



What's the most important part of any major event?



What's the most important part of any major event? Programmers say it is the follow up.

The value of the day is not what happens on that day, rather the impact of that day and the days, months and years that follow.

We have an outstanding example of this in the Jewish calendar. There is only one event in our calendar, which does not take place on the anniversary of what it celebrates or commemorates, which is the festival of Succot.

The Torah tells us, 'Bassuccot teshevu shiv'at yamim' – 'You must dwell in Succot in booths for seven days' (Leviticus 23:42-43). 'Ki vassuccot hoshavti et benei yisra'el behotzi'i otam me'erezt mitzrayim' – 'Because Hashem said I caused the children of Israel to dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt'.

Therefore, if Succot was to be celebrated at the right time of the year, we would be having our Pesach Seder in a Succah, can you imagine that? Hashem and His wisdom moved Succot to a different time of year to take place immediately after Yom Kippur, so that we can translate our resolutions of the Holiest day of the year, into action through this festival.

This year, I believe, that there is one particular way in which we need to guarantee that Succot will provide us with adequate follow-up.

On Yom Kippur, we pray to Hashem – 'veye'asu chullam aguddah echat la'asot retzonecha belevav shalem' – 'may all come together within one united band to perform the will of Hashem Our God'. We recognise the importance of Jewish unity.

During the festival of Succot, we bring the four kinds together and we clasp them as one, where we recite the Bracha in order to show that we can only properly bless God and hope for His blessing and salvation if we together are one united people.

As we now emerge into the New Year, let us not just pray for Jewish unity within the state of Israel and throughout the Jewish world, let us all do whatever we can to guarantee 'veye'asu chullam aguddah echat' – 'that we will form one single united band of Jews to perform the will of Hashem' and with that power, may we emerge with peace, with unity and with a wonderful New Year. I wish you all Chag Sameach.