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There is a well-known story about the Rebbe from Ropshitz who was late one Rosh Hashana coming to Tashlich. By the time he arrived, his Rebbe, the Chozeh M'Lublin was already returning. When his Rebbe asked him why he was late in coming, the Ropshitzer replied that he came to collect the Aveiros that the Chozeh M'Lublin threw away, in order that I should have more merits.

It is interesting to contrast the concept of Mayim Shelanu that we collect on Pesach, with the concept of Tashlich, of 'casting away', on Rosh Hashana. Whereas the custom of Mayim Shelanu symbolizes the gathering of Mitzvos, the custom of Tashlich symbolizes the throwing away of Aveiros.

The great-uncle of the U'LeLevi Omar, once explained to me based on the Zohar that the prohibition of cooking the Korban Pesach was similar to the prohibition of Basar B'Chalav, cooking milk and meat. The red color of the meat symbolizes Din, or 'Judgment'. The white of the milk symbolizes Rachamim, or 'Mercy'. Allowing the 'transfer of taste' between Din with Rachamim, so they are indistinguishable, as the taste of the milk is in the meat and the taste of the meat is in the milk', can be dangerous for Klal Yisroel. To reflect this, cooked mixtures of milk and meat are forbidden all year around. On Pesach, when Klal Yisroel was on the 49th level of Tumah, even water – which is not white, but translucent – is forbidden to be fused with meat. This is why the Torah prohibited Korban Pesach from being cooked in water. On Succos however, after the Rachamim has triumphed over Din, and the 'Ta'am' – the 'taste of Din' – has been annulled by the overwhelming quantity of Rachamim, the water can replace the blood that is poured on the Mizbayach. Accordingly, we have water libations on Succos and this is why we celebrate them in such a festive manner.

Another reason given by the Chassidim HaKadmonim for the water libations on Succos, is that water is compared to Torah. In this week's parsha we say, 'May my teachings drop like the rain, may my utterance flow like the dew' (Devarim 32:2). The rain and dew are compared to the Torah Sh'Bichtav and the Torah Sh'B'Al Peh. However, the waters deep beneath the ground are compared to the Torah HaNistar. After the entire nation has been forgiven for its transgressions on Yom Kippur, just as it was on the first Yom Kippur following the giving of the Torah and the Golden Calf, the 'wellsprings of Torah' were able to flow once again to Klal Yisroel, what we refer to as the Be'er Mayim Chaim, the Well of Living Water. By pouring water on the Mizbayach throughout Succos we are replenishing the 'aquifers of Torah' so that we may benefit from the Wellsprings of Torah throughout the year.

The Siftei Tzaddikim quotes the Apter Rav and explains that each of the seven exalted guests to our Sukkah – The Ushpizin – are connected to this Be'er Mayim Chaim, the wellsprings of Torat Nistar symbolized by the well water. The reason these seven exalted guests are called the seven shepherds is because they provided the water of Torah for those who depended on them and passed along the Toras HaNistar to the next generation. Avraham founded Be'er Sheva and dug many wells and Yitzchak 'dug anew the wells of water which they had dug in the days of Abraham' (Beraishis 26:18). Yaakov came to the well to meet Rachel, as did Moshe when he met Tziporah. Aharon (and Moshe) is referred to an officer who dug wells (see Bamidbar 21:18). Yosef was thrown into a dry well, as the Torah says 'the pit was empty, there was no water' (Beraishis 37:24). Finally, Dovid said, "Who will draw me water from the wells of Beit Lechem (Shmuel II 23:15). All seven shepherds embodied the Be'er Mayim Chaim and allowed those waters to flow to the rest of Klal Yisroel

May it be His will that we should merit to sit in the Sukkah of the Leviathan with the coming of the Go'el Tzedek speedily in our days.