

# LUBAVITCH OF N. C.

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## Thoughts From The Lubavitcher Rebbe

### The Year of Hakhel

By Rabbi Yossi Groner

The Hebrew year, begun just a few months ago, is special because of an important communal mitzvah which was observed during the Succoth festival in Jerusalem.

It is a biblical commandment that after the conclusion of a sabbatical year — when all of Israel rested and were involved in Jewish spiritual matters — just at the beginning of the near year, *Hakhel* should be declared.

*Hakhel* means to congregate and unite. The Torah commands that all Jews, even toddlers, assemble at the Holy Temple during the festival of Succoth and listen to the king recite passages from the Torah.

The purpose of it was to inspire all the people with a heightened sense of fear and awe of the Almighty G-d that translated into a more dedicated commitment to the way of Torah and Mitzvot in their every day life and conduct. The experience of that most solemn occasion, intensified by the holiness of the place and time, face to face encounter with the king, etc., left an indelible impression which continued to inspire everyone in all days ahead.

In our time, in the absence of the physical Beis Hamikdash, we are precluded from fulfilling the Mitzvah of *Hakhel* in its physical format. However, we can still carry it out in a spiritual way here and now and everywhere, by implementing the spirit and message of *Hakhel*, namely,

by reaffirming our resolve to adhere more closely to the way of the Torah and Mitzvot in our personal life, while, at the same time, also "assembling" — reaching out to — our fellow Jews, men, women and children, who are within our reach and sphere of influence, to have them share with us in the Mitzvah of *Hakhel* in its inner concept and essence.

This not only applies to the beginning of the year, but rather to the entire year. In fact, the year is called a year of *Hakhel*. It is therefore the obligation and privilege of all Jewish people to participate in this unique Mitzvah to inspire and enlighten his fellow Jew at every opportunity to bring him closer to the awe and observance of G-d.

May HaShem grant that everyone, including the very young children, should fully utilize the extraordinary opportunities and powers which this year, a year of *Hakhel*, brings with it, in all the above mentioned matters, in the form of actual deeds.

And through these *Hakhel* activities and gatherings everyone should achieve an even stronger and more effective inner unity, as is written: "Unify my heart to fear Your Name."

And these increased far-reaching activities should bring still closer and sooner the time when it will be possible to celebrate the Mitzvah of *Hakhel* in all its details, in the Beis Hamikdash, listening to the words of the Torah read by the King Mashiach, very soon indeed, in our own days.

## Youth Enjoy Succoth Party

On Sunday, October 11, a fun filled Succoth party took place at the home of Rabbi Yossi and Mariashi Groner. The main focus of the party was the children of the Tzivos Hashem youth club.

All the children had the opportunity to bless and observe the Mitzvah of Lulav and Esrog, shaking it to all directions in the beautiful Succah. The Succah, which is constructed of wood panels, felt refreshing with the fresh green pine branches hanging down from the top. They also had plenty of healthy and kosher food to eat in the grand Succah.

Rabbi Weiss, who leads the group, had arranged for special games to be played and also informed them of the rules for winning prizes in the national contest of Tzivos Hashem. Rabbi Weiss pleasantly discovered that all the children are winners, since they all participated in the important Mitzvot of the holidays.

The children listened to a story about a wonderful Esrog which saved the entire Jewish people, and learned many lessons from the interesting holiday.



Rabbi Weiss explains the significance of the Lulav and Esrog.



Children and Rabbi Weiss enjoying snacks in the Succah.

## Preschoolers Experience Holidays with Arts and Crafts

The children at Lubavitch preschool have been busy this past month learning about the holidays in a most creative way. Chanie Weiss, Judaica teacher at the school, reports that for Yom Kippur the children made paper slippers to learn about not wearing leather on Yom Kippur.

For Succoth the children constructed a big cardboard Succah with its own miniature

table and decorated the Succah with their own creations. The children also formed an Esrog out of papier-mache and painted it yellow. To that they added a Lulav with myrtle and willow branches.

Meanwhile the children were busy exploring the globe with Fern Sanderson, the morning teacher. Each week they learn about a new country. They already discovered Mexico;

they ate kosher Mexican food and dressed in traditional Mexican garb.

Japan was next on their tour. They made Japanese lanterns and learned Japanese customs. They also donned African masks that they designed. The purpose of their exploration is to broaden their knowledge of the world we live in and discover the greatness of the role we play in it.

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