



# Ushpizin Bites

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**W**e've all heard of—and perhaps been granted—surprise guests; they are particularly prevalent during the every-day-is-Shabbos-or-Yom-Tov month of Tishrei, which of course adds to the excitement (and the frenzy) of the season.

But, have you ever heard of invisible guests?

Oddly enough, you have. Every year, as we pack guests into our *sukkahs* to share in the contagious joy of Yom Tov, we remind ourselves of the spiritual, exalted guests - the *Ushpizin P'lain* - who grace our presence in a very real, albeit much less tangible (and much more cost-efficient) way than our guests of flesh-and-blood.

But wouldn't it be even nicer if we could see these guests? If they could become a little more "visible"?

Well, they can become visible. That is, to the mind's eye. All it takes is a little bit of learning.

Not feeling that Tishrei is prime time for pouring over text to understand and prepare an award-winning d'var Torah? Fear not! Embrace has got you covered.

We present you with "Ushpizin Bites" - short Ushpizin snippets that you can snip (or rip, if short on time or scissors) out of the Embrace and bring to your table. These light but meaningful, informative insights will hopefully make the special *ushpizin* at your table a little more visible to you and your (physical) guests.

Cut, share, inspire. And have a *gut yom tov!*



### Night 1 - ט"ו תשרי

*Ushpiz: Avraham Avinu*

*Chassidische Ushpiz: Baal Shem Tov*

Simchas Bais Hasho'evah involves the drawing and pouring of water, and water is something that tonight's *ushpizin* are both very connected to. Of Avraham, we say, "Remember [Avraham our] father who followed You like water." The Baal Shem Tov, as we know, was the one who initiated the *wellsprings* of Chassidus. Being that water travels downward, it represents the drawing down of forces from the loftiest of levels to the very lowest - alluding to the descent of a neshoma to this world, the lowest of all worlds. Every Yid has, as an inheritance from Avraham, a neshoma; the Baal Shem Tov further emphasized that this is true of even the simplest Yid. Our avodah is to ensure that this essence trickles down to and permeates all matters of our lives — down to the "lowest" of our faculties: our behavior<sup>1</sup>.



### Night 2 - ט"ז תשרי

*Ushpiz: Yitzchak Avinu*

*Chassidische Ushpiz: Maggid of Mezritch*

The similarity between tonight's *ushpizin* is that both never left their places of residence; Yitzchok remained in Eretz Yisrael for his entire life, and the Maggid did not leave Mezritch from the time he became Rebbe. However, we can also observe an area in which they differ; while Yitzchok is distinguished from the other

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*avos* as being an '*olah temimah*,' we find that the Maggid is distinguished from all the other Rebbeim in that he is the only one whose connection to Chassidus came later in his life. Unlike the Rebbeim before him, the Maggid spent many years without any connection to Chassidus. The contrasting aspects of their backgrounds demonstrate how the quality of influencing the world even while staying in one place, can be possessed both by someone raised within a particular approach of avodas Hashem (Yitzchok) and by someone who chose their approach to their avodah through their own initiative (the Maggid<sup>2</sup>).



### Night 3 - י"ז תשרי

*Ushpiz: Yaakov Avinu*

*Chassidische Ushpiz: Alter Rebbe*

In contrast to Yitzchok, Yaakov's *avodah* took place specifically *outside* Eretz Yisroel. And yet, even in the lowly place of Charan (home to Lavan Harasha), his avodah was complete and perfect. Yaakov's mission was to spread the holiness of Eretz Yisroel to the outside world. This mission is actually alluded to in his name: the letters of the word 'Yaakov' form the word 'Yiboka,' which means to 'burst forth.' This is the nature of kedusha: it does not remain within the boundaries of Eretz Yisroel, but bursts and spills forth *outside*. The innovation of the Alter Rebbe in revealing Chabad Chassidus had a similar effect. Chabad Chassidus provided an intellectual framework for the study of deep, esoteric ideas. Intellect is intrinsically cold, devoid of warmth and emotion, but Chabad Chassidus brought 'life' to it through the warmth of these holy ideas.<sup>3</sup>



### Night 4 - י"ח תשרי

*Ushpiz: Moshe Rabeinu*

*Chassidische Ushpiz: Mitteler Rebbe*

Tonight's *ushpizin* are actually connected to an idea in this week's Chumash, which says, "The Torah which Moshe commanded us is an inheritance of the congregation of Yaakov." This possuk stresses the

unity of all Yidden, because the word “inheritance” implies that the Torah is passed to all of us equally, regardless of our standing. Moshe’s connection to this idea is obvious, but what about the Mittlerer Rebbe? The unique quality of the Mittlerer Rebbe was that he elaborated on the ideas of Chassidus at great length. Being that Torah is an inheritance, every Yid, even the simplest, not only has an *association* with the elaborate understanding of Chassidus, but such an in-depth understanding of Chassidus actually *belongs* to every Yid (just as an heir inherits everything). At the same time, it is not enough to *just* inherit it - we must take it, learn it, and make it personal.<sup>4</sup>



### Night 5 - י"ט תשרי

*Ushpiz: Aharon HaKohen*

*Chassidische Ushpiz: Tzemach Tzedek*

Peace is the quintessential quality of Aharon’s avodah. His avodah was, as expressed in the command to light the Menorah, “you shall *raise up* the lamps” — i.e. you should raise up the neshomos of Yidden and bring them close to Hashem. This was to be done in a way that “the seven lamps shall illuminate towards the center of the menorah,” which means that all of the seven lamps should be united in their illumination. This teaches us that although there are seven different categories of avodah, these different categories must be united. The idea of peace is also emphasized in the case of the Tzemach Tzedek, for during his times, there was peace among the Talmidei Chachomim, so much so that they actually helped one another. This was something that was not so apparent during the times of the previous Rebbeim.<sup>5</sup>



### Night 6 - כ' תשרי

*Ushpiz: Yosef HaTzadik*

*Chassidische Ushpiz: Rebbe Maharash*

On each night of Sukkos, there is a special reason to add to the joy of Simchas Bais Hasho’eva. (The Rebbe explains many reasons for this for each night of Yom Tov.) What’s the reason for adding to the rejoicing of Simchas Bais Hashoeva tonight? It is actually obvious from the name of tonight’s *ushpizin* — Yosef — which means to add. This concept of addition is closely related to simcha; the very nature of simcha is to join together with another and share one’s joy. The Rambam even goes so far as to say that this is the only way to attain true joy. In a similar vein, the Rebbe Maharash is most frequently connected with

his saying, “The world says one must try to crawl under and if one does not succeed, one should try to climb over. My first impulse is to climb over.” This approach, although relevant at all times, is particularly applicable to matters of Torah and mitzvos, and especially to matters connected with joy, because joy strongly compels one to go above one’s boundaries.<sup>6</sup>



### Night 7 - כ"א תשרי

*Ushpiz: Dovid HaMelech*

*Chassidische Ushpiz: Rebbe Rashab*

The extra joy of Hoshana Rabbah is emphasized by Dovid Hamelech and the Rebbe Rashab. The Frieddiker Rebbe describes the Rebbe Rashab as “The Rambam of Chassidus”. This is because he took the Chassidus of the Alter Rebbe, the Mittlerer Rebbe, and the Tzemach Tzedek, with their differing opinions on various concepts, and offered the *final* decision and result - similar to the Rambam’s work of rendering the final decision in *halacha*. The clarification of a subject causes great joy, as seen in the saying, “There is no greater joy than the elimination of doubts.” This idea is also found by Dovid Hamelech. A king is the final arbiter, the one who lays down the actual law. While a king may take guidance from his advisors, as we find was the case with Dovid Hamelech when he would discuss Torah matters with the members of the Sanhedrin, the *main* function of a true Jewish king is to render decisions affecting actual behavior. The similarity between the two *ushpizin* of tonight is that both were engaged in rendering decisions in actual practice.<sup>7</sup> ■

1. Sicha, 1st Night of Sukkos, 5743

2. Sicha, 2nd Night of Sukkos, 5745

3. Sicha, 3rd Night of Sukkos, 5742

4. Sicha, 4th Night of Sukkos, 5744

5. Sicha, 5th Night of Sukkos, 5743

6. Sicha, 6th Night of Sukkos, 5741

7. Sicha, 7th Night of Sukkos, 5742

