

We are gathered here today to mourn the passing of Edith Kay, known to all simply as “Auntie”, Ita b. Bere. We extend our heartfelt condolences to her blood-niece, Miriam Rabinovitch, countless nephews, nieces, great-nephews and nieces and great-great nephews and nieces, along with all her surrogate nephews and nieces.

In just a few hours we’ll be starting the festival of Sukkot, so we do not recite the traditional eulogy or kel moleh memorial prayer, but let’s look at Edith’s life and the festival of Sukkot and derive a moral lesson from her life for all of us.

The Festival of Sukkot is about unity in three ways: Firstly, the mitzvah of Sukka is one of the only mitzvot where all limbs unite in performance of the mitzvah. Secondly, the mitzvah of Lulav & Etrog – as we know the four species represent all types of Jews coming together in unity. And thirdly, on Sukkot in the Temple we would offer 70 sacrifices in honour of all nations of the world, thus expressing our unity with the world as a whole.

Auntie Edith loved G-d, family and community. She loved coming to shul, from her early childhood in Russia. The family had their own Sefer Torah, and regretted that they didn’t bring it over from Russia.

Even as recently as this past Rosh Hashana, Auntie made it to shul, she so wanted to come for Yom Kippur services, but unfortunately just couldn’t make it.