

Shabbat Chol HaMoed Sukkot – October 15, 2022 – 20 Tishri 5783

Questions and Answers from Rabbi Edward Davis

1. Which of the four species (Lulas, Etrog, Hadasim, and Aravot) is not Muktzeh on Shabbat, and why?
The Etrog is the only one that is not Muktzeh because one may smell its aroma on Shabbat (with a brachah).
2. How many cows were offered as sacrifices during the Sukkot holiday at the Holy Temple in Yerushalayim? What significance is there to this number?
Seventy cows are sacrificed over the course of the Sukkot holiday in the Holy Temple, corresponding to the 70 nations of the world.
3. How do we fulfill the Simcha of Yom Tov today without the Holy Temple?
We fulfill the Simcha of Yom Tov with festival meals, including meat and wine. We also give presents to our wives and children.
4. What is an Eruv Tavshilin? Any why do we do it this year?
The Eruv Tavshilin is accomplished by setting aside a baked and a cooked item (e.g. a matzah and a hard-boiled egg) on Wednesday afternoon Erev Yom Tov. We do this when Friday is Yom Tov preceding Shabbat. This enables us to consider the Eruv Tavshilin the beginning of preparations for Shabbat, and we continue to prepare on Friday.
5. What Shabbat-prohibited work is permitted on Yom Tov?
The work items permitted on Yom Tov are: Kneading the dough, baking, slaughtering an animal, cooking, carrying from one domain to another, and extending a fire.
6. What Megillah is read on Sukkot and why?
The Megillah of Kohelet is read on Sukkot enabling us to consider the worthiness of life's true meaning and happiness.
7. One is permitted to cook on Yom Tov. May we cook food for a non-Jewish guest on Yom Tov? May we cook for a Jewish-owned pet (e.g. a dog) on Yom Tov?
One is not permitted to cook for a non-Jew or a pet.
8. What is omitted from the regular Friday night davening on Shabbat Chol HaMoed, and why?
We omit Kabbalat Shabbat because we do not need the prayers to elevate us from weekday to Shabbat since we are already in the midst of the spiritual elevation of Yom Tov.
9. What is significantly different between the Amidah of Shacharit and the Amidah of Mussaf on Shabbat Chol HaMoed?
The Shacharit Amidah of Shabbat is the regular Shabbat Shacharit with the additional inclusion of Ya'aleh V-Yavo. The Mussaf Amidah is the Mussaf of Yom Tov with the inclusion of the additional reference to Shabbat.
10. May a woman make a brachah if she eats in a Sukkah?
A woman may fulfill the mitzvah of eating in the Sukkah. According to Ashkenazim she does make a brachah. According to Sephardim she does not make a brachah.

One of the specific commandments for Sukkot is to rejoice. In this rejoicing, we also are to eat well-prepared foods, drink wine, have sweets, and buy nice clothing. While this is all nice, it is only physical pleasure. True spiritual pleasure comes from the joy of recognizing and understanding that we merit coming under G-d's Divine protection as we serve G-d. While we are commanded to rejoice in all the holidays, Sukkot has special significance because of its temporary dwelling. We live in this world as a temporary dwelling and we have an opportunity to make the most of it.

Good Shabbos! Good Moed!

Rabbi Nathan W. Langer