

בְּסֶפֶת תֵּשְׁבוּ ...

סֵדֶר

אוֹשְׁפִיזִין

וְאוֹשְׁפִיזָן

**Service
of Welcoming
“Ushpizin” & “Ushpizan”
to the Sukka
on the Festival of Sukkoth**

✧ Traditional Hebrew Text with Egalitarian Additions ✧

✧ Modern English Translation ✧

The ceremony of welcoming ushpizin originated in the Jewish mystical tradition of Qabbala, for which the ushpizin represented the divine emanations called "sefirot", in the context of the sukka as a representation of Ultimate Redemption. Because of this mystical association, the ceremony was rejected by some communities (such as Spanish and Portuguese Jews) and individuals (such as diehard rationalists). Without applying mystical implications, however, we can see this ritual as a symbol of how we bring into our lives diverse aspects of Jewish history and tradition as we navigate our spiritual journeys. Below are some questions that may stimulate discussion appropriate to each of the ushpizin. Encourage those in the sukka to ask their own questions.

Abraham: *What are our ultimate commitments? How do we know whether they are spiritually and morally right?*

Sara: *How can we nurture unabashed laughter even when confronted by difficult realities?*

Isaac: *How do we understand the spiritual implications of sacrifice, both willing and unwilling?*

Miriam: *What should we do to find inspiration for spiritual joy? How do we help others experience it?*

Jacob: *What does it mean to leave home in order to create family? How do we understand spirituality as a journey?*

Deborah: *How do we reconcile harmful consequences with acting in a just cause? What are the responsibilities of influence?*

Moses: *How can leaders inspire spiritual development?*

Hanna: *What is the role of prayer in our lives?*

Aaron: *How do we mesh ritual and spirituality?*

Abigail: *When we go out into the world, how can we remain open to spiritual experience amidst the everyday?*

Joseph: *How can we use our life dreams to further spiritual goals?*

Hulda: *How can we connect our everchanging spiritual life to fixed religious texts.*

David: *What are the spiritual implications of power and control?*

Esther: *How do we manage our different roles in the world to sustain our spiritual identities amidst secular challenges?*

בְּמָטוּ מִיָּנֶדֶד דָּוִד אוֹשְׁפִיז עֵילָא דִּיתְבִּי עַמִּי
 וְעַמְדָּא כָּל אוֹשְׁפִיזִין עֵילָאִין אַבְרָהָם יִצְחָק
 יַעֲקֹב מֹשֶׁה אֶהְרֹן וְיוֹסֵף:

בְּמָטוּ מִיָּנֶדֶד אֶסְתֵּר אוֹשְׁפִיזָה עֵילָאָה דִּיתְבֹּן
 עַמִּי וְעַמְדָּא כָּל אוֹשְׁפִיזִין עֵילָאִין שָׂרָה מְרִים
 דְּבוֹרָה אַבִּיגַיִל חֲלֵדָה וְחַנָּה:

רַבּוֹן כָּל הָעוֹלָמִים, יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ שְׁתַּפְּרוֹשׁ
 עֲלֵינוּ סִכַּת שְׁלוֹמְךָ.

בְּרוּךְ ה' לְעוֹלָם, אָמֵן וְאָמֵן:”

Inviting the “Ushpizin” and “Ushpizan”¹

Enter, holy and sublime hosts².

Enter, holy and sublime leaders.

Enter, faithful hosts,

to sit in the shade of sublime faith,

in the shade of the Blessed Holy One,

in the shade of the Divine-Presence.

May Abraham the beloved enter, and with him Isaac the bound, and with him Jacob the complete, and with him Moses the faithful shepherd, and with him Aaron the holy priest, and with him Joseph the righteous, and with him David the anointed king.

May Sarah the blessed enter, and with her Miriam the prophet, and with her Deborah the judge, and with her Hanna the prayerful, and with her Abigail the rider, and with her Hulda the teacher, and with her Esther the queen.

We are now prepared to fulfill the commandment of the sukka, as the Creator commanded:

“In sukkoth shall you dwell for seven days — each native among Israel shall dwell in sukkoth — in order that your generations will know that I caused the Israelites to dwell in sukkoth when I brought them out from the land of Egypt. I am Adonay your God.”³

¹ English translation and notes © 2008 Hayyim Obadyah.

² The word “ushpizin” is often translated as “guests”, but in Aramaic, it actually refers to hosts, such as innkeepers. The implication here is that when we enter the sukka, we symbolically enter a celestial realm, where redemption is a reality, and are hosted by the celestial figures who are our spiritual ancestors. Although some use “Ushpizoth” as the feminine plural, but that uses a Hebrew form; the appropriate Aramaic form is “Ushpizan”.

³ Leviticus 23:42.

עוֹלוֹ אוֹשְׁפִיזִין עֵילָאִין קַדִּישִׁין,
 עוֹלִין אוֹשְׁפִיזִין עֵילָאִן קַדִּישִׁין,
 עוֹלוֹ אַבְהֹן עֵילָאִין קַדִּישִׁין,
 עוֹלִין אַמְהֹתָן עֵילָאִן קַדִּישִׁין,
 לְמִיתַב בְּצִלָּא דְמַהִימְנוּתָא עֲלָאָה,
 בְּצִלָּא דְקַדְשָׁא בְרִידָה הוּא.
 בְּצִלָּא דְשְׁכִינְתָּא.

לְעוֹל אַבְרָהָם רְחִימָא, וְעַמִּיּה יִצְחָק עֶקֶדָא, וְעַמִּיּה
 יַעֲקֹב שְׁלֵמָא, וְעַמִּיּה מִנְשֵׁה רַעֲיָא מְהִימְנָא, וְעַמִּיּה
 אֶהְרֹן כְּהֵנָּא קַדִּישָׁא, וְעַמִּיּה יוֹסֵף צַדִּיקָא, וְעַמִּיּה
 דָּוִד מְלֻכָּא מְשִׁיחָא.

תְּעוֹל שָׁרָה בְּרִיכְתָּא, וְעַמָּה מְרִים נְבִיאָתָא, וְעַמָּה
 דְּבוֹרָה דִּינָתָא, וְעַמָּה חַנָּה מְצַלְתָּא, וְעַמָּה אַבְיגַיִל
 רְכִיבָתָא, וְעַמָּה חַלְדָּה מְלַפְנָתָא, וְעַמָּה אֶסְתֵּר
 מְלַכְתָּא.

הַרִינוּ מוֹכְנִים וּמְזַמְנִים לְקִים מְצוֹת סְפָה כְּאֶשֶׁר צִוָּה הַבּוֹרָא יִתְבָּרַךְ שְׁמוֹ:
 בְּסִכָּת תִּשְׁבּוּ שְׁבַעַת יָמִים כָּל־הָאֲזָרַח בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׁבּוּ
 בְּסִכָּת: לְמַעַן יִדְעוּ דְרִתִּיכֶם כִּי בְּסִכּוֹת הוֹשְׁבְתִי
 אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּהוֹצִיאִי אוֹתָם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם
 אֲנִי ה' אֱ-לֹהֵיכֶם:

On the seventh night of Sukkoth:

Please, David, sublime host, may all the sublime hosts, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Aaron, and Joseph, sit [here] with me and with you.

Please, Esther sublime host, may all the sublime hosts, Sara, Miriam, Deborah, Hanna, Abigail, and Hulda, and, sit [here] with me and with you.

You Who Transcends All Worlds, may You consent to spread over us the sukka of Your peace. Blessed is Adonay forever, amen and amen.¹⁶

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ביום החמישי אומרים:

בְּמָטוּ מִיַּד אֱהָרֹן אוֹשְׁפִיז עֵילָא דִּיתְבִי עָמִי וְעַמְדָּ
כָּל אוֹשְׁפִיזִין עֵילָאִין אַבְרָהָם יִצְחָק יַעֲקֹב מֹשֶׁה
יוֹסֵף וְדָוִד:

בְּמָטוּ מִיַּד אַבְיָגִיל אוֹשְׁפִיזָה עֵילָאָה דִּיתְבֹן עָמִי
וְעַמְדָּ כָּל אוֹשְׁפִיזִין עֵילָאִין שָׂרָה מְרִים דְּבוֹרָה חֲנָה
חֲלֵדָה וְאַסְתֵּר:

רְבוֹן כָּל הָעוֹלָמִים, יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ שֶׁתִּפְרוֹשׂ עָלֵינוּ
סִכַּת שְׁלוֹמְךָ.

בְּרוּךְ ה' לְעוֹלָם, אָמֵן וְאָמֵן¹⁵

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ביום הששי אומרים:

בְּמָטוּ מִיַּד חֲלֵדָה אוֹשְׁפִיזָה עֵילָאָה דִּיתְבֹן עָמִי
וְעַמְדָּ כָּל אוֹשְׁפִיזִין עֵילָאִין שָׂרָה מְרִים דְּבוֹרָה אַבְיָגִיל
חֲנָה וְאַסְתֵּר:

בְּמָטוּ מִיַּד יוֹסֵף אוֹשְׁפִיז עֵילָא דִּיתְבִי עָמִי וְעַמְדָּ כָּל
אוֹשְׁפִיזִין עֵילָאִין אַבְרָהָם יִצְחָק יַעֲקֹב מֹשֶׁה אֱהָרֹן
וְדָוִד:

רְבוֹן כָּל הָעוֹלָמִים, יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ שֶׁתִּפְרוֹשׂ עָלֵינוּ
סִכַּת שְׁלוֹמְךָ.

בְּרוּךְ ה' לְעוֹלָם, אָמֵן וְאָמֵן:

On the first night of Sukkoth.

Recite Qiddush (with the blessings on wine and on sanctification of the day), as given in festival prayerbooks. Recite the blessing upon sitting in the sukka and then the blessing of sheheheyenu. Sit and drink the wine. Wash the hands and recite the blessing before drying them. Recite the blessing over bread, then dip it in honey and eat. [Some have the custom to wash the hands with blessing before Qiddush.]

On the second night of Sukkoth:

Recite Qiddush (with the blessings on wine and on sanctification of the day), as given in festival prayerbooks, [on Saturday night, the habdalla, with blessings on the light and on the separation of days]. Recite the blessing of sheheheyenu and then the blessing upon sitting in the sukka. Sit and drink the wine. Wash the hands and recite the blessing before drying them. Recite the blessing over bread, then dip it in honey and eat.

On the intermediate Sabbath:

Recite Qiddush (with the blessings on wine and on sanctification of the day), as given in festival prayerbooks, and the blessing upon sitting in the sukka. Sit and drink the wine. Wash the hands and recite the blessing before drying them. Recite the blessing over bread, then dip it in honey and eat.

On other nights:

Wash the hands and recite the blessing before drying them. Recite the blessing over bread and upon sitting in the sukka. Sit. Dip the bread in honey and eat. [Some have the custom to recite the blessing upon sitting in the sukka after the blessing of washing the hands and before the blessing over bread.]

The blessing upon sitting in the sukka.

Blessed are You, Adonay our God, universal Sovereign, Who sanctified us with Your commandments and commanded us to sit in the sukka.

בערב יום ראשון:

מברכים על היין ועל היום, [במוצאי שבת מברכים על הנר והמבדיל], מברכים לישיב בסוכה ויושבים. מברכים שהחיינו, על נטילת ידיים, והמוציא. מבצע וטובל חלה בדבש.

בערב יום שני:

מברכים על היין ועל היום, [במוצאי שבת מברכים על הנר והמבדיל], מברכים שהחיינו ולישיב בסוכה. יושבים. מברכים על נטילת ידיים והמוציא. מבצע וטובל חלה בדבש.

בערב שבת חול המועד:

מברכים על היין ועל היום. מברכים לישיב בסוכה ויושבים. מברכים על נטילת ידיים והמוציא. מבצע וטובל חלה בדבש.

בחול המועד:

מברכים על נטילת ידיים והמוציא. מברכים לישיב בסוכה ויושבים. מבצע וטובל חלה בדבש.

ברכת סוכה

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מְלֶכֶּךָ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר
קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ לֵישֵׁב בַּסֹּכָה:

יושבים

Note: Originally only seven men were identified as Ushpizin. Now, however, we include seven women named in the Talmud (Megilla 14a) as prophetesses. The RaMaK, Rabbi Moses ben Jacob Cordovero, in 16th century Safed, associated each of these women with the 'sefirot' of the qabbala. According to a tradition recorded in the 17th century by talmudist and kabbalist Rabbi Menachem Azariah da Fano of Italy, these seven prophetesses should also be invited into the sukka as ushpizan.

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On the fifth night of Sukkoth:

Please, Aaron, sublime host, may all the sublime hosts, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Joseph, and David, sit [here] with me and with you.

Please, Abigail, sublime host, may all the sublime hosts, Sara, Miriam, Deborah, Hanna, Hulda, and Esther, sit [here] with me and with you.

You Who Transcends All Worlds, may You consent to spread over us the sukka of Your peace. Blessed is Adonay forever, amen and amen.¹⁴

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On the sixth night of Sukkoth:

Please, Hulda, sublime host, may all the sublime hosts, Sara, Miriam, Deborah, Hanna, Abigail, and Esther, sit [here] with me and with you.

Please, Joseph, sublime host, may all the sublime hosts, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Aaron, and David, sit [here] with me and with you.

You Who Transcends All Worlds, may You consent to spread over us the sukka of Your peace. Blessed is Adonay forever, amen and amen.

ביום השלישי אומרים:

בְּמָטוּ מִיָּנֶדֶד יַעֲקֹב אוֹשְׁפִיז עֵילָא דִּיתְבִּי עָמִי וְעַמְדָּ
כָּל אוֹשְׁפִיזִין עֵילָאִין אַבְרָהָם יַצְחָק מֹשֶׁה אֶהְרֹן
יוֹסֵף וְדָוִד:

בְּמָטוּ מִיָּנֶדֶד דְּבוּרָה אוֹשְׁפִיזָה עֵילָאָה דִּיתְבֹּן עָמִי
וְעַמְדָּ כָּל אוֹשְׁפִיזִין עֵילָאִין שָׂרָה מְרִים חֲנָה אַבְיָגַיִל
חֲלָדָה וְאַסְתֵּר:

רְבוּן כָּל הָעוֹלָמִים, יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ שְׂתַפְרוֹשׁ עָלֵינוּ
סַכַּת שְׁלוֹמְךָ.

בְּרוּךְ ה' לְעוֹלָם, אָמֵן וְאָמֵן: 13

ביום הרביעי אומרים:

בְּמָטוּ מִיָּנֶדֶד חֲנָה אוֹשְׁפִיזָה עֵילָאָה דִּיתְבֹּן עָמִי וְעַמְדָּ
כָּל אוֹשְׁפִיזִין עֵילָאִין שָׂרָה מְרִים דְּבוּרָה אַבְיָגַיִל חֲלָדָה
וְאַסְתֵּר:

בְּמָטוּ מִיָּנֶדֶד מֹשֶׁה אוֹשְׁפִיז עֵילָא דִּיתְבִּי עָמִי וְעַמְדָּ כָּל
אוֹשְׁפִיזִין עֵילָאִין אַבְרָהָם יַצְחָק יַעֲקֹב אֶהְרֹן יוֹסֵף
וְדָוִד:

רְבוּן כָּל הָעוֹלָמִים, יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ שְׂתַפְרוֹשׁ עָלֵינוּ
סַכַּת שְׁלוֹמְךָ.

בְּרוּךְ ה' לְעוֹלָם, אָמֵן וְאָמֵן:

קבלת אושפיזין ואושפיזין

תִּיבוּ תִיבוּ אוֹשְׁפִיזִין עֵילָאִין.
תִּיבִין תִּיבִין אוֹשְׁפִיזִין קַדִּישִׁין.
תִּיבִין תִּיבִין אוֹשְׁפִיזַת מְהִימְנוּתָא.
תִּיבוּ בְּצִלָּא דְקַדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא.
תִּיבוּ בְּצִלָּא דְשְׂכִינְתָּא.

זַכָּאָה חוֹלְקָנָא וְזַכָּאָה חוֹלְקִיהוּן דִּישְׂרָאֵל
דְּכָתִיב כִּי חֵלֶק ה' עִמּוֹ יַעֲקֹב חֶבֶל נַחֲלָתוֹ:

אַזְמִין לְסַעוּדָתִי אוֹשְׁפִיזִין עֵילָאִין אַבְרָהָם
יַצְחָק יַעֲקֹב מֹשֶׁה אֶהְרֹן יוֹסֵף וְדָוִד:
אַזְמִין לְסַעוּדָתִי אוֹשְׁפִיזִין עֵילָאִין שָׂרָה מְרִים
דְּבוּרָה חֲנָה אַבְיָגַיִל חֲלָדָה וְאַסְתֵּר:

אומים „ במטו...“ בכל לילה ולילה.

תפלה כשיוצאין מן הסוכה:

יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אַבוֹתֵינוּ
וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲמוֹתֵינוּ כְּשֵׁם שְׁקִימְנוּ וְיִשְׁבְּנוּ בְּסוּכָה
זו כֹּן אֲזַכָּה לְשָׁנָה הַבָּאָה לִישֵׁב בְּסוּכָה שֶׁל
לוֹיְתוֹ:

Welcoming the “Ushpizin”.

Sit, sit, sublime hosts.
Sit, sit, holy hosts.
Sit, sit, faithful hosts.
Sit in the shade of the Blessed Holy One,
in the shade of the Divine-Presence.

Our portion⁵ with [all] Israel’s portion is pure, as it is written⁶: “Adonay’s portion is the people, Jacob is [God’s] own possession.”⁷

I invite to my meal⁸ the sublime hosts Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Aaron, Joseph, and David.
I invite to my meal the sublime hosts Sara, Miriam, Deborah, Hanna, Abigail, Hulda, and Esther.

The relevant individual welcome for each night, on the following pages, is recited.

When taking leave of the sukka at the end of the holiday:

May it be acceptable to You, Adonay our God, God of our ancestors, that as we established and sat in this sukka, so may we merit in the coming year to sit in the sukka of the messianic era⁹.

⁵ It is customary to send food to the poor before the festival, as חלק אושפיזין “the portion of the ushpizin”.

⁶ Deuteronomy 32:9.

⁷ **Adonai’s portion is the people, Jacob is [God’s] own possession.** Literally: “Adonai’s portion is His people; His apportioned possession is Jacob.”

⁸ Note that one invites the ushpizin to “my meal”, not to “my sukka”. This is consistent with understanding the ushpizin as the hosts, not the guests. We provide the meal, but the sukka represents the realm of the Almighty.

⁹ **the sukka of the messianic era.** Literally: “the sukka of Leviathan”, referring to the midrash that after the Messiah comes, the Almighty will build for the righteous a sukka from the skin of the Leviathan defeated in the final battle.

3

On the third night of Sukkoth:

Please, Jacob, sublime host, may all the sublime hosts, Abraham, Isaac, Moses, Aaron, Joseph, and David, sit [here] with me and with you.

Please, Deborah, sublime host, may all the sublime hosts, Sara, Miriam, Hanna, Abigail, Hulda, and Esther, sit [here] with me and with you.

You Who Transcends All Worlds, may You consent to spread over us the sukka of Your peace.
Blessed is Adonay forever, amen and amen.¹²

4

On the fourth night of Sukkoth:

Please, Hanna, sublime host, may all the sublime hosts, Sara, Miriam, Deborah, Abigail, Hulda, and Esther, sit [here] with me and with you.

Please, Moses, sublime host, may all the sublime hosts, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Aaron, Joseph, and David, sit [here] with me and with you.

You Who Transcends All Worlds, may You consent to spread over us the sukka of Your peace.

Blessed is Adonay forever, amen and amen.

¹² Psalms 89:53.

1

On the first night of Sukkoth:

Please, Abraham, sublime host, may all the sublime hosts, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Aaron, Joseph, and David, sit [here] with me and with you.

Please, Sara, sublime host, may all the sublime hosts, Miriam, Deborah, Hanna, Abigail, Hulda, and Esther, sit [here] with me and with you.

You Who Transcends All Worlds, may You consent to spread over us the sukka of Your peace.

Blessed is Adonay forever, amen and amen.¹¹

2

On the second night of Sukkoth:

Please, Miriam, sublime host, may all the sublime hosts, Sara, Deborah, Hanna, Abigail, Hulda, and Esther, sit [here] with me and with you.

Please, Isaac, sublime host, may all the sublime hosts, Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Aaron, Joseph, and David, sit [here] with me and with you.

You Who Transcends All Worlds, may You consent to spread over us the sukka of Your peace.

Blessed is Adonay forever, amen and amen.

¹¹ Psalms 89:53.

1

ביום הראשון אמרים:

בְּמָטוֹ מִיִּנְךָ אֲבָרְהָם אוֹשְׁפִיז עֵילָא דִּיתְבֵּי עַמִּי
וְעַמְךָ כָּל אוֹשְׁפִיזִין עֵילָאִין יִצְחָק יַעֲקֹב מִשָּׁה
אַהֲרֹן יוֹסֵף וְדָוִד:

בְּמָטוֹ מִיִּנְךָ שָׂרָה אוֹשְׁפִיזָה עֵילָאָה דִּיתְבֹּן עַמִּי
וְעַמְךָ כָּל אוֹשְׁפִיזִין עֵילָאִין מֶרֶם דְּבוֹרָה חַנָּה
אַבִּיגַיִל חַלְדָּה וְאַסְתֵּר:

רְבוֹן כָּל הָעוֹלָמִים, יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ שְׁתַּפְּרוֹשׁ
עַלֵּינוּ סִכַּת שְׁלוֹמְךָ.

בְּרוּךְ ה' לְעוֹלָם, אָמֵן וְאָמֵן:¹⁰

2

ביום השני אומרים:

בְּמָטוֹ מִיִּנְךָ מֶרֶם אוֹשְׁפִיזָה עֵילָאָה דִּיתְבֹּן עַמִּי
וְעַמְךָ כָּל אוֹשְׁפִיזִין עֵילָאִין שָׂרָה דְּבוֹרָה חַנָּה
אַבִּיגַיִל חַלְדָּה וְאַסְתֵּר:

בְּמָטוֹ מִיִּנְךָ יִצְחָק אוֹשְׁפִיז עֵילָא דִּיתְבֵּי עַמִּי
וְעַמְךָ כָּל אוֹשְׁפִיזִין עֵילָאִין אֲבָרְהָם יַעֲקֹב מִשָּׁה
אַהֲרֹן יוֹסֵף וְדָוִד:

רְבוֹן כָּל הָעוֹלָמִים, יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ שְׁתַּפְּרוֹשׁ
עַלֵּינוּ סִכַּת שְׁלוֹמְךָ.

בְּרוּךְ ה' לְעוֹלָם, אָמֵן וְאָמֵן:

¹⁰ תהילים פ"ט פסוק נ"ג.