

A Thought for Shabbat

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Shabbat Shalom

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This week we celebrate the holy days of Sukkot, The Festival of Booths. It is a holiday based on the harvest, on the exodus from Egypt, of God's existence in the world and on the changing of the seasons. The sukkah, the temporary booth built outside the home, is symbolic of the Jewish home, among many other meanings.

As we reflect on the sukkah, let's consider if the themes of Sukkot are found within our actual homes, or are these ideas as temporary as the sukkah itself?

Harvest—what blooms in our homes? Is it a place for growth and maturation for all? Are our homes places where our souls, as well as our bodies, are nourished? Do we give thanks for the many blessings that pervade our homes like the ancients did at the time of the harvest?

Exodus—As we raise our children, are we preparing them for the journey ahead or are we creating a dependency so as to keep them from truly leaving, from sincerely making exodus from their home of birth to their home of independence, so that they discover their own promised land?

God—Is God to be found in any way, shape or form in our homes? Are we aware of, and do we acknowledge the Source from which our lives derived? Do we have the spirituality to pause, reflect and celebrate the Divine nature of our families within our home settings?

Changing of the Seasons—The environment around us changes every day (or four times a year technically—Winter, Spring, Summer and Fall). Do we allow for such change, development and rejuvenation within our homes?

Sukkot is the impetus to consider what takes place within our homes. If we want to elevate the spirit of our family life, let us answer these questions with honesty and then strive to make them come to fruition.