

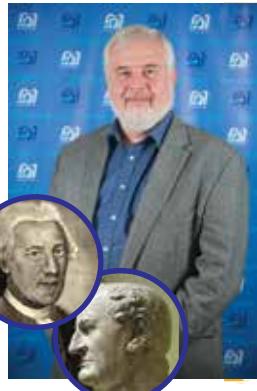
My Ushpizin

Israeli Rabbis invite guests to their Sukkah



Rabbi Dubi Haiun | Congregation Moria- Haifa

The first person that I would like to invite to my Sukkah is King Saul. I would ask him how he explains the fact that he who united the divided People of Israel then conceded without much of a fight to David, the red-head rebel. The second is Henryk Goldszmit, otherwise known as Janusz Korczak, a figure who has been inspiring me spiritually for many years. I would talk to him about education and identity, humanity and helping others, sacrifice for one's fellow man and about caring for children.



Rabbi Yosef Kleiner | Congregation Moreshet Avraham- Jerusalem

I would invite Rabban Jochanan Ben Zakkai, since he knew how to create a bridge between the Torah and between the demands of reality, without sacrificing the Torah, and without ignoring reality. I would invite Jacob Rodrigues Pereire, because he returned to his Judaism in a society that preferred assimilation, and he was the first that dared to teach the deaf to communicate with those around them and to integrate them in the society that surrounded them.

Haya Bat Haim David and Shmuel Hirsch Ben Eliezer – my mother and father, may they rest in peace. I would choose them because despite the fact that they were born into families that had become distanced from Jewish sources, they knew how to search for the meaning of Judaism, to renew the Jewish spirit, and to provide their children with the keys to continue the search. Thanks to the anonymous Jews that they represent, Judaism continues.

Rabbi Chaya Rowen Baker | Congregation Ramot Zion- Jerusalem

Hmmm...this is a difficult question. There are so many...at the moment, I would like to invite Shimon Peres. I would like to hear what he has to say about how to keep galloping ahead, when you are exposed to so much hate and humiliation...How do you prevent this from crushing the desire to give? Where does one find the ability to expose oneself again and again to the difficulties that are part of serving the public?

Or perhaps we need to invite his father and mother and ask them how to rear a son with such a strong spirit.



Rabbi Eliyahu Peretz | Congregation Sinai - Tel Aviv

I would like to invite to my Sukkah Hannah Arendt, the German – American philosopher. During the 1930's, she demanded that the rights of Jews be respected, and in the moment of truth, although she experienced the depth of human evil, she proceeds to maintain a just society.



Rabbi Arie Hasit | Masorti Congregation in Mazkeret Batya

Sukkot is a time when we are meant to have a diversity of guests, and as a result, a diversity of opinions at our chag table. At times, that diversity leads to heated, and not always polite, conversation. For that reason, I would love to have Shammai and Hillel as my ushpizin at Sukkot. The two are our Jewish models for discussion and disagreement--disagreeing for the sake of heaven--but even more importantly, even when they disagreed, they continued to recognize the validity of the other's opinions.



Rabbi Shmuel Rosenberg | Congregation Tiferet Shalom- Tel Aviv

The first guest and the one that I would most like to invite is Maimonides (the Rambam), both because he is the only individual for whom I ever felt a feeling of veneration, and because I owe him my entire religious life. The second guest would be the Lubavitcher Rebbe (Menachem Mendel Schneerson). I would be willing to give anything to conduct a five minute conversation with him in private. The third guest would be my grandfather, Shmuel Ofer, for whom I am named. He influenced my life greatly, and still does, despite the fact that I never met him. He died when my mother was ten years old.



Rabbi Sandra Kochmann | Masortit Mishpachtit Beit Hakerem- Jerusalem

I would be glad to have the opportunity to invite my Great Grandmother, Haya Leah Goldman, of blessed memory. I would be happy to hear the story of her life: what it was like to leave Poland with young children, and arrive at a distant and unfamiliar location like Paraguay, in South America. What it was like to cope with all of the problems that immigrants have and raise a traditional Jewish family in a place nearly devoid of the conditions needed to do so. In particular, I would be curious to know what she would have thought of the fact that she has a great grand-daughter who is a rabbi.