

JEWISH HIGH HOLY DAYS

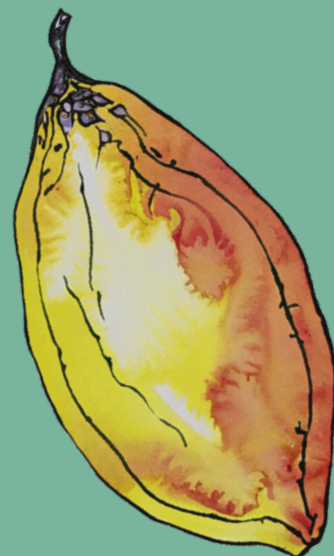
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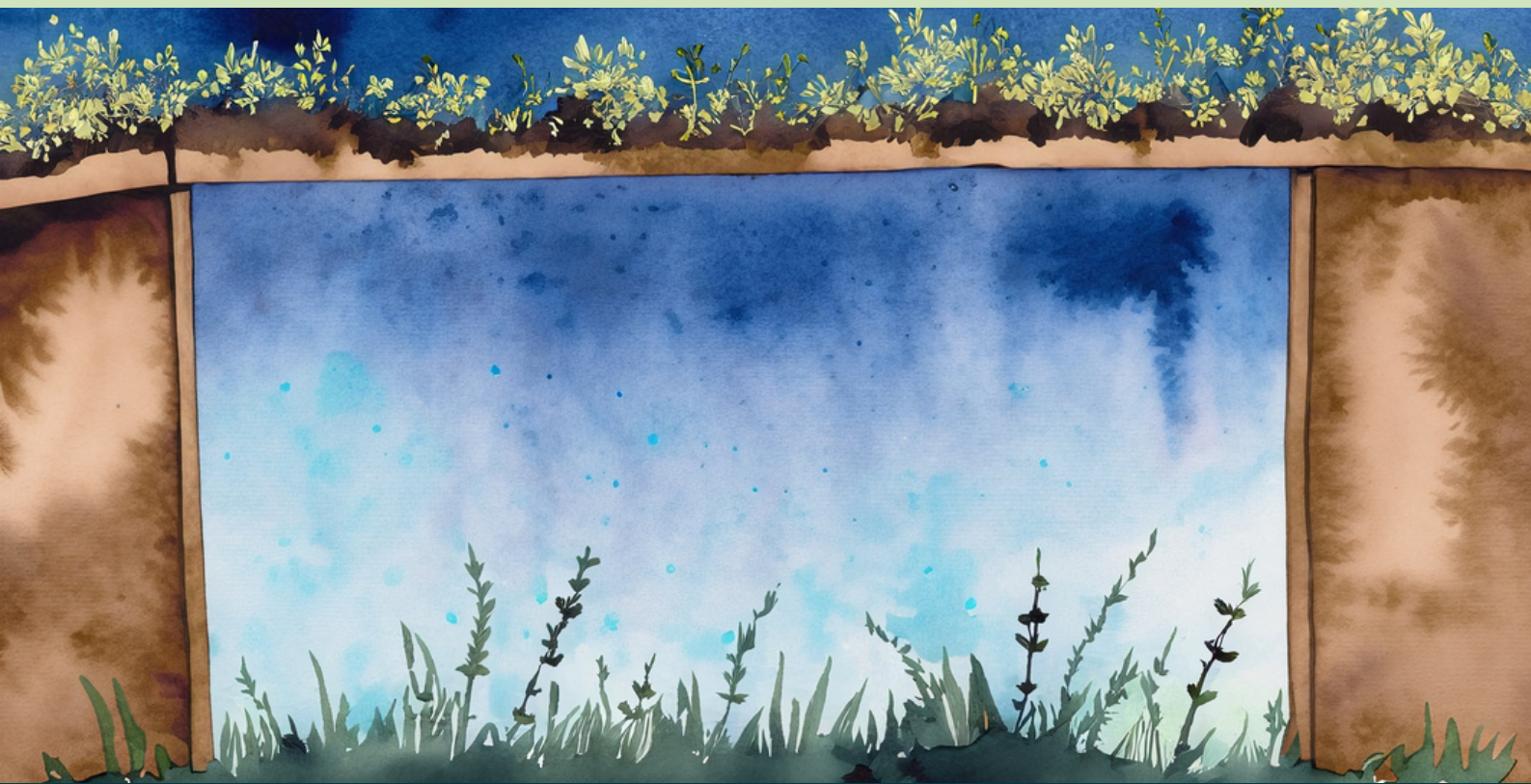
Sukkot

Evening of Friday, 29 Sept 2023 – Friday, 6 Oct 2023

Sh'mini Atzeret & Simchat Torah

Evening of Friday, October 6th - Sunday night, October 8th.





SUKKOT . SUKKOT

Beginning five days after Yom Kippur, Sukkot is a festival of unity and joy, filled with unique traditions and celebrations. The first two days (one day in progressive communities and Israel) people observing do not work. The rest of the festival, until Sh'mini Atzeret, are days where Jewish people can work as normal (except for usual sabbath prohibitions).

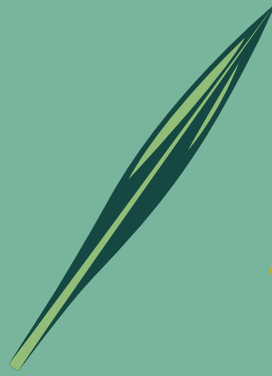
Sukkot is named after the 'succas' or 'booths' in English which are temporary structures many Jewish people erect outside their homes to eat, drink, study and some even sleep in.

These 'booths' remind us of when Israelites camped in the desert as well as how we rely on God's protection as much now as we did when we were exiles fleeing slavery in Biblical times.

Sukkot is the harvest festival. It was – and still is – a time for gladness and celebration at the gathering of the earth's bounty. At the same time, for our ancient ancestors, it was also a time of anxiety as they looked to the skies in anticipation of the rain that they needed to enable them to plant their seeds for the following year.



willow branches



a palm



etrog



myrtle

SUKKOT. SUKKOT. SUKKOT.

Many hold and wave the ‘Arba minim’ (‘four species’ in English) together to thank God for the bounty of the natural world and God’s power over it. The four species, depicted above, are the lulav (date palm), etrog (citrus), hadassah (myrtle branches) and aravah (willow branches). Each part, the palm branch, citrus, willow and myrtle represent different types of people, but we hold them together to show we are all one people and we should come together to celebrate and be the best we can be.

Suggested message for constituents or social media post:



Chag Sameach to all my Jewish constituents celebrating Sukkot!

Best time to post on social media:

Morning or early afternoon on Friday 29 Sept 2023

SIMCHAT TORAH



Immediately following Sukkot, we observe Sh'mini Atzeret and Simchat Torah. Sh'mini Atzeret is both the last day of the festival of Sukkot and also a new festival in and of itself. Among more traditional and Orthodox Jews outside of Israel, they are observed separately from one another on two consecutive days, while in Israel and progressive communities they are combined into a one day festival. Sh'mini Atzeret means the "Eighth Day of Assembly," while Simchat Torah means "Rejoicing in Torah."

Simchat Torah celebrates the conclusion of the annual cycle of reading the Torah and the recommencement of that cycle. The Torah, which is made up of the first five books of the Bible, is divided into weekly portions, which ensure that the entire text is read during the course of a year.

Simchat Torah is probably the most joyful festival of the year. It is an occasion when the Torah is celebrated, and Jews acknowledge the uniqueness of the teaching that is their heritage. The highlight of a Simchat Torah service is when the scrolls are paraded seven times around the synagogue accompanied by children waving flags. At the end of each circuit, sweets are traditionally thrown or shared with the congregation.



SIMCHAT TORAH

The whole event is symbolic of a marriage between the Jewish people and the Torah. The highest honours a person can receive at a synagogue is to be 'called up' to read the last words of the Torah or be called up to read the first words of Torah immediately after. The one who performs the first mitzvah concluding the Book of Deuteronomy reading is called the 'Chatan Torah' (bridegroom of the Torah); the other 'Chatan Bereishit' (bridegroom of Genesis).

Because of its emphasis on equality, progressive streams of Judaism encourage female members of the congregation to take the honour of being 'Kallat Torah' or Kallat B'reishit' (bride of the Torah and Genesis). Similarly, women and girls are encouraged to play a full part in carrying the Torah scrolls around the synagogue. Taking either of these roles is considered to be a special honour.

Suggested message for constituents or social media post:



Wishing all my Jewish constituents celebrating Simchat Torah a Chag Sameach! or simply Chag Sameach!

Best time to post on social media:

Morning or early afternoon of Friday, October 6th



The JLC connects and coordinates the Jewish charitable sector, strengthens and supports leadership across our community, and magnifies and amplifies the collective voice of our member organisations.

Contact the JLC:

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If you would like to find out more about Sukkot and Simchat Torah visit My Jewish Learning's [educational resource](#).

Website: www.thejlc.org



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