) reject this answer because, according to them, shaking the lulav is only "makhshirei mitzva" (usually translated as preparations for the mitzva; here, probably non-essential elements of the mitzva). It is unclear from their statement whether they see shaking the lulav as merely a non-essential part of the mitzva or as a totally independent custom that therefore does not affect fulfillment of the mitzva of lulav itself. The expression "makhshirei mitzva" implies that shaking is an ancillary element. The gemara uses a similar expression with regards to pulling the lulav off the tree - unquestionably an ancillary element of the mitzva. [It is possible that the

text of the Tosafot should read "mi-shiarei ha-mitzva," of the remnants of the mitzva - an expression that appears in other Rishonim - and not "makhshirei ha-mitzva."]

The Ba'al Ha-Maor refers to shaking the lulav as "shiarei mitzva." The gemara (Menachot 93b) implies that "shiarei mitzva" is still considered part of the mitzva. For example, "semikha" (laying on of hands) on a sacrifice is "shiarei mitzva." A sacrifice offered without performing "semikha" atones, but not ideally (the gemara's expression is "kipeir ve-lo kipeir", it atones and does not atone). Rabbeinu Tam (Sefer Ha-yashar, #406) also calls shaking the lulav "shiarei mitzva" and quotes an opinion that one does not fulfill the mitzva without shaking. According to Rabbeinu Tam, though, "shiarei mitzva" here is identical to that referred to in [Zevachim 52a](#) - remnants of a sacrifice's blood; the dispute about whether they are essential to the sacrifice or not also applies to lulav. In any case, whether or not shaking is ESSENTIAL, Rabbeinu Tam considers it part of the mitzva, and therefore prefers solving the problem (like we do today) by holding the etrog upside down until saying the blessing.

## **SHAKING THE LULAV DURING HALLEL**

Even if we assume, as emerges from most of the sources, that shaking the lulav is essential to the mitzva, it does not necessarily follow that shaking the lulav during Hallel is essential to the mitzva.

The gemara in Berakhot (30a) indicates that shaking the lulav during Hallel is not essential. It says that if one rises early for a journey, "they should give him a lulav and he should shake it." In context, it is pretty clear that he does not say Hallel. The Meiri in Sukka indeed sees the shaking at the time of the blessing as the essential one and shaking during Hallel as only an addition which enriches the joy of Sukkot.



The Ba'al Ha-Ittur, on the other hand, understands that the basic rule of shaking the lulav entails shaking during Hallel. It is only in extreme situations, like the gemara's case of one who must rise early to travel, that one can fulfill the mitzva by shaking independently of Hallel.

This raises a crucial theoretical question - is shaking the lulav during Hallel one of the reof

### **HALLEL or part of the mitzva of taking the LULAV?**

The same question arises in conjunction with Tosafot's explanation of why the lulav is shaken during Hallel - based on the verse, "Then all of the trees of the forest will sing out." Does the mitzva of lulav - "the trees of the forest" - require that they sing out; or when we sing out during Hallel, must we also involve the trees of the forest?

The Meiri is a bit clearer but still leaves room for doubt. He says that shaking the lulav is meant to arouse joy. He seems to mean the joy of Hallel, but it is possible that the mitzva of lulav, about which the Torah says, "You should rejoice before God," requires joy.

The Rambam sees shaking as part of the mitzva of taking the lulav. In his presentation the mitzva of lulav, he writes how and where to shake it.

### **HALLEL WITH A MINYAN**

The second aspect of our question involves determining the status of saying Hallel with a minyan.

There are two possible understandings of how Hallel is enhanced when said with a minyan:

1. Even though the mitzva of Hallel is identical whether fulfilled in private or with a minyan, there is always more "kevod Shamayim," honor of God, when mitzvot are done with a larger group. This is based on the verse, "In a multitude of people, the king is honored." This applies to all mitzvot, not just Hallel. By reciting Hallel with a minyan we accomplish an extra, independent halakhic and religious goal.

2. The mitzva of Hallel is essentially different when it is performed with a minyan.

The mishna in Erkin mentions a list of days when "the individual finishes (i.e. recites a complete) Hallel." This seems to leave room for reciting Hallel privately. However, the Sefer Ha-manhig quotes the Behag as saying that the meaning of "individual" here is not a private individual, but rather a minority of the Jewish people, in contrast to "rabbim," the majority of the Jewish people. According to the Behag's opinion, an individual cannot say Hallel alone.

Even though the Behag's opinion is a lone voice and not accepted as authoritative halakha, there is still evidence that Hallel said in public is essentially different than in private. From a number of talmudic passages, and from the Rambam's Mishneh Torah (Hilkhos Chanuka 3:12-13), it seems that the proper way to say Hallel is the way it was done during the Exodus from Egypt - one person leads and the rest of the group answers after him. This is only possible with a group. These sources imply that without this, Hallel is somehow deficient.

## **HALLEL WITH A MINYAN OR WITH A LULAV?**

We now have the resources to deal with our original question, whether it is preferable to say Hallel with a minyan or to say Hallel with a lulav, when it is not possible to accomplish both. Answering

the question must take into account the different approaches we presented regarding the status of shaking the lulav and regarding saying Hallel with a minyan.

If shaking the lulav is not an essential part of the mitzva, it can be done independently of Hallel - and it is obvious that saying Hallel with a minyan is preferable to saying it with a lulav. Likewise, if the reason for saying Hallel with a minyan is only to enhance the mitzva by doing it as a group and shaking the lulav is essential to the mitzva - one should obviously prefer saying Hallel with a lulav over saying it with a minyan.

Our situation is more complicated, though, because the sources seem to indicate that shaking the lulav is essential to the mitzva and Hallel is essentially different when said with a minyan. If so, how do we decide when confronted with a situation where both of them cannot be fulfilled?

Understanding the nature of the conflict depends on how we understand the importance of shaking the lulav during Hallel. If, as the Meiri seems to say, shaking the lulav is one of the laws of Hallel - then we are confronted with a conflict between two different rules of Hallel, which will be difficult to decide. What will make the best Hallel, one said with a minyan or with the shaking of the lulav?

On the other hand, if shaking the lulav is part of the mitzva of lulav, as the Rambam says, then the conflict is between two different mitzvot, lulav and Hallel, and we have guidelines how to deal with such conflicts.

When there are conflicts between different mitzvot, two principles come into play:

1. that which is more constant and frequent ("tadir") takes precedence;
2. that which has more holiness ("mekudash") takes precedence.

The mitzva of Hallel is certainly more frequent than lulav, but the mishnayot in Zevachim on the subject of precedence rule that frequency is only preferred when the two mitzvot in conflict are of equal importance.

On the first day, the mitzva of lulav is clearly to be favored, because lulav is of biblical force on the first day of the holiday (everywhere, not just in the Temple). Hallel is a rabbinic mitzva (according to the Rambam; the Behag disagrees). Even on the rest of the days of the holiday, lulav might still be on a higher level than Hallel because lulav has basis in a biblical mitzva. [We would have to assume that Rabban Yochanan ben Zakai's decree to take the lulav all seven days of the holiday even outside the Temple is an expansion of the biblical mitzva - either the Temple mitzva or the first day's mitzva - and not a purely rabbinic law to remember the destruction of the Temple.]

Based on a cold analysis, most approaches would prefer shaking the lulav during Hallel over saying Hallel with a minyan. However, it is emotionally difficult to leave the congregation for the public recitation of the Hallel. There is also not an open and shut case in favor of lulav. Therefore, it is highly recommended that everyone acquire their own four species to be able to shake the lulav during Hallel and not to enter the conflict at all.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Translated and Adapted by Rav Eliezer Kwass



Another way to solve the problem is for two people to swiftly pass the lulav from one to the other so both can shake during the congregation's Hallel.<sup>18</sup>

## **Sukkos: Two Types of Divine Providence**

**Rav Yakov Haber** writes:<sup>19</sup>

*"In order that all your generations should know that I caused the Children of Israel to dwell in booths when I took them out of Egypt" (Emor 23:43).*

In a well-known debate (*Sukka* 11b) R' Eliezer maintains that the booths refer to the Clouds of Glory. R' Akiva holds that they were actual huts set up at the various stops on the way to *Eretz Yisrael*. Surprisingly, *Tur* follows the position of R' Eliezer even though the *halacha* normally follows R' Akiva over R' Eliezer. *Aruch LaNeir* notes that in several places in the *Midrashei Halacha* the positions are presented switched where R' Akiva maintains that we commemorate the Clouds of Glory and R' Eliezer holds that we recall the actual booths. The *Tur*, then, does follow the accepted position of R' Akiva. Perhaps we can propose another approach based on other sources related to the celebration of *Sukkos*.

The *lulav* is waved not only at the time of the *b'racha* but also during the *Hallel*. All agree that it is waved not only during the recital of "*hodu LaShem ki tov*" but also at "*ana Hashem*" (*Sukka* 37b). *Beis Shammai* maintain that we wave at *ana Hashem hatzlicha na*. *Beis Hillel* hold that we only wave at *ana Hashem hoshi'a na*. The *halacha* follows this latter view. What is the root of their debate?

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<sup>18</sup> This is a summary of a shiur given on Shabbat Parashat Nitzavim-Vayelekh 5750; it has not been reviewed by Harav Lichtenstein.

<sup>19</sup> [https://www.torahweb.org/torah/2015/moadim/rhab\\_sukkos.html](https://www.torahweb.org/torah/2015/moadim/rhab_sukkos.html)

The two aforementioned verses beginning with "ana" both plead with Hashem for help but in two different ways. "Ana Hashem hoshi'a na" asks for a "y'shua", a salvation. This word is used when G-d saves in a situation where those He is saving are not actively participating in their salvation. A classic example is the splitting of the sea. Moshe tells B'nei Yisrael, "**Hisyatz'vu ur'u es y'shuas Hashem - stand and observe the salvation of Hashem**" (B'Shalach14:13). You are not able to save yourselves at all; G-d will miraculously do so[2]. If someone, *chas v'shalom*, is terminally ill and the doctors have given up hope of medical intervention, the family will oftentimes say, "He needs a *yeshua*", i.e. only Hashem can save him now; human beings cannot do anything.

"Ana Hashem hatzlacha na" requests "hatzlacha", success. Asking for success addresses a situation where the one praying is acting to bring about the result in a natural way, but, realizing that no human effort can succeed without Divine assistance, he prays for it. A classic example of this is Shlomo HaMelech's declaration "**Im Hashem lo yivneh bayis, shav am'lu bonav bo - If G-d does not build a house, its builders have toiled in vain**" (Tehillim 127:1). The builders are engaging in acts of building. Hashem created a natural order in which gathering building blocks and adhesives leads to the rising of an edifice. But, Shlomo teaches us, that this too needs the Divine blessing of "**hatzlacha**". When a person is about to take a test or engage in a new business we bless him: "have *hatzlacha*", not "have a *yeshua*" (unless he hasn't studied or has no business *kup!*)

These two ideas represent two different forms of Divine providence. Throughout our lives we actively engage in beneficial physical activities, such as producing food, construction, pursuit of a livelihood, or seeking a spouse. We also pursue spiritual activities such as praying, studying Torah, performing *mitzvos*, and engaging in *chessed*. Judaism teaches us generally to be active and not just passively await Divine salvation[3].

*Sifrei* (Re'eh 123:18) on the promised blessing of "**[Hashem] will bless you in all of your handiwork**" comments, "*I would think one should be idle (and G-d will supernaturally bless you), therefore the verse states 'in all of your handiwork'*". But we recognize that we always still need Divine blessing, otherwise, no activity can succeed. Therefore, we pray for "*hatzlacha*".

But there is another form of Divine providence - "*yeshua*". At times, we have no choice but to rely on miracles[4]. Oftentimes there are situations where no human intervention or activity can, by natural means, bring about the desired salvation. At these times, knowing that nothing is impossible for G-d we plead, "*Hoshi'a na!*"

It would appear that the debate between *Beis Shammai* and *Beis Hillel* revolves around the focus of the *Sukkos* holiday. Many have noted that the main theme of *Sukkos* is celebrating and inculcating into our religious mindset the concept of Divine providence and protection. (See *Chag HaSukkot: The Festival of Divine Providence*.) Divine providence expresses itself in two ways: within the natural order and transcending it. Most of the time, G-d operates in a hidden way seamlessly maneuvering within His natural system to bring about His desired result. Whether a person finds his or her spouse, gets the healing (s)he needs, connects with

the right employer or the right Yeshiva, he is experiencing the first, "natural" type of providence.

But sometimes Hashem intervenes in a way that defies the normal rules. Sometimes there are unexplainable medical miracles or unexpected and ultimately not understandable military victories. These belong to the second category of Divine providence. Which type of Divine providence is recalled, commemorated, and incorporated into our service of G-d? *Beis* Shammai, by focusing on *hatzlacha*, seem to view the first type as the primary one commemorated, perhaps since this is more common and hence more relevant. *Beis* Hillel seem to hold that the second, the supernatural, unexplainable, *yeshua* type of providence is being recalled and re-enacted. On a simple plain, this is because the miracles of the Exodus and subsequent stay in the desert were supernatural and hence this aspect should be highlighted. Below we will propose a different explanation of *Beis* Hillel's view.

Upon reflection, we can perhaps suggest that this debate is rooted in different approaches that the progenitors of these two great *yeshivos* followed. The Talmud (*Beitza* 16a) teaches us that Shammai would "live Shabbos" all week. Every time he found a choice delicacy he would put it away for Shabbos. If he found an even better one, he would consume the first and put away the second. This way, Shabbos was always on his mind, in fulfillment of the simple meaning of "*Zachor es yom haShabbos l'kad'sho*". But Hillel is described as, "*midda acheres hay'sa bo* - he had a different characteristic". He followed the thrust of the verse "*Baruch Hashem yom, yom* - praise Hashem every day for its blessings". Therefore, he would immediately partake of whatever came his way, trusting that the One who provided it for him that day would provide an even nicer item for Shabbos.

The Gemara then records that their respective schools taught in accordance with their *Rosh HaYeshiva*. What is the root of this debate? The *poskim* rule in this debate in accordance with Shammai[5] and explain that this is not a classic debate which would apply to all people. As the Talmud states concerning Hillel, "*midda acheres hay'sa bo*". Everyone in their life blends together the two *middos* of *hishtad'lus*, physical effort at achieving a goal, with *bitachon*, trust in G-d recognizing that ultimately all efforts are futile without Divine blessing. For Shammai, since he prepared for other aspects of his life as well, he had to do so for Shabbos. To rely solely on Hashem to provide for Shabbos would be a slight to *kavod* Shabbos by not actively preparing for it.

Hillel apparently operated with less effort and more reliance on Providence in his other efforts as well and therefore, consistent with this attitude, was able to rely totally on Hashem to provide for Shabbos as well.[6] In essence, then, Shammai puts more emphasis on human *hishtad'lus* creating the "utensil" for the Divine blessing to occur. Put differently, he trusted that Hashem would cause him to be "*matzliach*" - give success to his endeavors. Hillel put his trust in G-d that he would somehow bring about what he needed without any effort on his behalf, i.e. that He would send a "*yeshua*". It seems apparent that Shammai had greatly developed his *midda* of *bitachon* as well, but his *bitachon* expressed itself in the *hatzlacha* rather than the *yeshua* model. Their conduct the whole year then is consistent with their view concerning where the *lulav* is waved in the *Hallel*.

Based on the above, perhaps we can answer why the Tur followed R' Eliezer's view. Since the *halacha* follows *Beis Hillel* that we wave the *lulav* at "*hoshi'a na*" this indicates that the main emphasis of *Sukkos* is the second type of *hashgacha p'ratis*, the *yeshua* model, even if year-round we generally follow the *hatzlacha* model. To create a consistency between the theme of *lulav* and *sukka*, the Tur ruled that the *Sukkas* commemorate the *ananei hakavod*, clearly an open miracle, a *yeshua*[7].

At first glance, the view of Hillel and his *yeshiva* is only relevant to the supernatural, historical event of the *midbar* experience or the select few who are granted that level of Divine providence. But perhaps the message of the emphasis on *yeshua* on *Sukkos* is that even *hatzlacha* assumes *yeshua* as well. Every human endeavor, thought, or action is itself based on a reoccurring Divine will. It is only G-d that creates and recreates "nature" constantly allowing it to function. Ideas themselves often are implanted within our minds by G-d without our even knowing it (see *Targum Onkelos* to *Eikev* 8:18). Hence, according to *Beis Hillel*, the holiday celebrating Divine providence highlights that ultimately everything in the world comes from Divine salvation.

May our fulfillment of the *mitzvos* of *sukka* and *lulav* help us live our lives fully cognizant of, and in a manner consistent with, our realization of the pervasive role of Hashem's guidance in our individual and communal lives.

## Notes

[1] The core of the ideas outlined here concerning the debate between R' Eliezer and R' Akiva is based on concepts delivered by my esteemed father-in-law, Rabbi Yitzchak Handel *shlita* at the *bris* of his first child, now my brother-in-law. Here the ideas are presented with expansions.

[2] True, the Jews were commanded to enter the Sea, but this was a demonstration of faith in G-d that he would save them, the merit of which caused the salvation. It was clearly not an act that would naturally cause the Sea to split.

[3] Much has been written and said on the appropriate blend of *histadlus* and *bitachon* and how active one should be in pursuing *parnassa*, especially for those engaged in full-time Torah study. See the debate in *B'rachos* (35b) between R' Shimon bar Yochai and R' Yishmael and the insightful series on [yutorah.org](http://yutorah.org) by Rabbi Daniel Stein on *Emunah* and *Bitachon*. Here, we are discussing regular situations.

[4] Even Ben Gurion, the former Prime Minister of Israel, not coming from a Torah-observant perspective of belief, famously stated concerning events revolving around the State of Israel, "In Israel, in order to be a realist you must believe in miracles."

[5] See Mishnah Berurah to 250:2 and SS"K 42:4.

[6] In the language of Rav Soloveitchik zt"l (as heard from *Mori v'Rabi* Rav Schachter *shlita*) "We are all 'Shammai-niks'. We all buy insurance!" Also see Mishnah Berurah referenced in previous footnote who has a somewhat different formulation.

[7] It would be anomalous though that R' Eliezer who was a member of *Beis Shammai* would break this pattern. Perhaps this is a further proof to the version of the *Midrashei Halacha* quoted above which switches the positions.

## Na'anuim (Shaking of the Lulav)<sup>20</sup>

1. Sephardim shake the lulav before hallel when they first say the beracha and take the arba minim, then in hallel at the first hodu once, at anna hashem twice, and the second hodu once. <sup>[54]</sup>
2. In addition to the times that Sephardim shake, Ashkenazim have the custom that the chazzan shakes in yomru na also, and the congregation shake for all four hodu's that they say after the chazzan says his part. Some Ashkenazim also shake at both of the final two hodus at the end of hallel <sup>[55]</sup> (typical of Nusach Ashkenaz, while Nusach Sfarid typically did not shake at the first of those two).
3. Sephardim and Chasidim shake towards the south, north, east, up, down, west. (If the shul faces east then to your right, left, forward, up, down, backward.) <sup>[56]</sup> One should turn his body and face the direction to which he is shaking. <sup>[57]</sup>
4. Ashkenazim shake east, south, west, north, up, down. Face forward and shake clockwise <sup>[58]</sup> You don't have to turn your body to face that direction, you can just shake the lulav towards that direction while facing forward. <sup>[59]</sup>
5. If someone is in a shul that has a minhag to shake in a certain direction he should follow their practice. <sup>[60]</sup> Some are lenient and don't consider it Lo Titgodedu. <sup>[61]</sup>
6. One should refrain from shaking while mentioning the name of Hashem lest he become distracted while saying His name. <sup>[62]</sup>

1. 54 Even though the mishnah in sukka 37b doesn't mention any before hallel, Tosefot there "bihodu" adds that we should shake before also. Shulchan Aruch 651:8 and Chazon Ovadia sukkot 356 both agree to this.
2. 55 Rama 651:8 and Mishna Brurah 41.
3. 56 Chazon Ovadia 352-353 rules like the Arizal against Shulchan Aruch O.C. 651:10 who says to start at east and turn clockwise.
4. 57 Bikkurei Yaakov 651:36 quoting the Ari as well as the Kaf Hachayim 651:96
5. 58 Mishna Brurah 651:47
6. 59 Mishna Brurah 651:37 quoting the Magen Avraham and the Maamar Mordechai.
7. 60 Orchot Rabbenu v. 3 p. 91, Chazon Ovadia Sukkah p. 355. Chazon Ovadia quotes all the reasons that it isn't necessary to have one practice in this case but concludes that it is proper to establish one practice for each community.
8. 61 Piskei Teshuvot 651:13 based on Aruch Hashulchan 651:22
9. 62 Mishna Brurah 651:37, Kaf Hachayim 651:84, Chazon Ovadia 655

Qitzur Shulhhan 'Arukh, Yalqut Yosef (Orah Hayim 651:45) states:<sup>21</sup>

אחר שבירך, ינענע הלולב ומיניו שלש פעמים לכל צד. ואף על פי שהוא עתיד לנענע בשעת ההלל, יעשה הנענועים גם עתה אחר הברכה, ללא אומר ודברים. ודעת מרן שבנענוע צריך להקיף דרך ימין, שהוא לצד מזרח דרום מערב צפון. אבל המנהג פיעה"ק ירושלים ת"ו כמו שכתב רבינו האר"י, להקיף דרום צפון מזרח מעלה מטה ומערב. ואין לשנות. וכל עדה תחזיק במנהגה, אבל על כולם לעשות סדר הנענועים כסברא אחת, או כסברת מרן השלחן ערוך, או כפי מנהגינו כדעת האר"י ז"ל, [...]. ולא יהיו חלוקים במנהגם

*After one recites the blessing, one should wave the Lulav and its species three times in each direction. And even though one will perform the wavings during Hallel, one should perform the*

<sup>20</sup> [https://halachipedia.com/index.php?title=Order\\_of\\_Taking\\_the\\_Four\\_Minim#Naanuim\\_28Shaking\\_of\\_the\\_Lulav.29](https://halachipedia.com/index.php?title=Order_of_Taking_the_Four_Minim#Naanuim_28Shaking_of_the_Lulav.29)

<sup>21</sup> <https://judaism.stackexchange.com/questions/31206/what-is-the-correct-order-of-directions-for-shaking-the-lulav>



wavings now after reciting the blessing. And, according to Maran (i.e., Shulhhan 'Arukh), one should encircle oneself while performing the wavings by turning to one's right (i.e., by waving Eastward, Southward, Westward and finally Northward).

Nevertheless, the minhag in the Holy City of Jerusalem (she should be and stay built) follows the writings of Rabbeinu Ha'AR"l, which is to encircle oneself by waving Southward, Northward, Eastward, Upward, Downward and finally Westward. And this custom should not be altered.

And each community should hold by its own custom; but should ensure that all perform the wavings according to the community's custom, or according to the custom of Maran HaShulchan Arukh, or according to our custom which adheres to the opinion of Ha'AR"l I Z"L. And they should ensure not to be divided in their customs.



### **Six Differences Between Sephardic and Ashkenazic Jews Regarding the Na'anu'im**

**Rabbi Haim Jachter** writes:<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> <https://jewishlink.news/features/33819-six-differences-between-sephardic-and-ashkenazic-jews-regarding-the-na-anu-im>

Are there situations when Ashkenazic Jews follow the ruling of Rav Yosef Karo as recorded in the Shulchan Aruch and Sephardic Jews do not? The answer is yes, in a few instances, na'anu'im being one of them. The Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 651:9) rules that the na'anu'im begin in front and then wind around the right and conclude with up and down motions. Sephardim (and chasidim), though, follow the Arizal's practice of shaking to the south, then north, east, east in the upward direction, east in a downward motion and finally to the west (Kaf HaChaim Orach Chaim 651:49).

Maran Rav Karo writes that one performs the na'anu'im simply by moving one's hands. While Ashkenazi Jews follow this practice, Sephardic Jews fully extend their arms holding the four minim in a full motion back and forth, once again following the approach of the Arizal (Kaf HaChaim Orach Chaim 651:48 and 93).

The Kaf HaChaim (651:96) notes that it appears from the Shulchan Aruch (op. cit.) that one moves his hands and not his body when performing the na'anu'im. However, he notes that the prevalent Sephardic practice in his area is to move one's entire body in the direction to which he is waving. This appears to be the widespread practice among Sephardic Jews today.

Two other differences between Ashkenazic practice and Sephardic practice reflect differences between Maran Rav Yosef Karo and the Rama. The Rama (Orach Chaim 651:8) records the Ashkenazic practice to shake not only for Hodu LaHashem Ki Tov Ki L'Olam Chasdo, but also when responding Hodu LaHashem Ki Tov to the shaliach tzibbur reciting Yomar Na Yisrael etc. Maran Rav Karo does not record such a practice since Sephardic Jews do not respond Hodu LaHashem Ki Tov to Yomar Na Yisrael etc.

This difference of opinion between Rav Karo and the Rama stems, as it often does, from a dispute between Tosafot and the Rambam. Tosafot (Sukkah 37b s.v. B'Hodu) mentions waving while responding Hodu LaHashem Ki Tov to the shaliach tzibbur reciting Yomar Na Yisrael, etc., while the Rambam (Hilchot Lulav 7:10) makes no mention of this. This is because Sephardic Jews do not respond Hodu LaHashem Ki Tov to the shaliach tzibbur reciting Yomar Na Yisrael, etc.

In addition, while the Rama (Orach Chaim 651:9) defines na'anu'im as shaking the lulav, Maran Rav Karo defines it simply as waving. This difference of opinion between Rav Karo and the Rama once again stems from a dispute between Tosafot and the Rambam. Tosafot (Sukkah 37b s.v. Kde) mentions shaking in addition to the Gemara's mention of waving, while the Rambam (Hilchot Lulav 7:10) makes mention only of waving but not of shaking.

There is an important ramification of this difference. While some Ashkenazic poskim express reservations about using a lulav whose tip is closed by brown bark (sometimes referred to as "kora") since one is unable to shake such a lulav, for Sephardim this is not a concern. In fact, it is preferable for a Sephardic Jew to purchase such a lulav since the sealing of the tip in this manner allows for the purchaser to assume that the tip of the lulav is intact (see Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 645:3).

Finally, one more difference is that Yalkut Yosef (OC 651:50) records the practice to wave the lulav only once when reciting the last Hodu of Hallel. Ashkenazic Jews wave both times the last set of Hodu is recited.

## Four Kinds, Six Directions: Meditation in Movement

[https://www.chabad.org/multimedia/media\\_cdo/aid/996563/jewish/Four-Kinds-Six-Directions.htm](https://www.chabad.org/multimedia/media_cdo/aid/996563/jewish/Four-Kinds-Six-Directions.htm)

In *Yesod V'Shoresh HaAvoda*, by R. Alexander Ziskind, we read, "If one examines the writings of the Arizal, and notes some of the awesome and wondrous rectifications that the mitzvah of נענועים accomplishes in the higher worlds, one appreciates how very important this *avoda* is to us – the Holy Nation. Thereafter, one has to feel limitless joy when he performs this mitzvah, for he knows that his actions are causing monumental repairs in the higher and holier realms, which greatly pleases the Creator. By performing this mitzvah, one eternally etches his name in Heaven.

"The great aspects of this mitzvah are mentioned several times in the Zohar, but not every person can understand those words. People like myself should have in mind a simple meaning for the mitzvah, and not sway from it. Each time we thrust the lulav forward and then bring it back to us, in all the directions that we wave it, we should think to ourselves, ' לשם יחוד קודשא בריך הוא ושכינתיה לעשות נחת רוח ליוצרי – In the Name of the Oneness of the Blessed and Holy One and His *Shechina*, I am doing this to please my Maker.'"



## In Praise of Make-Believe

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**Michael Haruni** writes:<sup>23</sup>

[1]

Who am I, this worshipper? A person with, I'd like to suppose, a certain integrated unity. I have some understanding of the world, and I have certain desires, both for long-term goals and short-term pleasures, some purely selfish and some other-directed (concern for family, community, nation, humanity), some conscious, some less so. My unity consists of the fact that my actions are reasoned—that I can believe each action is instrumental to some goal in an integrated hierarchy of purposes, and according to some integrated understanding of the world. These purposes and this understanding are jointly at the core of my personal identity. But then what happens when, resolutely committed as I am to mitzvot, I thrice daily recite a petition to God to reinstate the Davidic dynasty in Jerusalem (in the fourteenth blessing of *Shemoneh Esreh*)? This simply does not square with my real, reasoned, day-to-day understanding of what the world is like and what it should be like, the understanding that defines who I am. For all its wretched faults, I'm still in favor of sticking to Israeli electoral democracy; in any case, how would David's offspring be identifiable as such; and does anyone imagine David's leadership qualities transmit this far down through the DNA? Or when, on *Sukkot*, I wave a *lulav* and *etrog* in all directions, supposedly to signal my recognition of God's control of the universe and to petition God to curb pernicious storms,[1] do I *really* believe this action could persuade God of my recognition and to tamper with the rain cycle—that because of their symbolic meaning, my flapping them somehow impresses God more persuasively than if I just verbalized my statement? Honestly, I don't. Or when we cover the *challot* at the Shabbat table, putatively so that they won't be embarrassed or envious when we first make *Kiddush* over wine,[2] although I frankly have trouble believing *challot* have emotions? Performing these actions, deeply unconvinced by these putative reasons, yet in some way entertaining the notion that they soundly explain what I'm doing—is this really me, the person identified with this everyday hierarchy of beliefs and purposes? Or do I, when I worship God, just enter some make-believe consciousness, momentarily imagine the *challot* are covered to save them from embarrassment, and for that moment pretend to be a person who believes it? If so, then it's not me worshipping but the make-believe; I'd be presenting to God a fake self.

[2]

It might be said that my difficulty here is really a non-issue, as it's founded on the specific and disputable view, associated with Maimonides, that each mitzvah serves a purpose. We might assume instead, with Leibowitz (supposedly the polar opposite), that the sole reason for fulfilling

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<sup>23</sup> <https://www.jewishideas.org/article/praise-make-believe>. Haruni created and translated the full Hebrew-English Orthodox siddur *Nehalel*, in which photographs juxtaposed with the text depict the prayers' meanings. He has also written stage plays (*The Stonemason*, Finborough Theatre, London; *Sta'm*, Beit Lessin, Tel Aviv), which have explored the relation between faith and identity, as well as a doctoral dissertation in Philosophy analyzing the experience of pain. This article appears in issue 35 of *Conversations*, the journal of the Institute for Jewish Ideas and Ideals.

any given mitzvah is to worship God, by unquestioningly doing as God has commanded us. If this is correct, and if my putative reason for (e.g.) waving my *lulav* and *etrog* is to petition God for a clement winter, then this is inessential to the real purpose; so that there's no problem if the putative reason is not at one with my real understanding of reality. I'll still be acting rationally by fulfilling the mitzvah just out of my wish to worship God.

But this by no means resolves the difficulty. It may well be true that what really makes us wave a *lulav* and *etrog*—the desire that actually, psychologically motivates us—is simply the fact that this is halakha. We typically first find out what halakha requires of us and do it, and only afterwards learn it's for this or that reason; hence this supposed reason could not really be our motivating reason. By deed, we're Leibowitzians. At the same time, however, upon learning that the reason for waving the *lulav* and *etrog* is to petition God to curb the storms (or, with some accounts, to petition for human fertility), we tell ourselves that this is our reason for doing so, and present ourselves to God as if this is why we're performing this action, though we may have no belief whatever that God is persuaded by our gesturing with these symbols.

I must note also that, contrary to what's often assumed, the Leibowitzian and Maimonidean understandings of mitzvot are perfectly consistent with each other, for they're speaking of different things. Leibowitz refers to *our proper reason for fulfilling a mitzvah*—what should properly motivate our action, or why it's right that we do so—in his view, that we thereby worship God; the Rambam's claim is about the reason it's a mitzvah in the first place, why God has commanded this particular mitzvah. Thus it could be that God has directed me to wave a *lulav* and *etrog* so that I thereby petition God for a better winter; while *my* proper reason for doing so, why it's right that I do, is just that God has (for *His* reason) directed me to do so and I wish to obey Him. The present problem, however, is that it's of the nature of our inquiring human minds to wonder what purpose could be served by our action—what the role is of this action in the large, teleological scheme of things. Even if one's actual motive for waving a *lulav* and *etrog* is one's wish to worship God, one cannot help wondering why God has given us this particular mitzvah, why it's *cosmically right*. One then learns that the putative reason is that we thereby petition God for a good winter, and one embraces this as one's own rationale—*one adopts it as the explanation of one's own action*—even if it doesn't authentically engage with one's real-world beliefs. One thus presents oneself to God in this false mental posture.[3]

[3]

The integrity of the psyche can be especially challenged by prayer. Reciting the liturgy, I must surely be committed to the notion that all this text states is true and right. I might not be aware of what these true and right thoughts and wishes stated by the text specifically are; but insofar as I do know this or that thought or wish it states, I must surely agree with it. For I'd otherwise be presenting myself to God as a person who has this thought and is acting to communicate it, though I at the same time know I have no such thought. What am I to do, then, when I recite the second blessing of *Shemoneh Esreh*, aware it praises God for some day resurrecting the dead, while I have difficult doubts about how true and right this could be?

This awkwardness is exacerbated where, in many *siddurim*, special *kavanot* are provided—interpretations of expressions, annotated into the text, which it's recommended the user reflect

upon while reciting them, sometimes literal interpretations but often going imaginatively beyond.[4] The popular Sephardic *siddur*, *Kavanat haLev*, for instance, is permeated not only with expression-related *kavanot*, but also includes many broader recommendations of *propositions* which one should, in some way, have in mind as one recites certain passages or sections. Just one example here: It recommends that, while reciting *HalleluYa'h halleli* (Psalm 146) in *Pesukey deZimrah*, one direct one's thoughts to the truth that one who trusts in God, Who supports one in all situations, will be happy.[5] To be clear, I certainly have no wish to question whether this is truth; my concern here is just with the question, *if* I somehow don't believe it's truth, must I recite the psalm while directing my thoughts to the idea and *pretending* I believe it? The Artscroll siddur, too, offers recommendations of this sort. An example: Its annotation at the beginning of the second paragraph of *Shema* asks us to "concentrate on accepting all the commandments and the concept of reward and punishment." [6] But I'll of course be unable to concentrate on any such acceptance if I have doubts about the precept of reward and punishment. I could perhaps concentrate on my *faking* of my acceptance of this precept—but I'd not thereby enter the elevated mindset that surely must be a precondition for connecting by prayer to God.

We have techniques for dealing with these difficulties. One familiar recourse is to *reinterpret* the problematic idea: to assume, for instance, that what we really mean when we say that God will raise the dead is that God will reawaken us from our spiritual slumber; or that our reference to the Davidic dynasty is our plea to restore the status of Jerusalem as a beacon of justice to the nations of the world. But there is some dishonesty in this. For the text has a fairly clear, literal meaning; it's that literal meaning we're stating if we're stating anything. (I can tell myself all I like that what I mean when I say "It's a sunny day" is that it's fortunate that it's raining, but if the perceivable context and assumptions of my audience don't make this clear, then that's not what I'll have communicated.) This is a meaning largely determined by its traditional understanding—the meaning rabbinically authorized and (more significantly) that this text has conveyed in its millennia of usage. We admittedly have some interpretative leeway, but our interpretative hypothesis will require justification. This may enable us to build on the received meaning, recognize some subtle distinctions hitherto tacitly assumed, but not to arbitrarily replace the meaning of this text with another, just because it better suits our temperament. To ignore the literal, traditional understanding of the resurrection of the dead is simply to sidestep the issue.

Then it may seem the difficulty is overcome insofar as one achieves the *kavanah*[7] one must aim for—the mental state ideally entered—when praying. It's our common understanding that this *kavanah* consists, in part at least, of *thinking about* the meaning of the text as one recites it. It seems to us even a truism that my reciting the second blessing could not be worth much if my consciousness is not, during those moments, in some way directed (in part) at the idea of the resurrection of the dead. This indeed seems to be the instruction of *Shulhan Arukh* when it writes that in praying one must "direct one's heart to the meaning of the words one issues from one's mouth..." [8] Now, if this means just that I must try *imagining* such a reality—just picturing or, in some way, *consciously representing the meaning* of the text—then it won't solve the problem of my seeming deceitfulness. For to picture in my consciousness the resurrection of the dead is not to *believe it will happen*. (I can conjure an image of pink elephants flying over the horizon without believing this will ever happen.) Something more is needed than just picturing the dead arising. Perhaps, then, I must try entering a mental state that is *subjectively identical to my having this belief*; something like imagining this event, but together with some sense of *affirming* that it will



happen. It seems to me in fact that many practitioners of prayer suppose albeit in some unclear way, that what they're attempting is something much like this.

Accordingly, while reciting the blessing, I'd try inducing a state of consciousness which, from the inside, seems just like that of inhabiting a reality in which God will someday raise the dead. I'd need for those moments (among other things), to become oblivious to my ongoing, lucid conviction that if this event ever occurred it would be geopolitically and ecologically catastrophic, but also that the prospect of it happening is (fortunately), unintelligible. In what bodies would the dead arise? Where on this earth would they all live? Would they remember who they were and their past biographies and, if not, then in what sense are they those same individuals? Ignoring the contrary thoughts I really have, I'd indulge in this blurred, *as if* conviction;[9] I'd become a momentary mimicry of a person who believes in the resurrection of the dead. For that half minute, I'd present to God not myself but, like a stage actor, this alien persona.

In that case, perhaps what I must do here is more than just adjust my consciousness so that it *internally seems* to me I have the belief. What's required, possibly, is that, by some special mental exertion, I induce an *actual state* of believing in (e.g.) the precept of reward and punishment. But this is all the more impossible. To believe that good deeds are rewarded and sinfulness is punished is to be configured with a certain *pervasive understanding*. This view of the world, of life, and of our relation with God, would need to be integrated with many more of my beliefs. It would need to penetrate into my thoughts about the unhappiness of good people and happiness of the wicked, of life after death and the possibility of a posthumous balancing out, of the Holocaust and the terror of innocents, and plenty more. It would need to govern the way I'd talk about and actively relate to these and many other matters. But there's just no way I could, in those moments of my reciting the second paragraph of *Shema*, transform my thoughts so radically that I could be said to actually, if only briefly, believe in this principle. It would, moreover, need to be the way I think about these things not just during those moments but fairly *enduringly*: it won't really have been my belief in those moments if, a few minutes later, having undergone no process of reassessing those associated truths, and without encountering any opinion-changing evidence, I rediscover myself as a person with no such belief.[10] While to induce a seeming-belief appears pointless, to induce an actual belief is impossible.

One further possibility: that my standing before God in prayer does not prerequisite my accepting as truth all that's stated by the liturgy, but is my way of acquiring that acceptance. The purpose of prayer, accordingly, is self-development: my *kavanah* is my engaging in a continuing project—even a life-long endeavor—of *nurturing my real and lasting acceptance* of the vision and agenda espoused by the text.[11] Day by day, through prayer, I'd incrementally strengthen my commitment to the agenda listed in *Shemoneh Esreh* and to the vision of the liturgy as a whole, thus bringing my religious personality into shape. I'd do so specifically by, during each session, *rehearsing* my commitment—inducing a mental state *resembling* commitment—until I eventually become *genuinely* committed.

Surely, however, my best way of nurturing (with the Artscroll example) an acceptance of all the commandments is to meditate upon sound reasons for this acceptance; to so meditate in some protracted, penetrating manner that articulates with my broader understanding of the world and my life-goals—to thus sustain a process of integrating my whole personality into this acceptance

of all the mitzvot and divesting myself of whatever obstructive attitudes I may have. This perhaps consisting of, in short, learning Torah—with particular focus on the propositions stated by the liturgy itself. Whereas it's hard to see what that brief pretense of accepting the meaning of the text, which I may muster in the course of prayer itself, will contribute to this project. Even more problematic: If the purpose of my reciting (e.g.) *Shemoneh Esreh* is self-improvement—as opposed to addressing God—then it's hard to see why this should count as prayer.

[4]

On the face of it, then, worship demands not make-believe but truthfulness. That the dead will arise must (we'd naturally assume), be the actual belief of this person I *really am and continue to be*, not merely something which, by fabricating a false state of consciousness, I can momentarily *imagine* I believe. Yet we seem to commonly proceed as if there's also a merit—a certain *religious piety*—in sustaining some such mental fabrication; as though, while it's ideal that we really believe in the resurrection of the dead and in reward and punishment and accept fully the yoke of mitzvot, there's failing that also value in fleetingly entering a mental state which *resembles* that of being enveloped and animated by this vision. This seems so commonly and instinctively our method, that we should perhaps wonder if it could somehow really be inherent to the nature of worship.

Indeed, it's only insofar as we allow ourselves to indulge in some make-believe that so much of the color and substance of Jewish life is at all possible. Consider Shabbat candles. One often-cited reason for lighting them is that they ensure domestic well-being.[12] In earlier epochs, of course, it was realistic that the Shabbat lamp was conducive to well-being in the home, in preventing members of the family from bumping into things or each other, or from tripping over and sustaining personal injury. It probably also thereby created a calmer and more secure atmosphere and reduced irritability and domestic strife. Shabbat lights were thus materially functional in achieving these ends. But this doesn't apply when, in our day, the light added in the home by Shabbat candles is typically negligible. The meaning of candles has thus shifted, from being *directly instrumental* in enabling domestic well-being, to acting as a *remembrance* to a time when it did.

Then what goes on in our minds as we now light or observe Shabbat candles? Some of us, possibly associating them with their erstwhile functional meaning, doubtless perceive them as potently *symbolic* of peace and well-being. But the difference between symbolic and functional meaning is easily blurred. I suspect that many of us, learning of this connection to domestic peace, retain the notion that they somehow, in our day too, have a power to achieve it by operating through some instrumental mechanism—though clearly not by contributing physically to the illumination of the home, nor by any other mundane process. Hence we're open to unearthly ideas; on one well-received view, the twin candles induce domestic peace by representing the souls of husband and wife.[13] Now, I stress that I don't presume to have anything of interest to say about the plausibility of this or any of the many extant rationales for Shabbat candle-lighting.[14] I mean just to point to the ambivalence with which we're able to embrace our favored reason. For sure, not all Shabbat candle-lighters and observers subscribe, in particular, to the idea that Shabbat candles are imbued with a peace-inducing force—but some of us do. And possibly many of us do believe this literally and unequivocally.

But many of us at least, though not *really* giving this idea clearheaded credence, do nonetheless apportion it mental space of some kind. We don't believe, really, that our presenting this symbol somehow persuades God more effectively to preserve peace in our home than our verbalized petition—nor that it achieves this peace by bringing together the two souls through some metaphysical harmonizing magnetism. Yet the idea that Shabbat candles induce domestic well-being could well be what we uncritically reply with if asked why we light them. Some such notion, it seems, can loom large for us and can act as an explanation to ourselves of why we're acting. This account and others like it are discontinuous with our regular, rational, workaday relation to the world—yet they insinuate themselves centrally into our experience of Shabbat candles.

Shabbat candles also impart their character to the experience of Shabbat in a quite enveloping way. Anyone who's experienced their Friday night glow knows the sense that it infuses the home with a nearly palpable and magical substance.[15] Shabbat candles are among those focal archetypes that spill their color over Shabbat and over Jewish life altogether, producing a kind of higher-order overlay. Possibly some symbolic meaning bleeds through this overlay and injects additional vigor, but there's also something irreducible—I'm tempted to say primal—about it; the overlay subsists independently of any symbolism. Looking at the two candles burning, we see not only these two physical objects in this confined physical space. We sense they are surrounded by an aura of meaning, an almost visible dimension that comes into being just when two otherwise plain sticks of combusting wax are, with the reciting of a blessing, exalted to the role of Shabbat candles. This sense derives, perhaps, from our knowing this ritual is ancestrally bequeathed, charged with some meaning possibly apprehended only by God, sanctified and delivered to us by millennia of practice. But the explanation doesn't lessen the fact that the secret, sacred dimension we thus glimpse can seem to us more real than the candlesticks and table they stand on.

But do I *really* believe in any such dimension? Unfortunately not—I'm too rational and too much a realist for that—at least not in the same *yom hol* way I believe in metallic candlesticks and wooden tables. Yet it is a real part of my world; I do not quite believe, in the fullest sense of *believing*, in its existence, but I do have a cognitive relation to it of *some* sort.

[5]

At least since Maimonides' formulation of his Thirteen Core Principles of Faith, it's been explicitly part of our religiosity that we—stating this broadly—have certain beliefs.[16] These are often beliefs which we don't receive passively, which are not forced on us by the evidence of our senses or as the logical implication of our everyday understanding, and which we therefore need to actively contrive to acquire. Alongside the praxis of mitzvot, the effort we make in inducing these cognitions is *part of our repertoire of worshipful acts*. Success is not straightforward; Maimonides' *Guide* was written on the premise that its reader was confounded by doubts that had to be seriously addressed, as well as that certain matters are necessarily beyond the comprehension of the human intellect.[17] Before Maimonides, Saadya Gaon had recognized that, as humans are created beings, human understanding is *necessarily* laden with doubts, for “the very fact of their being creatures necessitates their entertaining uncertainties and illusions.”[18] Saadya saw doubt as a productive force, the engine of a dialectical, reasoned process ideally culminating in conviction; that ideal state, if ever achieved, would be permanent. But it meanwhile inevitably

remains, in Saadya's view, our *normal* predicament to face God, en route to that ideal, with a faith that's stricken with doubt—and with a constant worshipful obligation to overcome that doubt.[19]

It's become immeasurably more difficult in our age to believe what we're obliged to believe. We expect our ordinary understanding of the world or even science to corroborate a thought before we accept it, and doubt fills the vacuum where it does not. It may comfort us that, in a certain respect, the collapse of certainty is our blessing: insofar as we're compelled into certainty by logical inference or clear evidence or simply an incapacity for doubt, our reaching to God is not a free act of worship; we're thus all the more able to manifest the love drawing us to God by overpassing our doubt with this freedom—the more difficult the doubt, the greater our worship.[20] As R. J. Sacks has said, "Faith is not certainty, but the courage to live with uncertainty." [21]

The question remains, however, whether we can deal with our doubt, not by dishonestly dismissing it with false argument or ignoring it, but by acknowledging it, incorporating it, and *defying* it. Nor by fabricating a state of consciousness in which we lose sight of our real selves and enter an alien identity, but rather—and this could be the key—by somehow *incorporating this state of consciousness into our own person*. Could we somehow rise toward God by adopting a strange mental posture which, though ungrounded in our understanding of the world, *leaves us nonetheless able to recognize ourselves*—even as we're then hovering, vertiginously distanced from firm ground, unfamiliarly contorted?

[6]

How drably unholy our religious lives would be without this capacity to mentally inhabit a dislocated reality. Much as if literature and theater were not able to likewise draw us into blissfully abandoning ourselves to impossible worlds; or if, at the cinema, we could not be seduced uncritically by even the most outrageously impossible premise into the ridiculous universe it implies (where, e.g., a 12-year-old boy suddenly turns into his adult self; [22] a woman formed from clay is endowed with superhuman strength, durability, flight, and more; [23] a man is eternally doomed to waking up every morning in the day that just ended [24]). The possibility of journeying into an impossible world—one held together by a matrix of symbolism—gives meaning to the possible. Not that we become convinced that this is reality: we accommodate it or, we might say, compartmentalize it, alongside the world in which we parked the car, bought the tickets and squinted to our seats—and to which we'll presently reemerge, edified, enlarged, uplifted by our journey. The alluring aura of Shabbat candles, our reverie of the dead arising, or any make-believe rationale for this or that mitzvah, are likewise our openings to an odyssey through a transcendent, sacred reality; we go there, looking to carry back sanctity to our everyday. Equivocation of this sort is part of the richness of our religious lives.

[7]

Peter Lipton, a leading figure in the Philosophy of Science, was until his sudden untimely death in 2007, intensely preoccupied by a concern to accommodate his own progressive Judaism in his broader world view, particularly with his scientific realism. There are clear inconsistencies, he acknowledged, between the claims of our religious texts and science. He argued, [25] however, that this does not force the scientist to reject outright (say) the biblical narrative. In fact, well-

grounded scientific understanding can sometimes contradict even the most fundamental tenets of our common sense understanding of the world. The physicist Arthur Eddington pointed out that he simultaneously has two incompatible understandings of a table. It's incontrovertibly the solid, substantial, colored, permanent object holding up (in the case of this table before me) my computer and elbows; but it's at the same time the scientifically understood table, comprising sparsely scattered electric charges rushing about at great speed, holding things up by the impacts they jointly, probabilistically impart, totaling less than a billionth of the bulk of the table of our commonsense conception.

Lipton invoked a theory about the nature of science and knowledge developed by Bas van Fraassen, known as *constructive empiricism*, the strength of which is its ability to sustain conflicting scientific theories (and hence dialogue between proponents of different theories before and after scientific revolutions). This account of science takes each theory's claims as *literal* descriptions, though not all of these will be believed as *true* descriptions, even by their proponents. A scientific claim, on this view, can meet with a cognitive attitude different from belief, an *acceptance*, which "is not just partial belief; it is also a kind of commitment to use the resources of the theory." [26] Thus a scientist may be committed to a subatomic understanding of the table, not fully *believing* in that understanding, but, in the suggestive term of this account, *immersed* in it. Lipton suggests a kind of equivalence between scientific and religious theories, in that where either contradicts our ineliminable everyday beliefs, it may elude belief, but is accessible to this different cognitive relation of immersion. "To immerse oneself in a theory is to enter into the world of that theory and to work from within it. This is not to believe that the theory is true, but it is to enter imaginatively into its 'world'." [27] A scientist might, for instance, take literally the Genesis account of Creation, possibly not believing it's true, but immersing herself in that world. The religious text can thus work for her as "a tool for thought, as a way of thinking about our world." [28] Tradition can in this way figure in our thinking, as a means for better understanding our lives and projects.

Lipton describes, in these terms of acceptance and immersion, what I've spoken of as our indulgence in *as if* belief. But what's most important here is that he also *validates* our doing so. He does so by showing it's of a kind with the attitude to scientific theory which a scientist is often forced to adopt. Despite evidence and firm theoretical grounds for believing in such-and-such a reality, that reality doesn't have, for the scientist, quite the solidity of our common-sense world. The story of the subatomic electrical space of the table is well-grounded; the scientist is fully justified in believing it; yet the sense of its reality can never be as cogent as that of the solid table of common sense. Our imaginary depictions of events in which the dead arise, or in which twin candles literally pressure together the souls of husband and wife, may likewise cognitively animate us as if they're real—though never with the same force as the realities of death and wax and flames. We sense even a *rightness* about these depictions, that a certain *piety* is conferred, by our inherited tradition, upon our upholding them; although we know, looking out again at our objective world, that they have no basis here. [29]

It's the incorrigible nature of many of us to critically assess ideas put our way and so to relate skeptically even to certain foundational tenets. But we may have an equally incorrigible sense that it's our religious duty to accept whole the vision delivered by tradition—that we have no business questioning it and that, by sustaining our doubts, we're *betraying our pact with God*. This is the

conflict inherent to *homo religiosus*, familiar from R. J. B. Soloveitchik's elaboration, between autonomy and submissiveness: between our creative, scientific, political activism and, pitched against this, our craving to overcome existential loneliness by quietly and uncritically attaching ourselves to God—specifically by sacrificing ourselves unprotestingly to the demands of halakha.[30] But the conflict, it's seen here, is not just practical—it extends also to our cognitive obligations. It's between, on the one hand, our psychic integrity and, on the other hand, our submissive self-immersion in a make-believe. We're *aware*, as we indulge in this make-believe, that it's a hiatus in the fabric of the real world; but also that, by our ambivalence, *we sanctify our whole world*.

[8]

There is some danger in this. Make-believe can lead us, through the pathway of tradition, back to God. But this must never permit us to lose sight of the divide between what belongs properly in our here and now, and what is not of this present reality. There are mitzvot that were early on rendered inoperative fiction by rabbinical interpretation in a world that had already vastly changed (such as *ben sorer u'moreh*, a parent's initiation of the public execution of his or her wayward, rebellious son[31]), but which continue to provide content to our religious imagination. The danger lies in the risk of upholding make-believe as a directive for some real-world action which, realistically, is inadmissible.

The recent Israeli movie, *Yamim Nora'im*,[32] about the assassination in 1995 of Prime Minister Yitzchak Rabin, reminded those who experienced this dark, traumatic moment of Israeli history how a blurring of the difference between what is real and what is make-believe could authorize evil. The movie shows the assassin going from rabbi to rabbi in search of halakhic consent to murder. The justification he sought would come from the principle of *din mosser*, the debated meaning of which revolves around a right to murder a Jew in order to prevent him from life-threateningly informing on another Jew to non-Jewish authorities for what is not Jewishly an offense. In the movie at least, no rabbi *explicitly* granted him that right, but too many failed to unequivocally deny it. Arrogantly swaggering on the flimsy divide of ambivalence, they spoke of *din mosser* in a broad halakhic language, as so tightly constrained that it's all but obsolete, but at the same time, with artful obscurity, insidiously invited their inquirer to move to its realization—with abominable consequence.

Our religious consciousness may essentially involve, not an ability to find internal consistency between contradictory understandings, but the mental versatility to accommodate inconsistencies. We have warrant to sanctify our world with make-believe, but must always remain conscious of our rational and realistic scheme of things, carefully measuring that make-believe against a humane, responsible code of conduct.[33]

## NOTES

[1] BT *Sukkah*, 37b.

[2] *Tur, Orach Hayyim* 271:9.

[3] Admittedly, Leibowitz maintains not only that worship is our proper reason for fulfilling mitzvot, but also that “Most of the mitzvot are meaningless except as expressions of worship. They have no utility in terms of satisfaction of human needs.” (“Religious praxis”, in Y. Leibowitz, *Judaism, Human Values and the Jewish State*, ed. E. Goldman. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992, 3-29, p. 16.) But he does not deny that *some* mitzvot have purposes. In any case, if it were true



that *no mitzvot* really serve purposes, then all the worse for our adopted pretense to God that we're acting for their putative purposes. Cf. also Leibowitz's own discussion of this supposed conflict, in "The reading of the *Shema*," *op. cit.* 37–47, pp. 41–42.

[4] A rich tradition of *kavanot*, associated with the mysticism of R. Isaac Luria, and largely developed by the eighteenth-century Yemenite Kabbalist, the Rash"ash—Rabbi Shalom Shar'abi—assigns often-esoteric meanings to the expressions. This method is closely tied to a theory involving such things as the elevation of holy sparks trapped in our world since Creation, and correct speech acting as an energy that unites the physical with the spiritual dimensions.

[5] *HaSiddur HaMephurash Kavanat HaLev*. Petach Tikvah: Machon Shira Hadashah, 5774. p. 111.

[6] *Siddur Kol Ya'akov*. New York: Menorah, 1990, p. 92.

[7] Though "*kavanot*," as the term appears above, is literally the plural form of "*kavanah*," their meanings here are different though related. The *kavanah* of prayer also differs from the *kavanah*, or motivating intention, with which one ideally performs a mitzvah.

[8] *Orah Hayyim*, 98:1. With this, I believe we've gone drastically wrong in identifying *kavanah* as just in some way thinking about meaning. Contrastingly, by far the most thematic explication of *kavanah* in prayer in rabbinic literature is *awareness of the immediate presence of God*. Thus BT *Berakhot*, 28b: "When you pray, know before Whom you stand." *Orah Hayyim*, *loc. cit.*; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Ahavah, Tefilah*, 4:16; R. J. B. Soloveitchik, *Lonely Man of Faith*, New York: Doubleday, 1965, pp. 53–54.: "Prayer is basically an awareness of man finding himself in the presence of and addressing himself to his Maker, and to pray has one connotation only: to stand before God."; also R. J. B. Soloveitchik, *Worship of the Heart* (New York: Toras HoRav/Ktav, 2003), p.100; and A. J. Heschel, *Man's Quest for God*, (Sante Fe: Aurora, 1998), p. 61.

[9] R. Prof. David Shatz wonders in this vein about what he calls the *Yizkor Jew*—someone who's distant from practice, presumably also from the underlying beliefs, but unfailingly attends synagogue for *Yizkor*: "It's not something the person believes literally. What is happening? Is it that at that moment the person believes the soul is in the next world? Is it that they've started living now in an imaginary thought world?..."

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z91Qp\\_J7o0k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z91Qp_J7o0k), at 45:00.

[10] Thus R. J. B. Soloveitchik: "The Halakhah has never looked upon prayer as a separate magical gesture in which man may engage without integrating it into the total pattern of his life. God hearkens to prayer if it rises from a heart contrite over a muddled and faulty life and from a resolute mind ready to redeem this life. In short, only the committed person is qualified to pray and to meet God." *Lonely Man of Faith*, *op. cit.*, p. 63. Cf. also Soloveitchik, *Worship of the Heart*, pp. 164–166.

[11] This is akin to a line of thought beginning at least with R. Yoseph Albo, *Sefer Ha'Ikarim*, treatise 4, chs. 16–18, that the purpose of prayer is not to persuade God to grant the petitions, but to bring it about, by one's reciting them, that one incrementally reshapes one's thinking in accordance with the vision of the world they define. This view seems in turn indebted to the Ramban's position on the purpose of at least some mitzvot, that they cultivate a better moral character of the agent. Cf. his commentary on Deuteronomy 22: 6. Cf. also R. J. B. Soloveitchik, "Redemption, Prayer and Talmud Torah," *Tradition: A Journal of Orthodox Thought*, 17, vol. 2, 1978, pp. 55–72, p. 66; and A. J. Heschel, *op. cit.*, pp. 32–33: "It is the liturgy that teaches us what to pray for. It is through the words of the liturgy that we discover what moves us unawares, what is urgent in our lives, what in us is related to the ultimate."

[12] Deriving from Rava's insistence, BT *Shabbat* 23b, that light on Friday night is more important than both Hannukah lights and even *Kiddush*, because it instills *shelom beyto*—well-being (or peace), in one's home. Cf. also the Rambam's variant on this, by which light enables us to fulfil the mitzvah of being joyful on Shabbat (*Mishneh Torah, Hilkhos Shabbat*, Chap. 5), as well as, through our Shabbat joy, that of honoring Shabbat (ch. 30). This is distinct from the familiar reason for lighting specifically (at least) *two* candles, i.e., that they represent the two aspects of the mitzvah of Shabbat, *zakhor* and *shamor* (*Orah Hayyim*, 263:1).

[13] Cf. e.g., [https://www.chabad.org/library/article\\_cdo/aid/484176/jewish/Why-Light-Two-or-More-Shabbat-Candles.htm](https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/484176/jewish/Why-Light-Two-or-More-Shabbat-Candles.htm). This builds imaginatively on the identification of flame with soul, suggested at BT *Taanit* 27b.

[14] A brief gloss of the Web reveals very numerous reasons on offer for lighting Shabbat candles, some more firmly rooted in mainstream sources than others. Chabad is especially productive in providing these.

[15] As beautifully stated by Ismar Schorsch: "And to this day, the lighting of two white Shabbat candles, one for *zakhor*...and one for *shamor*...each with a single wick, is how we imbue the mundane space of our homes with a touch of eternity. The journey back to Judaism often begins with this transformative act. Its disarming simplicity and aesthetic power open the door to a wellspring of blessings for those with the resolve to proceed. To alter our inner state we need to modify our surroundings. That is the function of ritual."

<http://www.jtsa.edu/the-meaning-of-the-shabbat-candles>.

[16] On the move from an impressionistic grasp of fundamental tenets in Torah, to the more discursive philosophical approach of Maimonides, see Howard Wettstein, *The Significance of Religious Experience* (New York: OUP, 2012), especially "Theological Impressionism," pp. 78–102 in that volume.

[17] *Guide to the Perplexed*, 1:31–32.

[18] *Book of Beliefs and Convictions*, Introduction 3.

[19] As R. N. Lamm states the point in his extensive discussion of the dynamic aspect of doubt, in "Faith and doubt," *Tradition* 9, 1967, pp. 14–51: "Cognitive doubt...is a violent struggle in the attainment of *emet*. I begin by believing despite doubt; I end by believing all the more firmly because of doubt" (27–28).

[20] Franz Rosenzweig quips that if not the Rhine ran through Frankfurt but the mythical Sambatyon River, which, according to Midrash, stopped flowing on Shabbat, then the entire Frankfurt Jewish community would be forced by this evidence to keep Shabbat; but that just the Rhine flows there shows that God does not appreciate observance founded on certainty instead of freedom.

(*Star of Redemption*, p. 294 in the Hebrew edition, Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 5753; cited in Gilad Beeri, “*Beyisurin*”, <https://www.etzion.org.il/he/ביסורין>) I thank Martin Lockshin for directing me to this reference.

[21] <http://rabbisacks.org/the-courage-to-live-with-uncertainty/>

[22] *Big*, with Tom Hanks.

[23] *Wonder Woman*, with Gal Gadot.

[24] *Groundhog Day*, with Bill Murray.

[25] P. Lipton, “Science and religion: the immersion solution,” in J. Cornwell & M. McGhee (eds.), *Philosophers and God: At the Frontiers of Faith and Reason*. Continuum, 2009, pp. 31–46.

[26] *Ibid.*, p. 44.

[27] *Ibid.*, p. 41.

[28] *Ibid.*, p. 44.

[29] An accommodation of a religious outlook into a broader, scientific understanding of the world, by some cognitive relation different from belief, may be what Samuel Belkin had in mind when, in his inaugural address as president of Yeshiva University, he explained his vision of *Torah u'madda*. “If we seek the blending of science and religion and the integration of secular knowledge with sacred wisdom, then it is not in the subject matter of these fields but rather within the personality of the individual that we hope to achieve the synthesis.” (“The truly higher education,” in S. Belkin, *Essays in Traditional Jewish Thought*, NY: Philosophical Library, 1956, 9-18. p. 17) The ideal of *Torah u'madda* seems to have become, in Belkin’s watch, not necessarily an attempt to find logical consistency between secular and Torah understandings of the world, but the cultivation of an individual able to accommodate contrary ideas.

[30] As described in *Lonely Man of Faith*, *op. cit.*, chs. I–II, founded in the conflict between Adam A of Genesis 1, commissioned to conquer the earth, and Adam B of Genesis 2, submissive to the Covenant.

[31] Deuteronomy 21: 18–21. According to BT *Sanhendrin* 71a, this was *never* applied.

[32] By Yaron Zilberman, translated as *Incitement*.

[33] I’m grateful to R. Prof. Martin Lockshin, and to R. Dr. Marc Angel, for commenting on earlier drafts of this article.



## **Hoshana Rabba Made Me A Yid**

**Rav Shlomo Katz** writes:<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> <https://www.theshlomokatzproject.com/rav-shlomo-katz/hoshana-rabba-made-me-a-yid/>

Approximately two years or so after Reb Shlomo zt'l left this world, my family was visiting the states (we were living at the time in Ra'anana). I was a teenager on a mission – to visit the shul (and home) of the person who was having the most profound impact on my life, R' Shlomo Carlebach ztz'l. Having never spending any time in Manhattan before, the tall buildings and intensity of the streets of the city didn't feel so good. I found it nerve-racking. I don't recall what day of the week it was (other than knowing it wasn't shabbos), but my day was about to change.

When I found the Carlebach Shul and opened its front door, I was immediately transported into a world of longing, longing for something 'more', something 'bigger' in life. To the right of the lobby was a glass display, showcasing some of the items the shul had for sale. There were some books, pictures, videos and cassettes. I didn't have a lot of money with me but was able to purchase a video cassette that caught my eye, a filming of Reb Shlomo's Hoshana Rabba davening of 1991.

Returning to my cousin's home in Passaic, NJ, I quickly popped in the video tape into the VCR, and the rest ... well, the rest is not just history, it's also the present and hopefully the future.

I saw a man standing before his creator, conversing with him, and pleading on behalf of the tzibur for sweetness and good news to reach all. Everyone who was present in that minyan was elevated to the consciousness of what being a yid is all about – standing *Nochach Pnei Hashem*, in the presence of the Master of the World.

Even before Hallel began, hearing the most eloquent nusach for a regular shmone esre of Shacharit captured me. I never heard this tone of prayer before.

As Hallel began, it seemed like a royal orchestra was summoned to play for the King. Mamesh. As simple as that sounds. It was a Hallel that cracked my heart wide open and continues to do so whenever I see or sing it.

When the Hoshanos began, Yiddishkeit itself took on a completely new meaning. The Tallis way over his head, and the shuckeling of the daled minim reached *shamayim* while also reaching little me, down here on the *aretz*. It infiltrated into a place I did not know existed. I never knew it was possible to act like this in this world.

As the Hoshanos ended, a niggun leading to dancing finished off the kaddish, a niggun R' Shlomo had just composed earlier that year. What was this joy in the room? It the joy of VICTORY, the victory of Tshuvah.

Jump ahead ten years or so later. I was flying back home to Yerushalayim, and a chassidishe yid sat next to me. Somehow the topic of R Shlomo ztz'l popped up in conversation and this is what he tells me.

“I'm sure you know that by us chassidim, Hashana Rabba means being in shul for hours, and not really being with your wife and children for most of the day. Last year I came across a certain video of Reb Shlomo davening Hashana Rabba, and I knew that this year's Hashana Rabba would be different in my household.” A huge smile appeared on his face as he proceeded to share the following. “I closed all the windows on the house and locked the door. I summoned my whole

family around the Shabbos table, and we all got dressed up very kavodic. I somehow found a device to play the video on. We sat around the table, my wife, my children and I, and davened with R' Shlomo. It was as if we each were davening for the first time.”