

## Shemini Atzeret and Simchat Torah

Although *Shemini Atzeret* (Eighth Day of Assembly) and *Simchat Torah* (Rejoicing of the Torah) conclude the seven days of *Sukkot*, they are independent holidays. In Israel, they are celebrated together on one day; outside of Israel, *Shemini Atzeret* is followed by *Simchat Torah* on the ninth day.

*Simchat Torah* is perhaps the most joyously celebrated biblical holiday on the Jewish calendar. It marks the conclusion of the annual cycle of reading the Torah (the Five Books of Moses), immediately followed by beginning the cycle once again.

During both the evening and morning services, the highlight of the celebration is the seven processions around the synagogue with all the Torah scrolls. Usually everyone present has the opportunity to carry one of the Torahs, as well as receive an *aliyah* (the honor of being called up to the Torah). The seven processions are accompanied by lively singing and dancing (often in the streets), lasting several hours.

### THINGS TO DO:

- ▶ Experience being in a *sukkah*. (Hofstra Hillel's *sukkah* is located between the Mack Student Center and Alliance Hall, North Campus.)
- ▶ Remember the fragility of life, and make a difference in the lives of others.
- ▶ Wave a *lulav* and *etrog*.
- ▶ As the Torah reading cycle begins, celebrate by learning a new Jewish insight each day.
- ▶ In the spirit of *Simchat Torah*, share with friends one Jewish tradition you find especially joyful.



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For a virtual Jewish experience, visit  
[hofstrahillel.org/vje](https://hofstrahillel.org/vje).

