

ב"ה Torah Tidbits

ISSUE 1678

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ושמחת
בחגך

לפני ה'
תטהרו



שישו ושמחו
בשמחת תורה



SHABBAT SHUVA, YOM KIPPUR & SUKKOT ISSUE

פרשת האזינו (שבת שובה)
יום כיפור - סוכות
שמיני עצרת/שמחת תורה

This week's issue of Torah Tidbits is dedicated in loving memory of
MAX & ANITA KARL z"l and ERNESTO & MARIA SECOMANDI z"l
by the Robert & Nilza Karl Family



**Halachot of Dwelling
in the Sukkah**
Rabbi Eli Ozarowski Page 88



A Return in Uman
Shoshana Judelman
Page 78



YERUSHALAYIM ZMANIM

HA'AZINU: CANDLES 6:05PM • HAVDALA 7:17PM • RABBEINU TAM 7:57PM

YOM KIPPUR: CANDLES 6:02PM • HAVDALA 7:14PM • RABBEINU TAM 7:54PM

SUKKOT/SHABBAT: CANDLES 5:56PM • HAVDALA 7:07PM • RABBEINU TAM 7:47PM

SHMINI ATZERET/SHABBAT: CANDLES 5:47PM • HAVDALA 6:58PM • RABBEINU TAM 7:38PM



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IMPORTANT REMINDERS

-  Please see pages 50-55 for extensive halachot of Yom Kippur.
-  Please see pages 88-92 for extensive laws of Sukkah.
-  Kaparot and Birchot HaBanim are said Erev Yom Kippur.
-  Light a 24 hour candle before Yom Kippur to be used to light the flame of the Havdala candle.
-  Light Yizkor candles for loved ones before Yom Kippur and Shmini Atzeret.

CANDLE LIGHTING AND HAVDALA TIMES



OTHER Z'MANIM



	HA'AZINU		YOM KIPPUR	
	Candles	Havdallah	Candles	Havdallah*
Yerushalayim/Maale Adumim	6:05	7:17	6:02	7:14
Aza Area (Netivot, Sderot et al)	6:23	7:19	6:21	7:16
Beit Shemesh/RBS	6:24	7:18	6:21	7:15
Gush Etzion	6:21	7:17	6:19	7:14
	6:22	7:18	6:20	7:16
Modiin/Chashmonaim	6:22	7:18	6:19	7:15
Netanya	6:22	7:18	6:20	7:16
Be'er Sheva	6:22	7:18	6:20	7:15
Rehovot	6:22	7:18	6:20	7:16
Petach Tikva	6:05	7:18	6:02	7:15
Ginot Shomron	6:21	7:17	6:19	7:15
Haifa / Zichron	6:12	7:18	6:09	7:15
Gush Shiloh	6:21	7:16	6:18	7:14
Tel Aviv / Givat Shmuel	6:23	7:19	6:20	7:16
Givat Zeev	6:25	7:17	6:22	7:14
Chevron / Kiryat Arba	6:21	7:17	6:19	7:14
Ashkelon	6:23	7:19	6:21	7:17
Yad Binyamin	6:22	7:18	6:20	7:16
Tzfat / Bikat HaYarden	6:24	7:16	6:11	7:13
Golan	6:19	7:16	6:17	7:13
Nahariya/Maalot	6:11	7:18	6:08	7:15
Afula	6:21	7:17	6:18	7:14

Rabbeinu Tam (Jerusalem): Ha'azinu - 7:57 PM | Yom Kippur - 7:54 PM

All Times According to MyZmanim (20 mins before Sunset in most Cities;
40 mins in Yerushalayim and Petach Tikva; 30 mins in Tzfat, Nahariya, Maalot and Haifa)

*Light from a preexisting candle

Shabbat Ha'aznu Daf Yomi: Chulin 142

Zmanim for Sukkot & Shmini Atzeret can be found on page 98



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JERUSALEM

Ranges 18 days Wednesday - Shabbat
Sept. 16 - Oct. 2 | 5 - 22 Tishrei

Earliest Tallit and Tefillin	5:32-5:43
Sunrise	6:23-6:34
Sof Zman Kriat Shema	9:28-9:31
Magen Avraham	8:52-8:55
Sof Zman Tefila	10:30
(According to the Gra and Baal HaTanya)	
Chatzot (Halachic Noon)	12:33-12:27
Mincha Gedola (Earliest Mincha)	1:04-12:57
Plag Mincha	5:26-5:07
Sunset (Including Elevation)	6:48-6:25



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DEAR TORAH TIDBITS FAMILY

RABBI AVI BERMAN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, OU ISRAEL
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Growing up, I had the tremendous *zechut* of having all four of my grandparents with me until I was already a father myself. That is something I do not take for granted. I was born in the 1970s, and because of the Holocaust, having all four grandparents was rare among my friends.

One of the things my siblings and I would discuss growing up was which grandparents' house was more fun to visit: Grandma and Grandpa's, or Bubby and Zaidy's? Bubby and Zaidy used to buy us more toys, but Grandma and Grandpa had a bigger basement to play in. Bubby and Zaidy had sugary cereals, but Grandma and Grandpa always had much better cake, and they had a machine that made malted milkshakes.

We loved them dearly, and they always spoiled us.

That was a long time ago. My family made aliyah when I was nine, and that put a stop to the regular visits and comparisons, especially after Bubby and Zaidy themselves made aliyah in 1989.

But there was one thing that I will always remember from Grandma and Grandpa's Shabbat table in America. Many people have the custom of having honey at the table for Rosh Hashanah. Some continue from Rosh Hashanah until Simchat Torah; everybody has their own custom. My grandfather had honey with his challah every Shabbat, whether it was the High Holiday season or not. He would show you how much he loved you by putting an ample amount of it on your challah.

It was always a very cute thing between

us and Grandpa, getting that honey. While my family does not have honey every Shabbat, we do continue the custom from Rosh Hashanah until Simchat Torah. We do it so that the beginning of the year, all the way until we complete the reading of the Torah in *shul*, should be a sweet time, and that, *b'ezrat Hashem, HaKadosh Baruch Hu* should give us a year full of sweetness and good things.

This issue of Torah Tidbits takes us through Shabbat Shuva, Yom Kippur, and Sukkot. Preparing such a large issue in advance takes real effort, and the Torah Tidbits team is working around the clock to get it to the printers in time for the holidays, all while preparing themselves and their own families for the *chagim*. For myself, I struggle to write about themes that carry over so many different days. My wife quips that I need not worry about writing so far in advance, since we know the *Beit HaMikdash* will be built by the time Simchat Torah comes around, and then all of our writing will be out of date anyway.

Nevertheless, when I think about this time of year, my mind often goes to Grandpa's honey and challah. There is something that connects Shabbat Shuva, Yom Kippur, and Sukkot, and there is a good reason why we refer to these few weeks together as "the *chagim*."

It is not just because we continue to say "*Le'David Hashem Ori ve'Yishi*" (Tehillim 27) from Rosh Chodesh Elul all the way until Hoshana Rabbah. It is not just because of the tradition that while *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* seals the judgment of our fate on Yom Kippur, the letter is metaphorically "sent off" on Hoshana

Rabbah. And it is not just because our love of Torah is so strong that we dance and sing on Simchat Torah upon completing the Torah. These are all beautiful connections, but I think there is something more.

This year, my team and I created a special Rosh Hashanah video message in which I wish everybody a *shanah tova*. In the video, I am standing somewhere very special: in the beautiful *yishuv* of Tekoa. There is an agricultural area there where different families from the *yishuv* acquired pieces of land, away from their homes, to develop and cultivate.

Nina Broder, our Director of Social Media, took me to meet two wonderful Jews, Yehudah Honickman and Shmaya Dovid Honickman, who decided that on their land, in addition to growing beautiful fruit trees of the Seven Species, including pomegranates, olives, and figs, they would also keep bees and produce honey.

While this was not the first time I had seen how honey is made, it was the first time I had been so close to the bees without a window between us. I saw how the hive was organized, with the queen kept in the lower section and the worker bees moving through the hive, each carrying out its role. Some were gathering nectar and pollen, while others were working inside the hive,

all contributing to the production of delicious honey.

It was especially meaningful to meet the two Honickman brothers because I remember their



grandfather, Tzvi Honickman, from Shilo. He and his wife, may she live until 120 in good health, lived in Shilo at a time when there were not many Anglo families there. I had the privilege of spending time with Tzvi in the yeshiva in Shilo, when he used to come and learn with us. But more than that, he would constantly invite us for Shabbat meals and even Rosh Hashanah meals. I still remember those meals very fondly, the singing, the Torah, the warmth and the delicious food.

I was very saddened to hear that he had passed away about a year ago, but I was so happy to see his grandchildren working the land, living in Tekoa, and building their families in such a beautiful way in the Land of Israel.

While we were filming the video, I felt like I had Grandpa with me, along with the values he taught me. The bees and the honey brought back those memories. But

more than that, Grandpa's involvement in the Jewish community, and his dedication to helping build it, was what he was all about. He used to blow *shofar* on Rosh Hashanah at the Young Israel of Flatbush. He would walk from



his house, which was not particularly close to the shul, in order to blow *shofar*, and he did it with great expertise.

Standing there in Tekoa, watching thousands of bees each doing their small part to create this delicious honey, produced in *Eretz Yisrael*, in the mountains of Yehudah, reminded me of something beautiful. It takes all of *Klal Yisrael* to create the sweetness that we have in this land.

Each and every one of us has our favorite *mitzvah*, our favorite *tzedakah*, our favorite way of doing *hachnasat orchim*. But what I saw in the honey-making process was that it cannot be accomplished by one bee alone. Every bee has its role, and together they create something that none of them could produce independently.

So too with *Klal Yisrael*. We are a nation in which each person takes upon themselves different *mitzvot*, different responsibilities, and different ways of contributing to the Jewish people.

I look at the OU Israel team, constantly working with so many different age groups and communities. Whether it is our Teen Centers working with teens at risk across the country, one teenager at a time, NCSY working with *olim* teenagers, programs helping English-speaking *olim* who have just made *aliyah*, mother-daughter programming for English speakers in Israel, our Women's Division, Torah Initiatives, or Torah Tidbits, there is so much going on here.

We have a team of almost 500 staff members, each working tirelessly in their own area. Could any one of them say that all of this is happening because of them? No. But could they all say together, "Wow, look at what we are accomplishing as a team"? The answer is yes.

And that is the beauty of *Klal Yisrael*. We

are all working hard, each in our own way, to bring *Mashiach*, to build the *Beit HaMikdash*, and to bring the Jewish people to a much sweeter place. Not every person has the same role, and not every contribution looks the same. But when we bring our efforts together, the result is something far greater than any one of us could accomplish alone.

That, to me, is the message of the honey. Sweetness does not come from one enormous act. It comes from thousands of small acts, each one contributing to something greater. One more *mitzvah*, one more act of *chesed*, one more person helped, one more moment of Torah, and together they create a sweetness that can be felt throughout *Klal Yisrael*.

B'ezrat Hashem, as we enter the new year, may we each find our own way to add to that sweetness. May we see *Klal Yisrael* blessed with a year full of endless miracles, endless *achdut*, endless Torah, endless peace, and endless health.

I want to take this opportunity to wish each and every one of our loyal Torah Tidbits readers all the *berachot* in the world, and to thank you for all of your support. We know that "*teshuvah u'tefillah u'tzedakah ma'avirin et ro'a hagezerah*," that repentance, prayer, and charity remove the evil of the decree.

I ask you to please help us by contributing to our valuable programs here in Israel, because we cannot do it without your support. Your generosity allows our staff to continue reaching teens who need guidance, helping *olim* build their lives in Israel, strengthening families, and bringing Torah and community to Jews across the country. Every contribution becomes part of something greater, and together, *b'ezrat Hashem*, we can continue making the Jewish people in the Land of Israel stronger and stronger every single day.

May the sweetness we bring to our own Shabbat and holiday tables extend far beyond our homes, into our communities and throughout *Klal Yisrael*.

Wishing you all an uplifting and inspiring Shabbat, a meaningful Yom Kippur, and a very, very happy and uplifting Sukkot,

Rabbi Avi Berman

Executive Director, OU Israel

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ALIYA-BY-ALIYA SEDRA SUMMARY

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HA'AZINU/SHABBAT SHUVA

PARSHAT HA'AZINU

Ha'azinu is the second to last parsha in the Torah. It is one chapter of 52 verses, making it one of the shortest parshiot in the Torah.

All but 8 verses consist of the song of Ha'azinu. The song is written in the Torah in the form of a poem with 2 parallel columns. The Torah itself calls it Hashira Hazot, this song; 5 times in last week's parsha and one time again this week.

The poem of Ha'azinu was the song the Leviim sang in the Beit Hamikdash during the Mussaf offering on Shabbat. We know the Leviim sang a psalm from Tehilim as the Shir Shel Yom – the daily song, sung accompanying the morning daily offering. They also sang a song during Mussaf of Shabbat and that song is Ha'azinu.

But they did not sing the entire song each week. Ha'azinu was divided into 6 sections – exactly the way we divide the aliyot. One section was read per week, the entire song in 6 weeks. Perhaps it was spread out over 6 weeks to express its theme, Jewish history. Jewish history spans millennia, hence it is

sung over 6 weeks in the Temple.



1ST ALIYA (DEVARIM 32:1-6)

Listen heavens, listen earth. G-d is Just, Faithful. I will call in the name of Hashem, ascribe greatness to our G-d.

The song is a rhythmic poem of couplets, or at least begins that way. These 6 verses are the introduction. What we are saying in this song is cosmic – give ear, heavens and earth. He is Great and Just. We, his children, are twisted.



2ND ALIYA (32:7-12)

Remember those days. While nations were arranged, you, Jewish people became His lot. He found you, the apple of His eye. Spread His wings over you. He Himself cares for us.

These 6 verses introduce the dawn of Jewish history. These are tender, wistful remembrances. This capsule of Jewish history and how G-d relates to us must begin with tenderness. This aliya is a smile, a description of those carefree days of faithfulness.



3RD ALIYA (32:13-18)

He placed you in the heart of the Land, fed you honey, olive oil, butter, with livestock aplenty and wine. Yeshurun got fat and kicked. Left Him and sought others – demons, new powers and forgot Him.

The song is written in the Torah in 2 parallel columns. All the verses in the song are couplets; either one line of two phrases or 2 lines of 2 phrases. One couplet is in one column, the second in the second column.

Hence every verse so far has ended at the end of the column. Except this verse. The

לעילוי נשמות

שיינדיל סימה בת מאיר ע"ה
Sonia Rottenberg a"h

On her 9th yahrzeit, 17 Tishrei

*Mark & Livia Rottenberg
Shopsy & Miriam Kanarek*

verse of Yeshurun getting fat, verse 14. It has 5 phrases. Too many. It ends not at the end of the column but now in the middle of the column.

Things start to go awry. The verses no longer end symmetrically, at the end of the second column. Now they begin to end in the first column, in the middle of the line, off balance. The song is off kilter now. The plenty in the land turned us fat. And rebellious. And off kilter.

It is a beautiful poetic tool – the fat of the Land is a verse of 5 phrases (the only verse not of 2 or 4 phrases), too many phrases, too much consumption, too much good.

Leave Him? Forget Him? Look to demons and other powers? This is not your forefather's beliefs.



4TH ALIYA (32:19-28)

I will hide my Face from them and see what happens then. They angered Me. I will send aggressors to anger them. My anger burns. I will take it out on the Land. I will scatter them, with no trace of their memory. They won't even understand that I am behind this, for they lack all insight.

The rebellion against G-d is met with Divine anger. But the people don't even get it, they can't understand it. G-d's Ways are beyond them.

And in another poetic flair, the song switches from Moshe's voice to G-d's voice. Moshe no longer describes Him. G-d speaks now in the first person. Moshe can't describe G-d's Ways, G-d hiding his Face, for no man can understand His ways; G-d needs to describe the hiding of His Face Himself.



5TH ALIYA (32:29-39)

Oh, would the people understand the consequences. One could not pursue 1, 000 nor 2 pursue 10, 000 were it not for our G-d. The oppressors drink the bitter

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vintages of Sodom and Gemorrah. G-d will eventually relent of this abandonment of His people, while the nations have none to their rescue. I am the One who gives life and takes it; none escapes My hand.

The myopia of the people, their inability to see the Divine in their successes is frustrating and disappointing.

The subject switches then from the Jewish people to the oppressors. While we have been disappointing, we have an end of reconciliation. But when it comes to the other nations

לעילוי נשמת

אברהם ישעיה גרינהאוז ז"ל

On his third yahrzeit

Dedicated by his wife

Malka Greenhaus and daughters

and their evil and rebelliousness, Moshe cedes the floor back to G-d. It is not for us to speak of the justice due others. The oppressors have none to turn to.



6TH ALIYA (32:40-43)

Arrows of blood, a flesh consuming sword, the payment of the enemy. Sing nations of His people, for in the end there is retribution and the Land atones for His people.

3 verses are in the first person with G-d speaking of ultimate justice, vengeance against My enemies, those that hate Me. This aliya is not for the faint of heart. The oppressors get their due and it is not pretty.

Divine justice, reward and yes, punishment is part of the order of the world. We don't delight in His meting out justice. Though we acknowledge that justice, Divine justice is to be part of the end of days.

But the song does not end with the retribution. It ends with all peoples singing – a

universal end of days.



7TH ALIYA (32:44-52)

Moshe brings this song, together with Yehoshua to the people.

He instructs them to take it to heart and to command it to their children. It is not empty words but rather it is your life. Then Moshe is told to ascend Har Navo where he is to die.

The emphasis on this song is crucial, something to take to heart, to command our children is curious. Why is a song about history, our future history, a history of rejection of G-d and exile, of Hiding His Face, why is this song Moshe's sendoff? And why is it a song? A song celebrates or is expressive; why is history told as a song?

Perhaps this song is a foil. Moshe has emphasized one theme repeatedly. Our history is different. It is a history entangled with the covenant. When we are loyal, we are blessed by Him. When not loyal, we lose the right to that blessing. And even worse, exiled and oppressed.

Perhaps Moshe wants to temper that view of history with a foil. Please know, he says, that it is not as simple as that. The Divine managing of our history is complicated. Our history is like a poem. It is woven of strands, complex, mixtures of loyalty and rebellion. He Knows how He Manages it. But for us, it is like a poem that carries secrets, embedded secrets. Opaque, misty, obscure. Interpreting history in a definitive manner, with certainty, understanding G-d's Ways definitively is folly. Not for Him. He Guides history. But with our eyes, clarity is elusive.

While our history has a Divine Hand, we should not be facile to think we can detect the moments of Divine Favour or Disfavour. We need suffice with the principles, ceding the full knowledge of His Ways to Him. Like a poem. ■

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Repression of the Sublime

It was advertised as one symposium at a major psychology conference. It was to be a discussion about memory and forgetfulness. But it turned out to be one of the most intense and instructive days that I have ever witnessed.

The first speaker began by insisting that the fact that we remember things is obvious. What requires explanation, he argued, is why we forget. We are hardwired to recall every event that occurs in our lives. The mechanisms of forgetfulness are a mystery and call for a program of scientific research.

The second speaker took a position diametrically opposed to the first. He believed that it is only natural that we forget. It is one

of nature's wonders, he maintained, that we remember anything at all.

The third speaker took a middle of the road position. For him, the major challenge to the science of the psychology of memory was not why we remember. Or why we forget. Rather, it was why we remember certain things and forget others. And why we distort even those matters which we do remember, so that our memories are grossly inaccurate and unreliable.

It is the position of this third speaker that has kept my interest over the many years since that conference. And it was just recently, as we commemorated the tragic events of September 11, 2001, that my interest in this subject was revived.

Very many of my acquaintances were on or near the scene of the collapsed World Trade Center Towers on that fateful day. To this day, some have clear recollections of every moment of their experiences. Others claim that they only remember certain vivid episodes, fleeting ones, and can only draw a blank when it comes to the majority of the time they were exposed to the tragic scene.

Some have memories which are as accurate and as clear as the "flashbulb memories" that psychologists have studied as far back as World War II. For others, the memories have been partially, and sometimes substantially, repressed and can no longer be recalled. Their powerful and poignant emotional reactions have wrought havoc with the ability to accurately remember the events of that day.

Remembering and forgetting are major

May the Torah learning
in this issue of Torah Tidbits
be לַעֲנֵי my beloved sister
on her 10th Yartzeit - ט תשרי

HANNAH BRAUN a"h
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Miss you
Judy Wasserman

themes in our Jewish religious tradition. We are commanded, for example, to remember the Sabbath, to remember the lessons to be drawn from the life of Miriam, and not to forget the enmity of Amalek. In this week's Torah portion, *Parshat Ha'azinu*, there are at least two verses which relate to these themes. One reads, "Remember the days of yore, understand the years of generation after generation." (*Deuteronomy* 32:7) and the other states, "You ignored the Rock who gave birth to you, and forgot God who brought you forth." (*Ibid.* 32:18)

I have always been intrigued by the notion of forgetting God. Earlier in the book of *Deuteronomy*, we were admonished to be careful, lest "our hearts become haughty, and we forget the Lord our God." (*Deuteronomy* 8:14) I can understand agnostic disbelief, and I can empathize with those who have lost their faith, but I have always found it puzzling to contemplate forgetting God. Either one believes, or one does not believe, but how are we to understand *forgetting* Him?

Many years ago, I came across the writings of a psychologist named Robert Desoille, and it was in those writings that I've discovered a concept that helped me come to grips with the notion of forgetting God.

Desoille coined the phrase "the repression of the sublime." He argued that we have long been familiar with the idea that we repress urges and memories that are uncomfortable or unpleasant. We repress memories of tragedy, we repress impulses which are shameful, or forbidden. It can even be argued that this power of repression is a beneficial one to individuals and society. If individuals would not be able to forget tragedy and loss, they could potentially be forever emotionally paralyzed and unable to move on with their

lives. A society whose members act on every hostile impulse, rather than repressing them would be a society which could not endure for very long.

It was Desoille's insight that just as we repress negative memories, we also repress positive aspirations. We are afraid to excel. There is a pernicious aspect to us that fears superiority and avoids the full expression of our potential. This is especially true in the area of religion and spirituality, where we dare not express the full force of our faith and, in the process, limit our altruistic tendencies. Perhaps it is the dread of coming too close to the divine. Perhaps it is a false humility that prevents us from asserting our inner spirit. Or perhaps it is simply that we do not wish to appear "holier than thou" to our fellows.

However one understands the reasons for this phenomenon, for me, the concept of "repression of the sublime" explains the notion of forgetting God. It is as if we have faith in Him, do not have sufficient faith in ourselves to express our faith in him in our relationships and life circumstances. We repress our sublime potential.

This week, we do not only read the Torah portion of *Ha'azinu*. We also read, as the *Haftarah*, the words of the prophet (*Hosea*

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14:2--10) which begin, "*Shuva Yisrael...* Return O Israel to the Lord your God for you have stumbled through your iniquity. Take words with you and return to God..." After all, it is the Sabbath between Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, and Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. What better theme for the day than the theme of *shuva*, of return?

There are many impediments to thorough personal change and self-improvement. Desoille demands that we consider an impediment that never before occurred to us: we are afraid to actualize the inner spiritual potential that we all possess. We are naturally complacent, satisfied with a limited expression of our religious urges. We repress the sublime within us.

As we approach the High Holidays and its truly sublime liturgy, it behooves us to allow our spiritual emotions full range. We must

dare to express the religious feelings which well up within us during the moments of inspiration that we all will surely experience during this sacred season.

Now is the season during which our faith demands that we loosen the bonds of the repression which limits us, take the risks of more fully expressing our religious convictions, and thereby no longer be guilty of "forgetting the God who brought us forth."

May we be successful in our efforts to free the sublime within us, to act courageously upon our religious convictions, and thereby merit the blessings of the Almighty for a happy and sweet new year. ■



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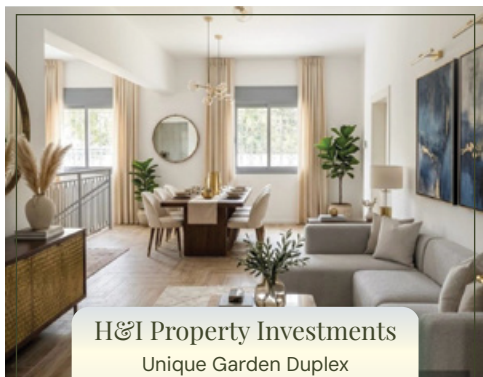
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Let My Teaching Drop as Rain

In the glorious song with which Moses addresses the congregation, he invites the people to think of the Torah – their covenant with God – as if it were like the rain that waters the ground so that it brings forth its produce:

Let my teaching drop as rain,

Let my words fall like dew,

Like gentle rain on tender plants,

Like showers upon the grasses. (*Deut. 32:2*)

God's word is like rain in a dry land. It brings life. It makes things grow. There is much we can do of our own accord: we can plough the earth and plant the seeds. But in the end our success depends on something

beyond our control. If no rain falls, there will be no harvest, whatever preparations we make. So it is with Israel. It must never be tempted into the hubris of saying:

"My power, the strength of my own hand, has brought me this great wealth." (*Deut. 8:17*)

The Sages, however, sensed something more in the analogy. This is how Sifrei (a compendium of commentaries on Numbers and Deuteronomy dating back to the Mishnaic period) puts it:

Let my teaching drop as rain: Just as the rain is one thing, yet it falls on trees, enabling each to produce tasty fruit according to the kind of tree it is – the vine in its way, the olive tree in its way, and the date palm in its way – so the Torah is one, yet its words yield Scripture, Mishnah, laws, and lore. Like showers upon the grass: Just as showers fall upon plants and make them grow, some green, some red, some black, some white, so the words of Torah produce teachers, worthy individuals, Sages, the righteous, and the pious.¹

There is only one Torah, yet it has multiple effects. It gives rise to different kinds of

1. Sifrei, *Ha'azinu* 306.

**May the learning in this
Torah Tidbits be a merit for**

**Meni's beloved mother
Yiska Leah Koslowsky a"h
On her Yahrzeit, 12 Tishrei**

**And Sandy's beloved father
Naftali Lieman z"l
On his Yahrzeit, 12 Tishrei**

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teaching, different sorts of virtue. Torah is sometimes seen by its critics as overly prescriptive, as if it sought to make everyone the same. The Midrash argues otherwise. The Torah is compared to rain precisely to emphasise that its most important effect is to make each of us grow into what we could become. We are *not* all the same, nor does Torah seek uniformity. As a famous Mishnah puts it:

“When a human being makes many coins from the same mint, they are all the same. God makes everyone in the same image – His image – yet none is the same as another.” (*Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:5*)

This emphasis on difference is a recurring theme in Judaism. For example, when Moses asks God to appoint his successor, he uses an unusual phrase: “May the Lord, *God of the spirits of all humankind*, appoint a man over the community” (Num. 27:16). On this, Rashi comments:

Why is this expression (“God of the spirits of all humankind”) used? [Moses] said to Him: Lord of the universe, You know each person’s character, and that no two people are alike. Therefore, appoint a leader for them who will bear with each person according to his or her disposition.

One of the fundamental requirements of a leader in Judaism is that he or she is able to *respect the differences* between human beings. This is a point emphasised by Maimonides in *Guide for the Perplexed*:

Man is, as you know, the highest form in creation, and he therefore includes the largest number of constituent elements. This is why the human race contains so great a variety of individuals that we cannot discover two persons exactly alike in any moral quality or in external appearance... This great variety and the necessity of social life are essential



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elements in man's nature. But the well-being of society demands that there should be a leader able to regulate the actions of man. He must complete every shortcoming, remove every excess, and prescribe for the conduct of all, so that the natural variety should be counterbalanced by the uniformity of legislation, so that social order may be well established.²

The political problem as Maimonides sees it is how to regulate the affairs of human beings in such a way as to respect their individuality while not creating chaos. A similar point emerges from a surprising rabbinic teaching:

“Our Rabbis taught: If one sees a crowd of Israelites, one says: Blessed be He who discerns secrets – because the mind of each is different from that of another, just as the face of each is different from another.” (Brachot 58a)

We would have expected a blessing over a

2. Maimonides, *Guide for the Perplexed*, II:40.

crowd to emphasise its size, its mass: human beings in their collectivity.³ A crowd is a group large enough for the individuality of the faces to be lost. Yet the blessing stresses the opposite – that each member of a crowd is still an individual with distinctive thoughts, hopes, fears, and aspirations.

The same was true for the relationship between the Sages. A Mishnah states:

When Rabbi Meir died, the composers of fables ceased. When ben Azzai died, assiduous students ceased. When ben Zoma died, the expositors ceased... When Rabbi Akiva died, the honour of the Torah ceased. When Rabbi Chanina ben Dosa died, men of deed ceased. When Rabbi Yose Ketanta died, the pious men ceased... When Rabban Yochanan bar Zakai died, the lustre of wisdom ceased.... When Rabban Gamliel the Elder died, humility, purity, and the fear of sin ceased. (*Mishnah Sotah 9:15*)

There was no single template of the Sage. Each had his own distinctive merits, his unique contribution to the collective heritage. In this respect, the Sages were merely continuing the tradition of the Torah itself. There is no single role-model of the religious hero or heroine in Tanach. The patriarchs and matriarchs each had their own unmistakable character. Moses, Aaron, and Miriam each emerge as different personality types. Kings, priests, and prophets had different roles to play in Israelite society. Even among the prophets, “No two prophesy in the same style,” said the Sages (Sanhedrin 89a). Elijah was zealous, Elisha gentle. Hosea spoke of love, Amos spoke of justice. Isaiah's visions were simpler and less opaque than those of Ezekiel.

The same applies even to the Revelation at Sinai itself. Each individual heard, in the same

3. See Elias Canetti, *Crowds and Power* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973).

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words, a different inflection:

The voice of the Lord is with power (Ps. 29:4): that is, according to the power of each individual, the young, the old, and the very small ones, each according to their power [of understanding]. God said to Israel, “Do not believe that there are many gods in heaven because you heard many voices. Know that I alone am the Lord your God.”⁴

According to Maharsha, there are 600, 000 interpretations of Torah. Each individual is theoretically capable of a unique insight into its meaning. The French philosopher Emmanuel Levinas commented:

The Revelation has a particular way of producing meaning, which lies in its calling upon the unique within me. It is as if a multiplicity of persons... were the condition for the plenitude of “absolute truth,” as if each person, by virtue of his own uniqueness, were able to guarantee the revelation of one unique aspect of the truth, so that some of its facets would never have been revealed if certain people had been absent from mankind. (*Emmanuel Levinas, “Revelation in the Jewish Tradition,” in The Levinas Reader, ed. Sean Hand (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2001), pp. 190–210.*)

Judaism, in short, emphasises the other side of the maxim *E pluribus unum* (“Out of the many, one”). For Judaism says: “Out of the One, many.”

The miracle of creation is that unity in heaven produces diversity on earth. Torah is the rain that feeds this diversity, allowing each of us to become what only we can be. ■

4. Exodus Rabbah 29:1.

These weekly teachings from **Rabbi Sacks zt”l** are part of his ‘Covenant & Conversation’ series on the weekly Torah teaching. With thanks to the Schimmel Family for their generous sponsorship, dedicated in loving memory of Harry (Chaim) Schimmel. Visit www.RabbiSacks.org for more.

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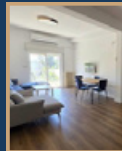
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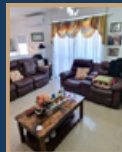
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“Ad” or “Eid”?

Ha'azinu hashamayim va'adabeira, v'tishma ha'aretz imrei fee”.

This week's parasha begins with Moshe Rabbainu calling on heaven and earth to witness (and testify to) the truth of the words he will recite during this “Shirat Moshe”, ‘song’ of Moshe. These opening words echo that which Moshe said at the closing of the last parasha (perek 31), that this song will serve as a witness of the inevitable punishments that would befall them were they to abandon Hashem. Interestingly, at the end of parashat Nitzavim (perek 30), Moshe again calls upon heaven and earth to stand as witnesses to his plea to Israel to choose good and life over, ch”v, evil and death.

I chose to begin this explanation of the Shabbat Shuva haftarah by discussing the parasha because the *pesiqta* (a collection of midrashim on the Torah and the haftarot,

composed around 845 CE), makes a puzzling comment about the opening pasuk of the haftarah. The pasuk from Sefer Hoshea states: “Shuva Yisra’el **AD** Hashem E’lokecha,” that Israel should return **to** Hashem, while the P’siqta argues that the pasuk should properly be read as “Shuva Yisra’el **EID** Hashem E’lokecha,” - that Hashem is a **witness** for Israel!!

HaRav Soloveitchik, in one of his essays (found in “On Repentance”), sees this somewhat curious statement of the P’siqta as a support to the view of the Rambam. Maimonides declares (Hilchot Teshuva 2;2) that true repentance is achieved when the sinner resolves in his heart never again to repeat the sin, and He who knows all that is hidden can indeed testify that this person will never again repeat that sin.

The Rav is quite troubled by this comment. Is it not a condition that the remorseful sinner will find almost impossible to fulfill? How can this be the demand of G-d on one who sincerely desires to do teshuva? And, if Hashem will testify that the sinner will never again sin-then what happens to the person's freedom to choose how to act?

Rav Soloveitchik, therefore, turns to the Lechem Mishneh's explanation of the Rambam's words. The term “ya'id” that is used does not mean that G-d will testify that the sinner will never again sin throughout his



Rav Joseph B. Soloveitchik zt”l

In Loving Memory of
Doris Krauthamer a”h
on her 5th yahrzeit

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life. Rather, the word ya'id can also be understood to mean to designate one as a witness, something Moshe Rabbeinu himself does at the end of the last parasha when he calls upon heaven and earth to be witnesses, to testify for Israel in the future. The Rambam's meaning, therefore, is that the sinner himself designated Hashem to witness how sincere and whole-hearted is his intention to repent and not to sin.

During this time of year, we stand before Hashem hoping to be granted a positive and successful future. Indeed, we did the same last year, as well. And yet, for many of us - and perhaps for most of the Jewish world - this past year was not what we had wished it would be. And, as a result, we approach the unknown future hardly knowing what prayers might be most effective and how to G-d to best reach out to Hashem.

For this reason. I would suggest that we heed the opening words of our haftarah and realize that... "Shuva Yisra'el....EID", our tefillot should be based upon the knowledge that Hashem is listening and witnessing how sincere our prayers are. We must understand that **WHAT** we pray for is less important than **HOW** we pray. A sincere tefilla becomes an impactive experience that reaches the heavenly throne, and, equally important, affects our very behavior throughout the year.

And so, do not worry if we forget to pray for a specific something or someone. We simply need to pray deeply to Hashem and allow Him to "fill in the blanks" for us all.

After all, when He witnesses that kind of tefilla how can He fail to respond? ■

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Drop by Drop

What does real change require? During the Aseret Yemei Teshuvah, we often imagine teshuvah as something dramatic—a sweeping resolution, a promise that this year everything will be different.

Yet in the haftorah of Shabbos Shuvah, Hoshea offers a quieter image: אֶהְיֶה כְּטֵל — “I will be like dew to Israel; he will blossom like the lily and strike his roots like Lebanon.” Rain announces its arrival. Dew forms almost

imperceptibly, drop by drop, yet it provides the moisture that allows life to grow.

The Radak explains that Hoshea compares Hashem’s blessing to dew because dew is constant: ואמר טל לפי שאינו נפסק, כן טוב הקל — “He said ‘dew’ because it does not cease; so, too, Hashem’s goodness will not cease from them.” Even when we feel spiritually dry or distant, Hashem’s goodness remains. His invitation to return is always open.

But dew alone is not enough. Hoshea continues: וְיָרַךְ שְׁרָשָׁיו כְּלִבְנוֹן — “He will strike his roots like Lebanon.” Rav Samson Raphael Hirsch develops this idea in his commentary on the words in Ha’azinu, תִּגְלוּ כְּטֵל אֶמְרָתִי — “May My words flow like dew.” He explains that just as dew causes everything rooted in the earth to grow and blossom, so Hashem’s words act upon our hearts. Dew falls everywhere, but it nourishes that which is rooted.

Perhaps this is the challenge of Shabbos Shuvah. Hashem provides the dew—the constant nourishment, love, and possibility of renewal. Our responsibility is to establish roots. A root is more than a passing inspiration. It is one commitment anchored deeply enough to remain after the emotion of the moment has faded: one tefillah approached with greater attention, one relationship treated with more care, one regular time for Torah learning, or one pattern of speech we resolve to change.

We sometimes dismiss a commitment because it seems too small. We want our teshuvah to feel like a downpour. But one

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small commitment that takes root can transform us more deeply than a sweeping resolution that cannot be sustained.

Perhaps the question of Shabbos Shuvah is not only, *How much am I prepared to change?* It is also, *Where am I prepared to put down roots?* Hashem provides the dew. Our task is to become rooted enough to receive it. And then, quietly and steadily, growth can begin. ■



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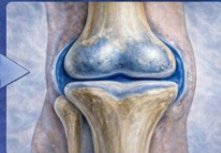
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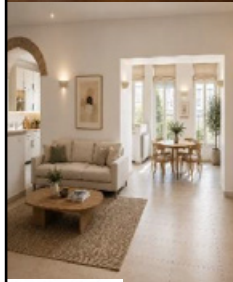
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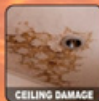
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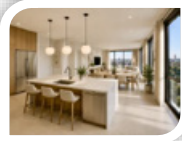
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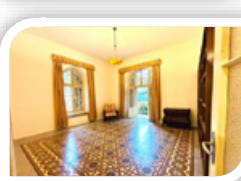
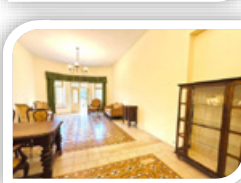
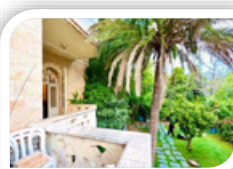
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HA'AZINU/SHABBAT SHUVA

Erev Shabbat with Rav Kook and His Students

In one of the beautiful teachings in his classic work on teshuva, *Orot HaTeshuva*, Rav Kook identifies a unique time each week for reflection and repentance: Erev Shabbat. As we prepare to enter Shabbat, we have a special opportunity to look back on the week that has passed and clear away whatever may stand between us and the holiness of the day:

“On the eve of Shabbat one must do teshuva for all that transpired in the course of the week, in order to welcome the Shabbat without any impediments of sin or wrongdoing.” (*Orot HaTeshuva* 14:33)

Rav Kook’s teaching invites us to consider not only how we observe Shabbat, but how we enter it. The twenty-four hours of Shabbat can be profoundly shaped by the thoughts, emotions, and practices we cultivate in the hours immediately preceding it. Erev Shabbat is not merely a race to finish the week; it is the

gateway through which we enter a different spiritual reality.

NOT OPENING THE MAIL

This sensitivity to the way we prepare for Shabbat was beautifully expressed by Rav Kook’s beloved friend and student, Rav Aryeh Levin, who maintained a remarkable practice: he did not read his mail on Friday afternoon.

Rav Aryeh regularly received letters and notes describing heartbreaking situations from people seeking his guidance or financial assistance. As the *tzaddik of Yerushalayim*, he somehow seemed never to turn anyone away. Yet he was careful not to allow the sorrow and anguish contained in those letters to accompany him into Shabbat.

He wanted to preserve the unique character of the day - to enter Shabbat with a sense of joy, serenity, and honor, giving the holiness of Shabbat its rightful place. (*Derech Avot*, Sternberg, p. 168)

His practice teaches a powerful lesson: sometimes preparing for Shabbat means deciding what not to bring into it.

RAV CHARLOP ENTERING SHABBAT

Another practice among the students and disciples of Rav Kook that enriched the experience of welcoming Shabbat was the recitation of *Shir HaShirim* during the hour preceding Shabbat.

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He later recalled:

“I made a special effort to come early before the beginning of Shabbat and saw Rav Charlop reciting Shir Hashirim in his home. His recital of Shir Hashirim, after he had immersed in the mikvah, as he wore his elegant white Shabbat garments, was for me like seeing the angels singing before God’s throne in heaven. Rav Charlop recited the words with a full voice and in deep concentration. When he recited certain verses tears ran down his cheeks.” (*Shirat HaYam*, Yair Charlop, pp. 205–206)

For Rav Charlop, Shabbat did not simply arrive. He entered it - with preparation, anticipation, purity, and profound emotion.

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Former Chief Rabbi of Israel, Rabbi David Lau, *shlita*, is fond of relating a story about two great rabbis who would spend Friday afternoons together in Jerusalem nearly a century ago.

“Two tzadikim, an elder rabbi and a young rabbi. They were Rabbi Chaim Berlin, the son of the Netziv, who sat every Friday afternoon with a young Rabbi Aryeh Levin. They said together the Shir HaShirim, which Rabbi Akiva said was the Kodesh HaKodashim of songs.”

Rav Chaim Berlin would weep when they

reached the words, “Your eyes are like doves” (*Shir HaShirim* 4:1). Out of respect, Rav Aryeh did not ask him why. After several weeks, however, his mentor revealed the reason, recalling an episode from his years as Chief Rabbi of Moscow during the Russian Empire.

“I was a *mohel*. I knew that one day I would pay for it,” he said. “I heard a knock on my door. It was a soldier, a big officer.”



The officer ordered Rabbi Berlin to pack and accompany him the following morning, instructing him to bring his *brit milah* instruments.

“I took my knife, tefillin, and sid-dur. I said goodbye, and I did not know for how long.”

The officer brought him to a house deep in a forest, where a woman was holding a newborn baby. Rabbi Berlin performed the *brit milah*. Two nights later, the officer thanked him and offered to pay.

Assuming that the officer was not Jewish, Rabbi Berlin asked why he had been summoned to perform a *brit milah*. The officer replied, “My parents and the parents of my wife are Jews. I’m a child of the Tsar.” Yet despite his loyalty to the despot, he added, “Maybe one day he’ll ask himself where he came from.”

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Rav Chaim Berlin explained that a pure eye instinctively searches for the good in another person. This is the deeper meaning of the verse, "Your eyes are like doves." The Midrash teaches that one must learn to see the beauty, faith, and commitment of the Jewish people even when their righteousness is not immediately apparent. (*Shir HaShirim Rabbah* 4:1; Queens Jewish Link, Kadinsky, "Ashkenazic Chief Rabbi of Israel Visits West Hempstead")

Perhaps this is why those words moved Rav Chaim Berlin to tears. When one learns to look at another Jew with the eyes of a *yonah*, one begins to see what may be hidden beneath the surface - the Jewish soul, its potential, and its enduring connection to Hashem.

CLOSENESS WITH THE CREATOR

The stories of Rav Charlop, Rav Chaim Berlin, and Rav Aryeh Levin bring Rav Kook's teaching to life. Each of these great figures understood that the spiritual experience of Shabbat begins before Shabbat begins.

They did not simply wait for Shabbat to arrive. They prepared themselves to receive it.

For Rav Aryeh Levin, that meant setting aside painful letters and refusing to carry the burdens of the week into the holy day. For Rav Charlop, it meant immersing himself in

the mikvah, donning his Shabbat garments, and reciting *Shir HaShirim* with such intensity that tears streamed down his face. For Rav Chaim Berlin and Rav Aryeh Levin, it meant spending the final moments before Shabbat together contemplating the deepest love and holiness expressed in *Shir HaShirim*.

We often find ourselves rushing through the final moments of the week, trying to finish one last task before Shabbat arrives. But these spiritual masters, who brought their extraordinary light to Yerushalayim only a generation or two ago, offer us another model. They teach us that the quality of our Shabbat can be transformed by the way we prepare for it.

A few quiet moments of reflection. A conscious decision about what to leave behind. A chapter of *Shir HaShirim*. A moment to put on Shabbat clothes with anticipation. A decision to enter the day with joy rather than anxiety. These seemingly small acts can become a doorway to something much greater. And when we enter it with intention, purity, joy, and longing, we create the space to experience what Rav Kook understood so deeply: that the preparation for Shabbat itself can become a path toward greater closeness with the Creator. ■



Rabbi Goldscheider's most recent OU Press Publication, "Torah United" on the weekly Parsha, can be ordered directly from Rabbi Goldscheider at aarong@ouisrael.org at a special price for Torah Tidbits readers.

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YOM KIPPUR

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Mother of Reuven Tradburks

YOM KIPPUR

The Torah reading for Yom Kippur is the description in Chapter 16 of Vayikra of the entire service in the Mikdash for Yom Kippur. The Kohen Gadol himself read this exact Torah reading as part of the service. We are reading what he read.



1ST ALIYA (VAYIKRA 16:1-6)

One may enter the Holy of Holies with the following elaborate procedure. For I, G-d, appear there in a cloud. Aharon is to bring a bull for a sin offering, along with a ram. The Jewish people bring 2 goats for sin offerings and a ram. Aharon wears 4 unique white garments for this service.

The Holy of Holies is where the Aron is housed, with the ten commandments. No one is ever to enter there. "For I, G-d, appear there in a cloud". One may enter only through this

elaborate ceremony.

Where else have we seen the appearance of G-d, a thick cloud, an area where no man may approach and the ten commandments?

Mt. Sinai. A thick cloud over the mountain. G-d descends. No man may approach the mountain. He utters the ten commandments.

The Holy of Holies is a miniature re-enactment of Mt. Sinai. There, He descended to us. With a thick cloud. To tell us the ten commandments

Here, the ten commandments are housed. At Sinai He approached us; on Yom Kippur, the Kohen Gadol approaches Him. And like Sinai where the cloud descended on the mountain, here the Kohen Gadol comes with incense to create the cloud.

At Sinai the people said "we can't hear your voice or we will die". Man cannot withstand G-d's Presence. So too here, G-d says, no man may enter the Holy of Holies, for he cannot withstand My presence.

But once a year, on Yom Kippur, I make an exception and allow, with an elaborate ceremony, only one man to enter that place. And that man shall make a cloud.

Yom Kippur is the intimate encounter of man with the Divine Presence in the Holy of Holies. As if He Says: The pinnacle moment of Yom Kippur is just you and Me, in My most private place, the Holy of Holies. You, Aharon, as the representative of My people. And Me, in the cloud.

And this re-enactment of Sinai comes one week after Rosh Hashana, the day of the shofar. For at Sinai, besides the cloud and besides

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man not being allowed to approach, there was the sound of the shofar. At Sinai, He sounded the shofar. On Rosh Hashana, we sound the shofar.

The Sinai moment is the closest, most intimate encounter of man and G-d on this earth. The Rosh Hashana, Yom Kippur re-enactment is man's desire to renew that intimate encounter, but on our initiative. Shofar. And Holy of Holies.



2ND ALIYA (16:7-11)

Take the 2 goats of the people.

Through lots, identify one as an offering and the other to send to the desert for atonement. Aharon offers the offering for himself and his household.

In this moment of intimate contact of the Divine and us, we achieve atonement through pageantry. The pageantry of the 2 goats is rich; identical in appearance, their roles achieved through lots, their fate radically different. One will be an offering to G-d. The other will be sent to the barren desert.



3RD ALIYA (16:12-17)

Aharon is to take a pan of coals and of incense into the Holy of Holies, with the smoke of the incense enveloping the covering of the Aron. Aharon takes the blood of his sin offering and sprinkles it 1 + 7 times in the Holy of Holies and 1 + 7 times in front of the curtain, outside of the Holy of Holies. He repeats this with the blood of the people's sin offering, the goat.

Aharon brings incense into the Holy of Holies to create smoke. But the Torah does not say that the smoke from the incense fills the Holy of Holies. It says it covers the Aron.

The emphasis on the Aron is to be reminiscent of Mt. Sinai, where the thick cloud covered the mountain when G-d spoke these ten commandments, housed in the Aron.

And perhaps the smoke and the cloud accompanying this intimate encounter is deliberate. For the closer the encounter with the Divine, the more hidden, obscure, mysterious, enigmatic. Cloudy. Obscured. Intimacy and mystery.



4TH ALIYA (16:18-24)

He then takes the blood of his bull and the goat of the people and both places it on the incense altar and sprinkles it 1 + 7 times, purifying it. He thus completes the atonement of the holiest places. Aharon then places his hands upon the head of the other goat of the people, confessing all their sins, placing them on the head of the goat. The goat, bearing the sins of the people, is led out to the desert. Aharon now changes from the special white garments to his regular ones and offers the more conventional offerings for himself and the people.

Two goats. One offered. One taken to the desert after the sins are confessed upon it.

Rav Soloveitchik captured this drama as a metaphor. This goat in the desert is pushed over a cliff, falling to its death.

The fall, the pull of gravity is a metaphor for the push and pull of our nature, but with no exercise of will. Man can choose to assert his will. Or choose to be subject to the whims

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and forces of his nature, like the goat unable to break his fall.

In a word, when man allows himself to be pulled down by his nature, failing to assert his will, gravity pulls him down to his demise. Such is the sinful one, allowing forces to dominate, failing to assert his will.



5TH ALIYA (16:25-30)

The one who led the goat to the desert need be purified upon his return as do the ones who burn the sin offerings of Aharon and the people outside of the camp. All of this is to be done every year on Yom Kippur accompanied by fasting. For on this day, He provides you with atonement and purity; you become purified before G-d.

While the drama of this day was punctured by the destruction of the Temple, the atonement persists through the day of Yom Kippur itself. The Talmud took the verse literally. On this *day* you achieve atonement. The day itself, even without the elaborate Temple service, but the day itself, the power of Yom Kippur atones.



6TH ALIYA (16:31-34)

This procedure atoning for the Holy of Holies, the outer area, the altar, the Kohanim and the people shall be done once a year.

This atonement and purification are humbling, overwhelming, ennobling. For the

Holy One reaches for mankind, descends in a cloud as it were to the Holy of Holies, granting atonement. It is His reach for man; His kindness, generosity, and love.

Yom Kippur is a gift, an affirmation of man, a chance to begin anew, a smile from the Holy One, appreciating our desire and passion, even if we err. Yom Kippur is the faith of the Holy One in us, giving us a yearly clean slate. That is a gift. ■

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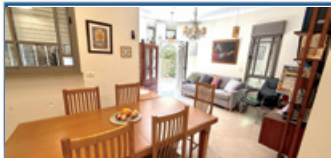
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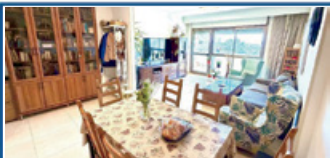


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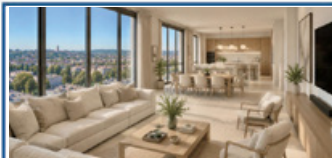
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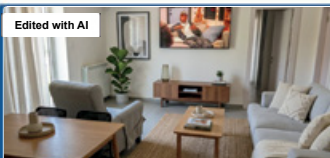
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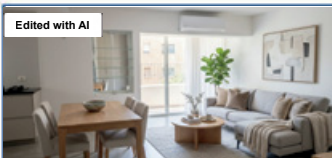
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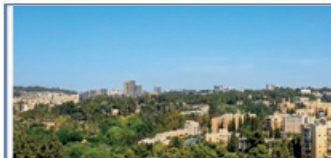
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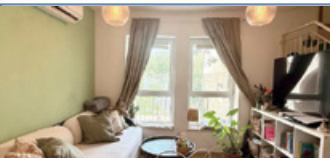
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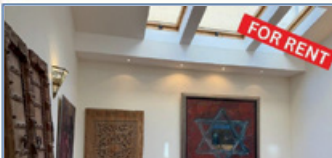
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HALACHOT FOR YOM KIPPUR

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EREV-YOM KIPPUR

I. TEFILLAH

תחנון and למנצח are omitted at Shacharis of Erev-Yom Kippur (YK).¹ Ashkenazim also omit מזמור לתורה and אבינו מלכנו, while Sephardim recite both.²

II. TESHUVA

כִּי בַיּוֹם הַזֶּה יְכַפֵּר עֲלֵיכֶם לְטָהַר אֶתְכֶם מִכָּל חַטָּא – “For on this day, He shall effect atonement for you to purify you; from all your sins, before Hashem, you shall be purified.” Although Yom Kippur is the day of forgiveness, it only atones for sins between a person and Hashem, but not for interpersonal sins, until the wrongdoer seeks forgiveness from the person he wronged. Therefore, it is customary to ask forgiveness from one another on Erev-YK.³ If the offender asks and is not forgiven, he must return at least three times, each time with three others accompanying him. If forgiveness is still withheld, he is no longer obligated to ask, unless the wronged party is his *rebbe*, in which case he must continue seeking forgiveness.⁴ If the person who was wronged has passed away, the offender must go to the grave with a *minyán* of ten people and ask forgiveness there.⁵

The wronged should be compassionate and forgive the individual asking for forgiveness,⁶

for those who forgive others are forgiven by Hashem.⁷

One must be especially careful to repay all debts, including *tzedakah* commitments, and return anything not rightfully his, for the sin of theft blocks the pathway to *teshuvah*.⁸

III. MINCHA AND VIDUY

There is a biblical obligation⁹ for both men and women¹⁰ to verbally¹¹ confess (*viduy*) their sins, as the Torah teaches: אִישׁ אוֹ אִשָּׁה כִּי יַעֲשׂוּ ... וְהִתְוַדּוּ אֶת חַטֹּאתֵם. While confession is required whenever one performs *teshuvah*, Yom Kippur is a particularly auspicious time for both individuals and the community to repent, such that everyone is obligated to confess on this day.¹²

One is also obligated to recite the *viduy* at Mincha on Erev-YK, lest he choke or become inebriated at the *seudah ha'mafsek*, preventing him from properly confessing.¹³ Some *poskim* rule that one is obligated to recite *viduy* again after the *se'udah* before nightfall. Many fulfill this opinion by reciting *Tefillah Zakah* before¹⁴ *Kol Nidrei* since it contains an element of *viduy* in it. However, the ח"א and Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach *passkin* that it should be said after *Kol Nidrei*.¹⁵

Viduy must be recited while standing, without leaning on anything that would cause

7. משנ"ב סימן תרו סק"ח

8. משנ"ב סימן תרו סק"א

9. חינוך מצוה שסד

10. Ibid.

11. רמב"ם תשובה פ"א-א

12. רמב"ם פ"א-א, פ"ב-ז

13. שו"ע סימן תרו-א ומשנ"ב שם

14. משנ"ב סימן תרו סק"א

15. הליכות שלמה תשרי פ"ד הע' 4

1. שו"ע סימן תרד-ב

2. חזון עובדיה, ימים נוראים עמ' 229

3. רמ"א סימן תרו-ב

4. שו"ע סימן תרו-א

5. שו"ע סימן תרו-ב

6. רמ"א סימן תרו-א

one to fall if it were removed.¹⁶ When reciting *viduy*, it is best to bend forward slightly, similar to the posture taken during Modim.¹⁷ When reciting the word “*shechatanu*,” lightly strike the heart with the right fist.¹⁸ Older or weaker individuals who have trouble standing alone may lean on a table or *shtender* if necessary.¹⁹

IV. KAPAROS

There is a custom among both *Ashkenazim* and *Sephardim*²⁰ to perform *kaparos* with a white rooster or chicken on *erev YK*.²¹ Men use a rooster and women use a chicken.²² One raises and rotates the chicken above his head three times²³ while saying, *זה חלפתי, זה תמורת, וזה כפרתי*, which has the *rashei teivos* of חת"ך, the name of the angel responsible for life.²⁴ The chicken is then *shechted* and given to the needy. The point of *kaparos* is to arouse the individual to perform *teshuva* when he sees the chicken *shechted* and imagines that it is taking his place. Furthermore, the chicken is given to *tzedakah* since *tzedakah* atones.²⁵

One may also use money as *kaparos*.²⁶ The amount of money used should equal the price of a chicken.²⁷ Some say²⁸ that one *kaparos* may be performed on behalf of many individuals, while others say that it is best to perform

separate *kaparos* for every living member in the house, even fetuses.²⁹ All agree that if a chicken or money was already used on one individual, it should not be used on another.³⁰

V. EATING AND DRINKING ON EREV YK

There is a *mitzvah* to eat, drink,³¹ and have larger meals than usual during the daytime³² of *erev YK*³³ so that it will be easier to fast the following day.³⁴ Nevertheless, even a sick individual who is not fasting is obligated to eat and have a larger meal on *erev YK*.³⁵ Some have the custom to use *Lechem Mishneh* in the *seudah ha'mafsek*³⁶ and to dip the *challah* in honey.³⁷ Although there is no obligation to eat meat, many customarily eat chicken.³⁸

There is also a custom to eat *kreplach* (meat covered with dough) because *erev YK* is considered a Yom Tov, on which many hold one should ideally eat meat. However, since *mela-cha* is still permitted, it is not considered a full-fledged Yom Tov, which we express by covering the meat with dough.³⁹ (For this reason, there is a custom to eat *kreplach* on Hoshana Rabbah and Purim as well.)

Ideally, if one intends to continue eating after the *seudah ha'mafsek*, he may do so, though it is preferable to verbalize this intention before *bentching*.⁴⁰

There is a biblical requirement to accept upon oneself the sanctity of Yom Kippur

16. שו"ע סימן תרז-ג.

17. משנ"ב שם סק"י.

18. משנ"ב סימן תרז סק"א.

19. בן איש חי, שנה א, כי תשא, אות ז.

20. Although the Shulchan Aruch writes not to perform *kaparos*, the *Arizal* writes that *Sephardim* have accepted the *pssak* of the *Arizal* on this matter to perform *kaparos*.

21. רמ"א סימן תרה-א.

22. Ibid.

23. קרבן נתנאל על הרא"ש, יומא פ"ח סימן כג-פ.

24. משנ"ב סימן תרה סק"ג.

25. משנ"ב סימן תרה סק"ה.

26. משנ"ב סימן תרה סק"ב.

27. אלף המגן סק"א.

28. משנ"ב סימן תרה סק"ג.

29. פמ"ג א"א-ב, אריז"ל שער הכוונות.

30. הלכות חג בחג פרק כא הע' 21.

31. מג"א סימן תרד סק"א.

32. מג"א סק"א, ערה"ש תרד-ה.

33. שו"ע סימן תרד-א.

34. רמ"א ש"ש יומא פ"ח סימן כב, though other reasons are given as well.

35. כתב סופר קיב ומשנה הלכות ח"ג סימן קעו.

36. של"ה פרק תורה אור וטעמי המנהגים סימן תשל"ד.

37. מטה אפרים סימן תרה-יח.

38. משנ"ב סימן תרח סק"ו.

39. ליקוטי מהר"ח חלק ג- ערב י"ב.

40. משנ"ב סימן תרח סק"ב.

slightly earlier than sunset.⁴¹ It is preferable to make this acceptance verbally,⁴² and some *poskim*⁴³ hold that doing so even two minutes before Yom Kippur is sufficient.

VI. OTHER CUSTOMS

Some have a custom to *daven* at the cemetery and to increase *tzedakah* giving.⁴⁴

There is a custom to go to the *mikvah* on *erev*-YK, and even some women have the *min-hag* to go,⁴⁵ but single women should not go.⁴⁶ The commonly accepted custom today is that even married women do not go.⁴⁷ One should try to make sure there is no *chatzitzah* on the body and that fingernails and toe nails are properly cut.⁴⁸ If one cannot go to the *mikvah*, he may take a shower instead.⁴⁹ The shower should be long enough for 9 *kav* of water to be poured on one's head (12 or 16 liters, or 4-5 minutes).⁵⁰

There is a custom to receive *malkos* on *erev* YK to arouse one to do *teshuva*.⁵¹ The one giving the *malkos* softly⁵² hits the other's back using a leather strap while saying רחום ורחם three times. The recipient crouches down with his head facing north⁵³ and recites אשכנח three times.⁵⁴ However, there are many who do not have the custom to receive *malkos*.⁵⁵

VII. CANDLE LIGHTING

It is customary for married women (as well

as single men/women when living alone)⁵⁶ to light candles for Yom Kippur similar to Shabbos and Yom Tov and recite the *bracha* of להדליק נר של יום הכיפורים.⁵⁷ *Sephardim* do not accept the sanctity of Yom Kippur at the time of lighting candles, but only afterward. Therefore, they should first recite the *bracha* and then light, and they should not recite שהיינו (through which they accept the sanctity of YK)⁵⁸ until after completing the candle lighting, and removing leather shoes.⁵⁹ Alternatively, if they plan to be in shul, they can recite it there with the *tzibur*. *Ashkenazi* women accept the sanctity and laws of Yom Kippur when lighting candles. Therefore, they should first light the candles and then recite the *bracha*.⁶⁰ Those *Ashkenazim* who have the custom to recite שהיינו should make sure do so after finishing to light all the candles (because reciting the *bracha* before lighting causes them to accept the sanctity of the day),⁶¹ but they should not repeat it again during *davening*.⁶²

In pressing situations, such as if she needs to drive to shul afterward for *Kol Nidrei* and it is too far to walk both ways, if an *Ashkenazi* woman does not want to accept the sanctity of YK when lighting, she may stipulate so before lighting and she should make sure not to recite "שהיינו".⁶³ However, she should make sure to accept Yom Kippur at least a few minutes before sunset to fulfill the mitzvah of adding to Yom Kippur, as discussed above, and she should recite שהיינו in shul with the

41. שו"ע סימן תרח-א ומשנ"ב סק"א

42. משנ"ב סימן רסא סק"א

43. אגרות משה או"ח ח"א צו

44. רמ"א סימן תרה

45. משנ"ב סימן תרו-ז

46. שדי חמד קצט חלק ט סימן א אות ו

47. מקראי קודש לרב הררי פ"ב הע' סו

48. אלף למטה סק"ג

49. משנ"ב סימן תרו סק"ב

50. שו"ת מנחת יצחק (ח"ד-כא)

51. ומשנ"ב סק"ח שו"ע סימן תרו-ו

52. משנ"ב סימן תרו סק"כ

53. רמ"א סימן תרו-ו

54. משנ"ב סימן תרו סק"ט

55. כף החיים תרו-מ, ארחות רבינו חלק ב עמ' ר

56. שו"ע או"ח סימן רסג-ב

57. שו"ע תרי-א, רמ"א סימן תרי-ב, ילקוט יוסף תרי-א

58. ילקוט יוסף תרי-א, ז

59. חזון עובדיה, ימים נוראים עמ' רנו

60. שמירת שבת כהלכתה פמ"ד-יד

61. ארחות חיים רסג-ו

62. Ibid. - יג

63. Ibid. - טו

congregation.

Candles should also be lit in the bedroom with enough wax to burn throughout the night to prevent intercourse on Yom Kippur, as cohabitation in lit rooms is always forbidden.⁶⁴ Today, one may also keep on an electric light (even a small one) in the bedroom.⁶⁵ Some *posskim* hold that the custom is no longer to leave a candle or light in the bedroom, especially if it will prevent falling asleep easily.⁶⁶

A candle should remain lit throughout Yom Kippur, to be used after YK for lighting the *Havdalah* candle.⁶⁷ Many also light a *yahrtzeit* candle for departed relatives for which they recite *yizkor*, and some also light a *ner bari* for every living married male member of the household.⁶⁸ Married women may also light a *ner bari* should they choose.⁶⁹

VII. SETTING THE TABLE AND PROPER ATTIRE FOR YK

Since Yom Kippur is referred to in the Torah שבתון, a clean, festive tablecloth should remain spread on the table throughout the entire day⁷⁰ and the beds should be made.⁷¹

There is a custom to wear white on Yom Kippur for two reasons: first, to symbolize that on this day we resemble angels, and second, to remind us of the shrouds in which the deceased are buried, inspiring us to do *teshuvah*.⁷² Married men have a custom to wear a *kittel* (some do not wear it during their *shana*

rishona, first year of marriage).⁷³ Since the *kittel* is a garment that is designated for *davening*, it may not be taken into the restroom.⁷⁴

Women should not wear jewelry normally worn on Shabbos or Yom Tov on Yom Kippur,⁷⁵ but jewelry worn during the week, such as a regular bracelet or necklace, is permitted. It is customary for both men and women to refrain from wearing gold.⁷⁶

Men who normally wear a *tallis* daily should don a *tallis* before sunset and recite the *bracha*.⁷⁷ If donned after sunset, the *bracha* is not recited.⁷⁸

YOM KIPPUR NIGHT AND DAY

The Torah⁷⁹ teaches בַּחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי בְּעָשׂוֹר – “In the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you shall afflict yourself.” The Gemara⁸⁰ explains that this “affliction” refers to abstaining from food and drink. Additionally, the Gemara⁸¹ infers from other verses that four other pleasures are prohibited on Yom Kippur: washing, anointing, wearing leather shoes, and marital relations. Furthermore, all activities that are prohibited on Shabbat are also forbidden on YK.⁸²

I. PROHIBITION TO EAT AND DRINK

Eating or drinking even a small amount of food is biblically prohibited on YK.⁸³ However, the punishment of כרת for eating applies

64. רמ"א סימן תרי"א ומשנ"ב סק"א

65. מקראי קודש לרב הררי ב-ז

66. קובץ הלכות לרב שמואל קמנצקי עמ' שנט, אהלי הלכה, עמ' 69

67. שו"ע סימן תרכד-

68. רמ"א תרי"ד

69. מטה אפרים תרג-ח

70. רמ"א סימן תרי"ד ומשנ"ב סקט"ו

71. ערה"ש תרי"ב

72. רמ"א סימן תרי"ד

73. מהר"ם שיק סימן כח

74. משנ"ב סימן תרי סק"ח

75. משנ"ב סימן תרי סקט"ז

76. ספר המנהגים הגהות קנט וכן ברעק"א

77. רמ"א סימן י"ח

78. משנ"ב סימן יח סק"ז

79. ויקרא טז-כט

80. יומא דף עד:

81. יומא דף עד.

82. שו"ע סימן תריא-א, ב

83. שו"ע סימן תרי"ה

only if one eats the size of a date (about 2/3 of an egg(within the time it takes to eat a פסס 4) eggs),⁸⁴ which is normally determined to be between 4-7 minutes,⁸⁵ but most *posskim* are stringent for YK to follow the opinion of 9 minutes.⁸⁶ Similarly, the punishment of כרת for drinking applies only if one drinks a cheekful within the time it takes to drink a *revi's* (a few seconds), which equals about 3 *kezzeisim*⁸⁷ (86 ml).⁸⁸ Some *posskim* are more stringent and hold that one is liable even if it is consumed within the time it takes to eat a פסס 9) minutes, as above), and this is the opinion that is followed.⁸⁹

In a life-threatening situation, one should eat or drink immediately. A sick person, a woman who is pregnant, or a nursing mother should consult a Rav and a doctor to determine whether they can fast safely, and if the fast must be broken, to clarify how much may be consumed. Those who are ill and permitted to eat small quantities may consume up to 30cc⁹⁰ of food (the size of a date) and⁹¹ up to their own⁹² cheekful of beverages once every 9 minutes.⁹³ Eating such small amounts over an extended period of time is still considered “afflicting” oneself.⁹⁴ When eating less than a *kezayis* or drinking less than a *revi's*, one recites a *bracha rishona* but not a *bracha acharona*.⁹⁵ If one continues eating after the time of *achilas pras*, a new *bracha* is not required, provided one had in mind to

continue eating.⁹⁶

Children and sick individuals who are allowed to eat full meals on YK do not recite *kiddush*⁹⁷ and do not require *Lechem Mishneh*,⁹⁸ but they should wash their hands up to their wrist before eating bread.⁹⁹ When *bentching*, they should add יעלה ויבוא, though if they forgot, they do not need to repeat *bentching*.¹⁰⁰ If they ate *mezonos* or fruit from the *shivas ha'minim*, they should also mention Yom Kippur when reciting the *bracha m'ein shalosh*.¹⁰¹

II. PROHIBITION TO WASH

It is forbidden to wash any part of the body for pleasure, even a single finger, whether with hot or cold water.¹⁰² However, washing to remove dirt is permitted, though one should have in mind not to benefit from the washing and take caution to only wash the dirty areas.¹⁰³

In the morning when waking up and any time after using the bathroom, one may wash one's hands up to the knuckles.¹⁰⁴ Those who wash each hand three or four times in the morning may do so on Yom Kippur as well (up to the knuckles),¹⁰⁵ provided they intend not to benefit from the washing. One may wash the crust from one's eyes but should be careful not to wet any other part of the eye.¹⁰⁶

Kohanim who are going up to *duchen* wash their hands up to the wrist, since this washing is not for benefit.¹⁰⁷ Similarly, a sick individu-

96. משנ"ב סימן קפד סק"ז

97. משנ"ב סימן תריח סקכ"ט

98. מג"א תריח סק"י

99. שמירת שבת כהלכתה פל"ט-לג הע' קה

100. שו"ע סימן תריח-י ומשנ"ב סקכ"ט

101. שמירת שבת כהלכתה פל"ט-לג

102. שו"ע סימן תריג-א

103. משנ"ב סימן תריג סק"א

104. שו"ע סימן תריג-ב

105. מנחת יצחק ח"י-מה

106. משנ"ב סימן תרי"ג סק"ט

107. רמ"א סימן תריג-ג, משנ"ב סק"ז ושעה"צ סק"י

84. משנ"ב סימן רח סקמ"ג

85. וזאת הברכה (עמ' 6) וילקוט יוסף (קסח-יב)

86. משנ"ב סימן תריח סקכ"א

87. משנ"ב סימן רי סק"א

88. שו"ע סימן תריב-י

89. משנ"ב סימן תריב סקל"א

90. מה טובו אהליך יעקב ח"ד עמ' רסד

91. אכילה ושתייה לא מצטרפים, שו"ע סימן תריב-ב

92. שו"ע סימן תריב-ט

93. שו"ע סימן תריח-ח

94. משנ"ב סימן תרי"ב סק"א

95. שו"ע סימן רי-א

al or a child who is washing for bread should wash up to the wrist, while intending not to benefit from the washing.¹⁰⁸ Some *Sephardi kohanim* only wash until their knuckles,¹⁰⁹ though Rav Ovadya *passkins* to wash to the wrist.¹¹⁰

It is forbidden to brush teeth or use mouthwash on YK.¹¹¹

It is forbidden for both men and women to go to the *mikvah* on YK.¹¹²

III. PROHIBITION TO ANOINT

It is forbidden to anoint any part of the body, even if your intention is to remove dirt.¹¹³ Applying makeup, lipstick,¹¹⁴ or perfume¹¹⁵ is included in the prohibition of anointing on Yom Kippur. Medicated creams are not subject to the prohibition of anointing,¹¹⁶ though they still may be forbidden due to Shabbos restrictions. Stick or spray deodorant should not be applied on Yom Kippur.¹¹⁷

IV. PROHIBITION TO WEAR LEATHER SHOES

It is forbidden to wear leather shoes on Yom Kippur.¹¹⁸ It is best to avoid wearing non-leather sneakers or other shoes that one would wear year-round,¹¹⁹ but non-leather slippers or Crocs are allowed.¹²⁰

Moskt *posskim* require one to recite the *bracha* of שְׁעָשָׂה לִי כָל צָרָכִי on YK.¹²¹

V. MARITAL RELATIONS

Marital relations are prohibited on Yom

Kippur, and married women have the halachic status of a *niddah* on this day.¹²² Therefore, one may not touch his wife, sleep in the same bed, sit on the same couch, or engage in any other restrictions that apply to a *niddah*.¹²³

MOTZAEI YOM KIPPUR

One should extend YK for a couple of minutes after *tzeis*.¹²⁴ Maariv is recited with אתה עשית חוננתנו and without the additions for עשית אתה חוננתנו. If one forgot to recite המלך or המלך הקודש or accidentally recited המשפט,¹²⁵ one does not repeat the *Amida*.

Havdalah is recited over a cup of wine or grape juice without *besamim*, using a candle that was lit from a fire burning from before Yom Kippur.¹²⁶

Motzaei YK is considered a minor Yom Tov, on which there is a *mitzvah* to eat and drink.¹²⁷ For this reason, *Kiddush Levana* is recited on *Motzaei YK*, as it should be said in a joyous mood.¹²⁸ According to most opinions, it may be recited even before Havdalah and even while wearing YK shoes.¹²⁹

Ideally, one should begin building the *sukkah* on *Motzaei YK* and complete it the following day.¹³⁰ ■

122. שו"ע סימן תרטו-א

123. משנ"ב סימן תרטו סק"א

124. שו"ע סימן תרכד-ב

125. ח"י אדם כד-י

126. שו"ע סימן תרכד-ד

127. רמ"א סימן תרכד-ד

128. משנ"ב סימן תרב סק"י

129. משנ"ב סימן תכו סק"א

130. רמ"א סימן תרכד-ד ומשנ"ב סק"ט

- 108. שמירת שבת כהלכתה פל"ט הע' קו
- 109. כך החיים תריג-טו
- 110. חזון עובדיה עמ' 312
- 111. רמ"א סימן תקסז-ג וחוט שני יום כיפור עמ' קלג
- 112. שו"ע סימן תריג-יב
- 113. שו"ע סימן תריד-א
- 114. נטעי גבריאל פ"ג-ה
- 115. אור לציון ח"ד פ"ב-ט
- 116. שו"ע סימן תריד-א
- 117. אשרי האיש ח"ג פ"א-ט
- 118. שו"ע סימן תריד-ב
- 119. הלכות חג בחג עמ' שסט
- 120. הליכות שלמה פ"ה-יז
- 121. משנ"ב סימן תקנד סק"א



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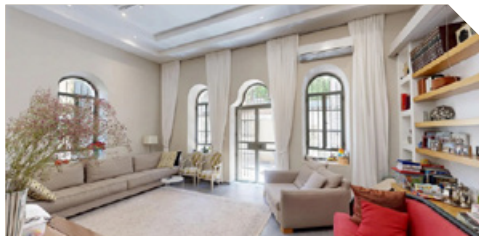
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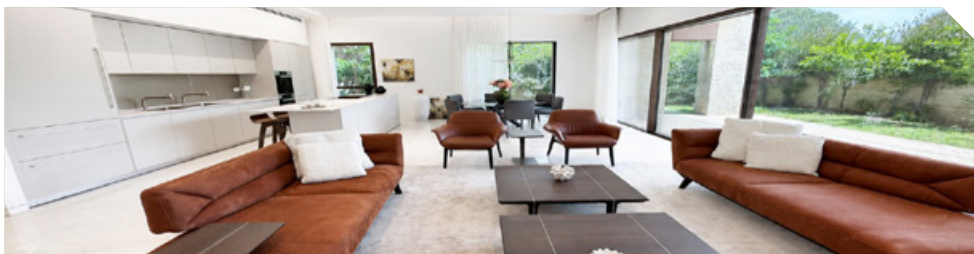
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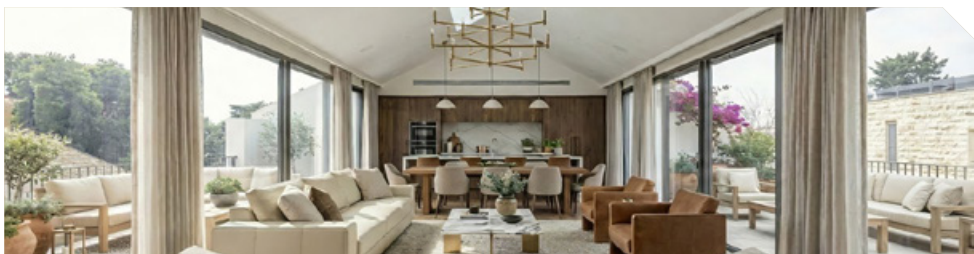
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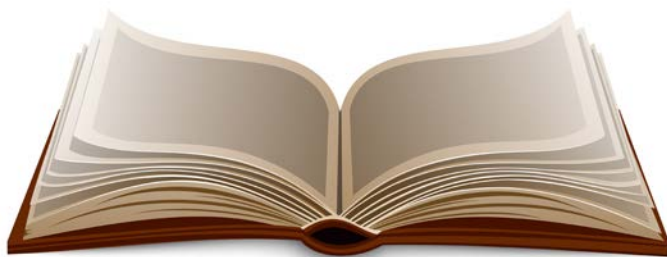


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וידוי עשׂוּ

The following is an elaborated commentary on the Viduy which is recited throughout the day of Yom Kippur. It should be used along with the text in your machzor.



We have become guilty... of a whole variety of sins. What we have done was not necessarily to rebel against G-d, but we nonetheless are devastated by our behavior

אֲשָׁמְנוּ
אֲשָׁמְנוּ

We have eaten - forbidden foods, questionable foods, without brachot, without good manners and concern for others; there is something lacking in our faith in G-d (even just sometimes); we don't always say Amen properly, we have a cruel streak...

We have betrayed G-d by not doing His mitzvot properly and by sinning in a way that is disloyal to G-d; we have betrayed family & friends

בִּגְדָנוּ
בִּגְדָנוּ

We have wasted prayer and Torah study time; we were not careful with Milk & Meat; we relied on ourselves sometimes to the exclusion of trusting in G-d; we have said "sloppy" brachot; we have belittled parents, teachers, scholars, friends; we have wasted time...

We have stolen - things, time, other's sleep, ideas; we have deceived...

גָּזַלְנוּ
גָּזַלְנוּ

We have been arrogant; wrongly took credit for something; harmed or annoyed others; not raised our children properly; have not been strict enough about sexual behavior; have not repaid kindnesses properly...

We have slandered G-d (by questioning His justice and kindness) and people. We have said one thing and meant something else.

דִּבְרָנוּ דְּפִי
דִּבְרָנוּ דְּפִי

We have gossiped, defamed, used vulgarities, spoken disrespectfully, shouted - misused the power of speech; not given people the benefit of the doubt...

We have caused perversion, corrupted others

הִעֲרִינוּ
הִעֲרִינוּ

We have entertained improper thoughts - during davening, Torah learning, or in general; we have davened without kavana; burdened others; encroached on another's "space"; looked at indecent pictures, literature, etc.

And we have caused wickedness; caused others to sin

וְהָרַשְׁנוּ
וְהָרַשְׁנוּ

We have neglected to be properly respectful of G-d; showed lack of concern for the possessions of others; said we're sorry without trying to mean it; fomented dissent; joined with others and wasted time on nonsense...

**We have sinned intentionally, and then have rationalized our behavior
(making T'shuva all the more difficult)**

זָדוֹנָנוּ

*We have taken G-d's Name in vain; been careless about ritual washing of our hands;
been disrespectful to our parents; we 'ate like pigs'; threw food, mingled immodestly...*

**We have extorted; we have taken advantage of those weaker than us;
we have pressured others to give in to us**

חֲמָסָנוּ

*We have caused Chilul HaShem; we have falsely flattered others; thought bad thoughts;
unjustly suspected others of wrongdoing; desecrated the Shabbat; not paid our debts;
desired (in an unhealthy, unkosher manner) the possessions of others...*

**We have "attached" ourselves to falsehood; lying has become
a part of our lives; we have accused others falsely;
compounded lies by lying more; hung out with the wrong crowd**

טַפְּלָנוּ שָׁקָר

*We have given erroneous opinions and advice; defiled ourselves and others;
handled Muktzat on Shabbat or Yom Tov; belittled Good and chosen Bad...*

**We have given evil counsel; we have abused the trust of others;
advised others in ways that are not in their best interest**

יַעֲצָנוּ רָע

*We have secluded ourselves improperly with members of the opposite sex; joined others
in time-wasting activities; knowingly sinned; lacked proper reverence and awe for G-d...*

**We have been deceitful; made intentionally misleading statements;
false promises; have not tried hard enough to keep our promises**

כִּזְבוֹנוּ

*We have made HaShem angry at us; been ungrateful; intended to harm others (even
if we didn't); wasted time; delayed paying wages; called others derogatory nicknames...*

**We have clowned around about matters that we should have treated
seriously; we have ridiculed good people; we've joked about things, which
prevents us from proper T'shuva because we don't take things seriously enough**

לִצְנוּ

*We have - not learned Torah properly; worn Shaatnez; not been kind & charitable; not been
meticulous about mitzvot & halacha; not been scrupulous in our dealings with others...*

We have rebelled; defied G-d's will; sinned because of incomplete faith

מִרְדָּנוּ

We have held others back from doing mitzvot; not behaved properly in business...

We have angered G-d (so to speak) by disregarding His mitzvot, etc.

נֶאֱצָנוּ

*We violated promises and vows; took revenge and bore grudges; benefited from
this world without brachot; were lazy in Torah learning and service of HaShem...*

We have turned away, ignored our responsibilities to G-d (and fellows)

סָרְרָנוּ

*We have turned from Jewish customs; contradicted our parents or Torah
authorities; dealt with contraband; forgiven others in word, but not in our hearts...*

**We have been perverse and have sinned because of perverted reasoning;
we have deliberately sinned to gratify our desires**

עִוְיָנוּ

*We have been falsely modest; a burden to our spouse;
we were insensitive to orphans & widows; we have violated (minor) prohibitions...*

**We have acted wantonly; denied the validity of (some) mitzvot; we
basically believe in G-d & Torah, but have disregarded a specific mitzva**

פִּשְׁעָנוּ

*We have rejected the Yoke of Heaven; we were afraid to reproach someone;
we turned our hearts to idleness; we opened someone else's mail; we lacked fear of sin...*

We have persecuted others; caused suffering; been callous to others

צָרָרְנוּ

We have distressed our family members; we put our needs before G-d's...

We have been stubborn; we have refused to see G-d's Hand in life; we have ignored or denied that what happens in this world is not chance, but G-d's Will

קִשְׁיֵינוּ עָרָר

We have been jealous of others; been stingy with Tzedaka; read improper books; listened to and accepted Lashon HaRa; not been careful with Kriyat Sh'ma...

We have been wicked; done sins that are particularly identified with wickedness, such as hitting others, stealing, planning to sin

רָשָׁעֵנוּ

We have pursued honor; quarreled for no good reason; ran after temptations...

We have corrupted our character; been arrogant; extremely angry; vulgar - sins which affect one's character

שִׁחַתְנוּ

We have - lied; forgotten G-d and our commitment to Him; were silent when we should have objected; gloated over another's misfortune; hated others; squandered physical & spiritual energies...

We have been abominable; have become loathsome to G-d; immorality; idolatry; haughtiness; anger

תַּעֲבָנוּ

We have desired sinful things; belittled the Torah; we did not take the opportunity to repent; were not careful with our T'filin; were sloppy with davening...

We have strayed; drifted further away from G-d rather than getting closer to Him

תָּעִינוּ

You have let us go astray (we lost the merit to have Your help); we have misused freedom of choice for ourselves and others

תַּעֲתָעֵנוּ.

In summary... We have veered from Your mitzvot and good rules, and that hasn't been worth it at all. We acknowledge that Your judgments against us are just, because You act truthfully and we have brought evil upon ourselves. (Nonetheless, please forgive us...)

סָרְנוּ מִמִּצְוֹתֶיךָ וּמִמְשָׁפְטֶיךָ
הַטּוֹבִים, וְלֹא שׁוּבָה לָנוּ. וְאַתָּה
צָדִיק עַל כָּל הַבָּא עָלֵינוּ, כִּי
אָמַת עֲשִׂיתָ וְאָנַחְנוּ הִרְשָׁעֵנוּ.

What can we say to You, G-d; You know everything; nothing is hidden before You...

מָה נֹאמַר לְפָנֶיךָ יוֹשֵׁב מְרוֹם, וּמֵה נִסְפֵּר לְפָנֶיךָ שׁוֹכֵן שְׁחָקִים, הֲלֹא כָּל הַנִּסְתָּרוֹת
וְהַנֶּגְלֹת אֵתָּה יוֹדֵעַ. אֵתָּה יוֹדֵעַ רֵזִי עוֹלָם, וְתַעֲלוּמוֹת סִתְרֵי כָּל חַי. אֵתָּה חוֹפֵשׁ כָּל
חַדְרֵי בֵּטָן, וּבוֹחֵן כְּלִיּוֹת וְלֵב. אֵין דְּבַר נֶעְלָם מִמֶּךָ, וְאֵין נִסְתָּר מִנֶּגְדְּ עֵינֶיךָ.

Therefore, may it be Your will that You forgive, pardon, and atone our many sins...

וּבִכֵּן יִהְיֶה רְצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ, ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ, שֶׁתְּסַלַּח לָנוּ עַל כָּל חַטָּאתֵינוּ,
וְתִמְחַל לָנוּ עַל כָּל עֲוֹנוֹתֵינוּ, וְתִכַּפֵּר-לָנוּ עַל כָּל פְּשָׁעֵינוּ.

After summarizing, we once again use an alphabetical format (this time, a double alphabetical arrangement) to enumerate a multitude of sins. And once again, the custom is to strike the heart (left side of the chest) for each AL CHEIT...

For the sin that we have sinned before You... (repeated for each)

accidentally (or under duress) and willingly - even when we don't mean to sin, we still must repent, for it indicates a lack in us that we sinned. How much more so, when it is intentional	עַל חֵטָא שֶׁחֲטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בְּאִנּוּן וּבְרָצוֹן,
through hardness of the heart - refusing to admit that we might be wrong often results in sin. We have to be more humble...	וְעַל חֵטָא שֶׁחֲטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בְּאִמּוּץ הַלֵּב.
through ignorance - lack of Torah learning results in doing the wrong thing. Rather than plead ignorance, we must strive for greater knowledge	עַל חֵטָא שֶׁחֲטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בְּבִלִי דַעַת,
with words - many sins, especially related to misuse of the power of speech, such as flippancy oaths, cursing, gossip. We must be more careful of what emerges from our lips...	וְעַל חֵטָא שֶׁחֲטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בְּבִטּוּי שְׂפָתַיִם.
in public or in private - sins in public are potential Chilul HaShem; sins in private often indicate fear of what others will think, but a disregard for what G-d thinks. Negative either way.	עַל חֵטָא שֶׁחֲטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בְּגִלּוּי וּבִסְתֵּר.
through immorality - this includes a wide variety of sins and includes the sins themselves as well as that which a person does that causes lust and leads to the more serious sins...	וְעַל חֵטָא שֶׁחֲטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בְּגִלּוּי עֲרִיּוֹת,
with harsh speech - generally, this refers to misuse of the power of speech in all forms; specifically, it refers to speaking harshly to someone and unjustly hurting his/her feelings.	עַל חֵטָא שֶׁחֲטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בְּדַבּוּר פָּה.
with knowledge and deceit - refers to using our knowledge in order to deceive and take advantage of others. Also includes deceiving ourselves.	וְעַל חֵטָא שֶׁחֲטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בְּדַעַת וּבְמַרְמָה,
through thoughts - this includes fantasizing about sin; such thoughts are the root of sin and also interfere with Torah learning and davening. "I was ONLY thinking about..." is no excuse.	עַל חֵטָא שֶׁחֲטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בְּהִרְהוּר הַלֵּב.
through wronging a fellow - deceiving, taking advantage of a friend, etc.; also refers to unfair treatment in business	וְעַל חֵטָא שֶׁחֲטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בְּהוֹנָאת רֵעַ,
by insincere confession - T'shuva must be "in your mouth and in your heart, to do..." Let our words motivate us to sincere repentance and let our sincere repentance be accompanied by proper VIDUI (VIDUI can start or 'cap' the T'shuva process)	עַל חֵטָא שֶׁחֲטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בְּדוּדֵי פֶה.
in immoral gatherings - being part of a group whose conversations are improper can easily lead one astray. "But everyone else was there!" is not a reason or excuse	וְעַל חֵטָא שֶׁחֲטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בְּוַעֲיֵדֵת זָנוּת,
willfully and carelessly - even when we did not mean to sin, we have what to repent - we should have been more careful, etc.	עַל חֵטָא שֶׁחֲטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בְּזִדּוֹן וּבְשִׁגְגָה.
by belittling parents (incl. in-laws!) and teachers - this is not only something we do or say, but even something we think. It all is wrong and it threatens the strength of the Chain of Tradition.	וְעַל חֵטָא שֶׁחֲטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בְּזִלְזוּל הוֹרִים וּמוֹרִים,

by exercising power - it is wrong to use one's power to intimidate others; one must not arrogantly act superior over others.	על חטא שחטאנו לפניך בְּחֹזֶק יָד,
through desecration of G-d's Name - includes major Chilul HaShem as well as relatively minor acts which cause a lowering of the respect for G-d or Torah in the eyes of others.	ועל חטא שחטאנו לפניך בְּחִלּוּל הַשֵּׁם.
through foolish speech - "why do we say stupid things?" One has to repent this too, since speech is such a precious & powerful feature of humans. And, foolish speech often leads to action.	על חטא שחטאנו לפניך בְּטִפְשׁוֹת פֶּה.
through impure lips - this is one of several references to improper speech; in this case, the subject is vulgar language and cursing.	ועל חטא שחטאנו לפניך בְּטִמְאַת שִׁפְתַּיִם,
with the Evil Inclination - we sometimes fail to fight our Yetzer HaRa - rather flirt with it, then give in to it and follow it.	על חטא שחטאנו לפניך בִּיֵצֶר הָרָע,
knowingly and unknowingly - we want to repent even sins that we are unaware of having done. Also, sins against others who may or may not know what we've said about or done to them.	ועל חטא שחטאנו לפניך בְּיֹדְעִים וּבְלֹא יֹדְעִים.

ועל כלם, אלוהי סליחות, סלח לנו, מחל לנו, כפר-לנו.

For all of these sins, G-d of Forgiveness, forgive us, pardon us, atone for us.

(These are different levels of forgiveness - commentators disagree concerning the terminology. Basically, we ask G-d to forgive what we've done, not to punish us for it, not to even hold a sin against us, and to completely erase it, as if we never did it. Some suggest that S'LACH is to forgive, but not necessarily to forget. M'CHAL is more - maybe like forgiven & forgotten.)

by yielding to bribery - monetary bribery as well as flattery with ulterior motives are insidious to honest dealings among people. Bribery and flattery can blind one and cause a multitude of sins in their wakes.	על חטא שחטאנו לפניך בְּכַפַּת שֹׁחַד.
through denial and false promises - we have not been honest, neither with G-d nor with our fellow human beings. Remember: this need not be a chronic condition, we must repent even the minor instances of dishonesty. "I'm basically honest, but..." Not good either.	ועל חטא שחטאנו לפניך בְּכַחַשׁ וּבְכַזָּב,
with Lashon HaRa - another misuse of the power of speech. A particularly serious sin because it often results in permanent damage to a person's reputation, even when groundless. "But it's true" is not an acceptable excuse for Lashon HaRa. Neither is "I was only joking".	על חטא שחטאנו לפניך בְּלִשׁוֹן הָרָע.
through fooling around - not taking someone's reproach of us seriously, laughing it off, will impede T'shuva. Ridiculing others, joking at someone else's expense are serious offenses.	ועל חטא שחטאנו לפניך בְּלִצְוֹן,

in business - business ethics and proper behavior in the market place are just as much a part of Halacha as is fasting on Yom Kippur or keeping Shabbat. Extra warning: these kinds of sin often involve Chilul HaShem and are often disregarded by many	על חטא שחטאנו לפניך במשא ובמתן,
with food & drink - one should not pat himself on the back for keeping kosher; one needs to carefully answer the question: "Am I as careful and as strict as I ought to be?" Included in this sin are not making brachot properly, sloppy benching, careless washing for meals, poor table manners, gluttony, stinginess with guests...	ועל חטא שחטאנו לפניך במאכל ובמשתה.
through interest and extortion - taking or paying interest on personal loans is forbidden. Besides the sin, it causes one to become hard-hearted.	על חטא שחטאנו לפניך בנשך ובמרבית,
through haughtiness - arrogance is a particularly reprehensible character trait. We must repent sins that result from it as well as work on ridding ourselves of this negative characteristic.	ועל חטא שחטאנו לפניך בנטיית גרון.
with prying eyes - this includes looking at forbidden things, invasion of privacy of others, expressing disapproval of others with a raised eyebrow	על חטא שחטאנו לפניך בשקור עין.
with idle chatter - yet another expression of the misuse of speech. Here it can refer to davening and benching without kavana, as well as pointless and time-wasting conversation.	ועל חטא שחטאנו לפניך בשיח שפתותינו,
with haughty eyes - looking down at others. This is parallel to the earlier reference to haughtiness, a particularly negative trait.	על חטא שחטאנו לפניך בעינים רמות,
with brazenness - acting without shame and a bit of natural embarrassment is a contributory factor to a host of other sins	ועל חטא שחטאנו לפניך בעזות מצח.

ועל כלם, אלוה סליחות, סלח לנו, מחל לנו, כפר-לנו.

in throwing off the Yoke - we exist to learn Torah, perform mitzvot, and be good people. Many sins come from shirking our responsibilities.	על חטא שחטאנו לפניך בפריקת על,
in judgment - refers to sins of unfair judgment, in the formal courtroom as well as in everyday life. It even refers to judging G-d.	ועל חטא שחטאנו לפניך בפלילות.
through entrapping a fellow - taking advantage of others, manipulating people for our own purposes	על חטא שחטאנו לפניך בצדית רע,
through a begrudging eye - being jealous and stingy. Finding excuses for not giving Tzedaka or being generous with others. Not helping others.	ועל חטא שחטאנו לפניך בצרות עין.
through lightheadedness - we are often frivolous. This is especially inappropriate in shul and when learning Torah or davening.	על חטא שחטאנו לפניך בקלות ראש,
with stubbornness - refusing to recognize that we might be wrong. Not learning from experience. Not taking constructive criticism. This is a major obstacle to T'shuva, and we must repent this in order to repent other things too.	ועל חטא שחטאנו לפניך בקשיות ערף.

enthusiastically - One must examine his wrongdoings and see if there is the added sin of doing them with a smile or with "licking one's lips".	על חטא שחטאנו לפניך בריצת רגלים להרע,
by gossiping - The prohibition includes Lashon HaRa and character assassination, but also includes telling tales with no intention to hurt anyone. It is all too frequent that people get hurt from plain gossip.	ועל חטא שחטאנו לפניך ברכילות.
through vain oaths - swearing falsely or frivolously can damage the underpinnings of interpersonal relationships as well as being a serious lack of respect to G-d. One has to be extremely careful in this regard.	על חטא שחטאנו לפניך בשבועת שוא,
through baseless hatred - do you hate a person when you should really be hating the wrong things that he does?. This distinction is crucial for the proper growth and development of Klal Yisrael.	ועל חטא שחטאנו לפניך בשנאת חנם.
in matters of "giving a hand" - we have been callous towards the needs of others. Also, we have sometimes joined with others in evil.	על חטא שחטאנו לפניך בתשומת-יד,
through confusion - this refers to a diminished faith in G-d caused by not seeing G-d's hand in everything and by doubting the validity of the Torah and the authority of halacha.	ועל חטא שחטאנו לפניך בתמהון לכב.

ועל כלם, אלוה סליחות, סלח לנו, מחל לנו, כפר-לנו.

After enumerating different kinds of sins, we ask for forgiveness of sins according to punishment & style:

For sins which would require a sacrifice in the Beit HaMikdash, then for those which one gets corporal or capital punishment from Beit Din or penalties from Heaven.

Then we mention sins of commission and omission, sins we know about and those of which we - but not G-d - are unaware

ועל חטאים שאנו חייבים עליהם עולה.
ועל חטאים שאנו חייבים עליהם חטאת.
ועל חטאים שאנו חייבים עליהם קרבן עולה ויורד.
ועל חטאים שאנו חייבים עליהם אשם ודאי ואשם תלוי.
ועל חטאים שאנו חייבים עליהם מכת מרדות.
ועל חטאים שאנו חייבים עליהם מלקות ארבעים.
ועל חטאים שאנו חייבים עליהם מיתה בידי שמים.
ועל חטאים שאנו חייבים עליהם כרת וערירי.
ועל חטאים שאנו חייבים עליהם ארבע מיתות בית דין,

סקילה שרפה, הרג וחנק. על מצות עשה ועל מצות לא תעשה, בין שיש בה קום עשה, ובין שאין בה קום עשה. את הגלויים לנו ואת שאינם גלויים לנו. את הגלויים לנו כבר אמרנום לפניך, והודינו לך עליהם; ואת שאינם גלויים לנו, לפניך הם גלויים וידועים, כדבר שנאמר: הַנִּסְתָּרוֹת לִּי אֵלֹהֵינוּ וְהַגָּלוּת לָנוּ וּלְבִינֵנוּ עַד-עוֹלָם לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת-כָּל-דְּבָרֵי הַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת: כִּי אַתָּה סֹלֶחַן לְיִשְׂרָאֵל וּמַחֲלֵן לְשִׁבְטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּכָל דּוֹר וָדוֹר, וּמַבְלִעַדִּיד אֵין לָנוּ מִלֶּךְ מוֹחֵל וְסוֹלֵחַ אֵלָּא אַתָּה.

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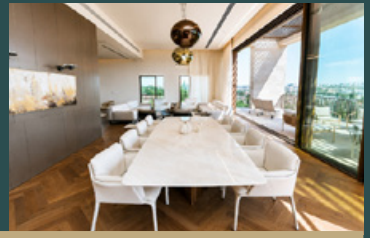
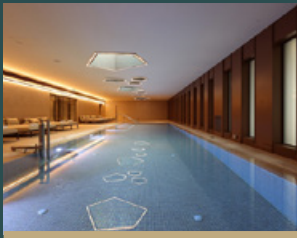
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YOM KIPPUR

Yom Kippur: Believe in Teshuva and Believe in Jews

Western civilization generally views history as open-ended and evolutionary. The future is unknown, shaped by human choices and unfolding events. Judaism views history very differently. History follows a predetermined arc and, in a deeper sense, is cyclical. It moves steadily toward a conclusion that echoes its beginning: a perfected world in which Hashem's presence is fully recognized and no longer contested by Man. Our world is never static. History is always coursing toward its destination, toward what we call redemption, or *geulah*.

Yet an intriguing position cited in the Gemara in Sanhedrin (97b) calls this inevitability into question. Rabbi Eliezer claims that our final *geulah* depends upon *teshuvah*. If we perform *teshuvah*, we will be redeemed; if we refuse to do so, redemption will not come.

A CONDITIONAL REDEMPTION?

This position stems from a simple reading of the end of Sefer Devarim. The *tochachah* of *Ki Tavo*, which is generally understood as

describing our final *galut*, does not conclude with an unconditional redemption or return from exile. Instead, the resolution appears only in Parshat Nitzavim, which describes a broad national *teshuvah*:

וְשָׁבַת עַד ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ וְשָׁמַעְתָּ בְּקוֹלוֹ... וְשָׁבַת ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ אֶת שְׁבוּתְךָ וְרַחֲמֶךָ וְשָׁב וִקְבַּצְךָ מִכָּל הָעַמִּים אֲשֶׁר הִפְצִיךָ ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ שָׁמָּה.

"You will return to Hashem your God and listen to His voice... and Hashem your God will restore your fortunes and have mercy upon you, and He will return and gather you from all the nations among which Hashem your God has dispersed you."

Rabbi Eliezer reads this sequence literally. If we succeed in performing *teshuvah*, we will be redeemed. If we do not, we will remain in exile. This represents a dramatic departure from our assumption that *geulah* is the inevitable terminus of Jewish history.

TESHUVAH AS PROPHECY

Astonishingly, the Rambam adopts Rabbi Eliezer's position that final *geulah* depends upon prior *teshuvah*. Yet he understands that position very differently. He reads the pasuk not merely as a condition for redemption but as a prophecy that this condition will eventually be fulfilled. In the seventh *perek* of *Hilchos Teshuvah*, the Rambam asserts:

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of their daughter, Aliza

בסוף גלותן ומיד הן נגאלין.

“The Torah has already promised that at the end of their exile, Israel will ultimately perform *teshuvah*, and immediately they will be redeemed.”

Structurally and logically, the Rambam agrees with Rabbi Eliezer. Final *geulah* must be preceded by *teshuvah*. But the Rambam adds that this national *teshuvah* has already been promised and will certainly occur. If the *teshuvah* is assured, then the *geulah* that follows it is assured as well.

By describing this verse not as a narrative about a possible *teshuvah* that might lead to *geulah*, but as a prophecy that this *teshuvah* will certainly occur, the Rambam strengthens a conviction essential to *teshuvah*: our faith that teshuva is actually possible. Additionally this Rambam reshapes how we view the Jewish people and their future.

THE LEAP OF FAITH

Teshuvah is not obvious. It requires a leap of faith. Will HaKadosh Baruch Hu really forgive even the most grievous sins? The Midrash describes Adam meeting his son Kayin after Kayin had murdered his brother Hevel. Adam asks what became of his punishment, and Kayin responds that he performed *teshuvah* and that his sentence was mitigated. Adam is stunned. He had never imagined the possibility of *teshuvah*. He had simply accepted his own fate and left Gan Eden. It never occurred to him that he could repent and recover from his sin. *Teshuvah* was never self-evident to mankind. What happened had happened, and there was little reason to believe that a person could turn back the clock and somehow rewrite his story.

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opened his heart and, with painful candor, exposed the inner landscape of his *teshuvah*, as mortifying as that disclosure must have been. He understood his role as teaching us that *teshuvah* is possible and thereby strengthened our faith in its power.

That faith was not always easy to summon. The prophets of the First Beit HaMikdash repeatedly pleaded with us to return. Some were stubborn, refusing to acknowledge that they had sinned and rejecting any criticism of their behavior. Others recognized their failures but despaired of the possibility of return. They could imagine sin, but they could not imagine recovery. *Teshuvah* demands faith that Hashem has granted us this extraordinary gift: that failure need not be final and that even after we have fallen, a path back remains open.

FAITH IN OURSELVES

Teshuvah demands faith not only in Hashem, but in ourselves. Have we fallen too far to recover? Perhaps our sins have poisoned us so much that we are no longer capable of returning. It takes great faith in the inner

 **Mazel Tov to** 

Arlene Friedson Saslow

and family on the engagement

of her grandson

virtue and nobility of man to believe that no matter how deeply we have fallen, recovery remains possible.

The Gemara in Chagigah (15a) tells of Elisha ben Avuyah, known as Acher, the great scholar who abandoned his faith and descended into apostasy. He heard a heavenly voice, a *Bat Kol*, proclaiming: שבו בנים שובבים חוץ מאחר — “Return, wayward children, except for Acher.” He understood the *Bat Kol* as declaring that everyone was invited to perform *teshuvah* except for him.

Rabbi Soloveitchik explained that the *Bat Kol* could not actually have excluded Elisha ben Avuyah. That would contradict the very premise of free will and *teshuvah*: every person, no matter how far he has fallen, retains the capacity to return. Even Yonah, buried in the depths of the sea inside the belly of the fish, still possessed a direct path back to Hashem. The *Bat Kol* called everyone to return. It was Elisha’s own despair that added the words חוץ מאחר — “except for Acher.” He was so convinced that he had fallen beyond recovery that he actually heard himself being excluded from an invitation that was addressed to everyone.

He had fallen so far that he could no longer believe in his own capacity for *teshuvah*. *Teshuvah* therefore requires faith not only that Hashem will accept us, but that something within us remains intact enough to return.

BUILT INTO HISTORY

The Rambam’s prophecy strengthens both forms of faith: faith in Hashem’s willingness to accept our *teshuva* and faith in our own capacity to achieve it. The very concept of a prophecy about *teshuva* is surprising. *Teshuva* is an expression of free will, while *nevu’ah* realities that are destined to unfold.

How can a freely chosen act be guaranteed in advance?

The message that emerges from the Rambam is that these two ideas can somehow coexist. Each individual retains complete freedom to choose whether to perform *teshuva*. Yet on the national level, the Jewish people are destined to return. National *teshuva* is somehow woven into the course of Jewish history without eliminating the freedom of any individual Jew.

That prophecy should strengthen our own faith in *teshuva*. If *teshuva* is destined to emerge from the Jewish people, then the *capacity* for *teshuva* must already lie within us. *Teshuva* is not an alien possibility that we somehow have to manufacture. It draws upon a deep human capacity for renewal that Hashem has planted within us.

BELIEVE IN JEWS

But the prophecy of the Rambam speaks not only about *teshuvah*. It also reveals a crucial truth about the people destined to perform it. At certain moments in history, the prospect of national return may seem remote, even implausible. Yet the endpoint has already been foretold. Something will awaken the Jewish heart, whether an internal stirring, an external jolt, or some combination of the two, and turn it back toward HaKadosh Baruch Hu.

If our return is guaranteed, then prolonged estrangement can never extinguish our capacity to return. Something within us survives distance and alienation and remains capable of awakening. Believe in Jews, the Rambam teaches us. Our return is not merely a hope, but a part of the prophetic trajectory of Jewish history.

FAITH IN A DIVIDED NATION

Today, our faith in the Jewish people is

being challenged on a different front. We are living through a deeply divided moment in our history. We are immersed in sharp and painful ideological debates, and the coming election season will likely deepen our polarization and harden our positions. Our nation faces questions that appear almost irreconcilable, while comprehensive solutions remain elusive. Where are we headed as a people?

This Rambam does not promise that every national disagreement will somehow disappear or that every political and social question will find an easy resolution. But he does teach us something profound about how we are meant to view the Jewish people. We must not judge our future solely by our present condition. If we are asked to believe in the seemingly improbable prospect of a great national *teshuvah*, we should also believe that our people can find a path through the divisions that currently overwhelm us.

A people whose eventual spiritual return is guaranteed possesses depths that are not always visible at a particular moment in history. We may not yet see how our divisions will be resolved or where a common path will emerge. But the Rambam asks us to maintain faith in the people who must eventually find it.

During this season of *emunah*, the Rambam calls upon us to believe. Believe in *teshuvah*. Believe in the Jewish people. Believe in me. Believe in you. ■



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Sounding the Shofar of Prophecy

In exploring Yirmiyahu's inaugural prophecy, the midrash draws a comparison between Yirmiyahu and Moshe Rabbeinu. Both initially resisted their appointment as prophet, claiming inability to perform the task being assigned to them. The midrash continues that they were alike not only in their initial response to their missions, but in other ways as well - both prophesied for forty years, both prophesied to the entire nation, not just one of the two divided kingdoms, both were persecuted by members of their own tribe (Moshe by Korach and Yirmiyahu by the people of Anatot), Moshe was thrown into the river and Yirmiyahu into a pit, both were saved and both offered words of rebuke.¹

Yirmiyahu is compared by the midrash to two other Neviim as well. The Mechilta teaches that three prophets, Yirmiyahu, Eliyahu and Yonah, each adopted a different stance with regard to their missions. Eliyahu demanded the honor of the Father and not of the son - he zealously defended the honor of Hashem and could not tolerate the sinfulness

of the people, and was therefore stripped of his mission, and instructed to hand responsibility over to his student, Elisha.

Yonah demanded the honor of the son but not of the Father - he tried to escape his prophecy, willing even to die at sea rather than fulfill his mission to Nineveh. If Yonah were to succeed in his mission, bringing the capital of the Assyrian empire to the point of repentance, they would then be eligible to serve as Hashem's instrument of punishment for Israel. Yonah preferred to forfeit his relationship with Hashem, even his life if it came to it, rather than endanger his beloved people.

Yonah was punished by the loss of his prophetic ability; Hashem no longer spoke to him. Yirmiyahu, on the other hand, achieved the perfect balance between his love for both Hashem and the people of Israel. He admitted the people's sinfulness, yet found ways to advocate for them. For this his prophetic ability was strengthened. In this respect, the midrash puts Yirmiyahu on the same plane as Moshe Rabbeinu and David HaMelech, who were similarly able to balance rebuke with love and advocacy.²

While the first midrash compares Yirmiyahu to Moshe Rabbeinu in terms of the circumstances they endured, the second is a more profound reflection upon a personal outlook. Yirmiyahu is one of the few prophets to allow us more than a glimpse into his



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feelings toward his mission. We are privy to his struggles and to his hopes, his love for his G-d, his people and for Yerushalayim and the Mikdash.

Rav Moshe Lichtenstein views the comparison of the midrash differently. He argues that while it's true that Moshe and Yirmiyahu both initially resisted their appointments, Yirmiyahu was easily appeased by Hashem's promise of reinforcement, while Moshe continued to argue. He suggests that the mission of each was essentially different from the other - Moshe was a prophet-leader, while Yirmiyahu was to serve as Hashem's "shofar" - a mouthpiece to relay the word of Hashem to the people. He was not sent to effect change, rather to inform, to warn and to prepare. This served to intensify Yirmiyahu's inner struggle. His loyalty to Hashem's word was in constant conflict with his desire to advocate for Yisrael and Yerushalayim.³

It is significant that Yirmiyahu's opening prophecy concludes with words of comfort that still resound in our ears, as they appear in Tefillat Musaf of Rosh HaShanah. In the bracha of Zichronot, we ask Hashem to remember, as He promised Yirmiyahu he would, the kindness of our youth and the love of our betrothal and commitment to Him as

we willingly followed Him into the desert without a thought as to how we would survive there. Only on the basis of this promise, the promise of ultimate redemption, suggests Rav Lichtenstein, was Yirmiyahu able to fulfill his mission of rebuke. May we merit to listen to the sound of the shofar during these auspicious days, and hear the echo of the words of the Neviim through Hashem's "loudspeaker", begging us to return to Him with full hearts so that He may forgive our sins and fulfill His promise of redemption. ■

Mrs. Leah Feinberg is a master educator who taught at the SKA High School for Girls in Hewlett for twenty-one years, also serving as Tanach Department chairperson and New Teacher Mentor. Leah is currently on the faculty of the OU Israel Center and has taught in all three cycles of the OU Women's Initiative Nach Yomi program

In the **OU Women's Initiative Nach Yomi series**, which just began its fourth cycle, women scholars deliver a daily shiur on the books of Prophets (Neviim) and Writings (Ketuvim) at the pace of a chapter a day. Shiurim are geared toward learners of all levels who would like to participate in the two-year Nach Yomi study cycle. Visit the OU Women's Initiative to register for additional content.

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YOM KIPPUR

The Magic of Yom Kippur

As I listened to the ba'al tefillah's beautiful niggunim during the repetition of Mussaf on Rosh Hashana, I found myself dreaming.

Dreaming of Yom Kippur in the Beit HaMikdash.

The Seder HaAvodah has been one of my favorite Yom Tov experiences ever since I first learned about it in high school. There is something almost magical about watching the Kohen Gadol move through that extraordinary day: the precision and alacrity required of him, the enormous responsibility resting on his shoulders, the changing of his elaborate and holy, simple linen clothings, the daily services and korbanot alongside the special Yom Kippur offerings.

Yom Kippur has always been my favorite day of the year.

For one day, we spend our time intimately with Hashem. We dress in white. We become angelic. The distractions of the physical world recede. Nothing else matters.

And at the end of it all, we have the possibility of coming out beautifully clean.

The red thread turned white!

Atoned and Purified. What an extraordinary gift.

We have been forgiven. לפני ה' טהרו!

A fresh slate.

And then the Kohen Gadol emerges from

the Kodesh HaKodashim—alive!

His face is glowing.

Our prayer captures the moment in the unforgettable words of מראה כהן:

“אמת מה נהדר היה גדול בצאתו מבית קדשי

הקדשים בשלום בלי פגע”

“How magnificent was the Kohen Gadol when he emerged from the Holy of Holies in peace, unharmed.”

The piyut goes on to describe him with images of light and the celestial: כוכב הנוגה. בגבול מזרח... כברקים היוצאים מזוי החיות. Like a shining star on the eastern horizon, like flashes of lightning emerging from the radiance of the heavenly beings.

I could almost see him.

The excitement. The joy. The relief. The radiance.

Forget all the scientific and psychological terminology of manifestation and visualization. There is something deeply Jewish about simply envisioning the end goal.

This was a pivotal mussaf for me. The moment of transformation, really.

Erev Rosh Hashana morning began with a very different, heavy feeling.

What will this year bring? More war and loss? Sickness or health? Will it be the year of Eternal joy and Peace? What awaits us? Will it be a year of life and goodness?

Shortly thereafter, word came of the passing of my dear friend, Shira Schijveschuuder.

We went to her funeral at noon on Erev Rosh Hashana. For an hour and a half, hundreds of us listened to a mussar shmues (in the form of hespedim) more powerful than

anything even the greatest rabbi could have prepared.

Through brain surgeries, chemotherapy, radiation, hospitalizations and unimaginable challenges, Shira had trained herself to see the beauty. To focus on the gifts. On kindness. On gratitude. She literally cloaked herself in gratitude—with love and laughter and genuine concern for others.

I left feeling that we had gained another powerhouse defender in Shamayim ahead of Judgement Day.

From that funeral, our entire immediate family went to Har Herzl to spend time with Binyamin, including our newest few week old granddaughter, Hodaya Liora. (Yes, named to thank Hashem for His kindnesses and blessings)

We prayed. We cried. We sang.

And we were not alone. Other families were also at the cemetery visiting their loved ones a couple of hours ahead of Yom HaDin.

I felt a little more prepared. A little more confident.

Then came the Zichronot section of Mussaf.

And as I read those words, I found myself almost “reminding” Hashem.

Hashem, remember the sacrifices families have made for Am Yisrael.

Remember the plethora of unbelievable chessed initiatives that have emerged from these difficult years.

Remember the people who are volunteering to live with discomfort and danger on farms in order to protect the people and the Land.

Remember Shira’s husband and children, who came to shul for Rosh Hashana tefillot barely 24 hours after her passing.

Look at how many people are sick, pained, troubled, and grieving and still placing their faith in You, Hashem.

Hashem, do I need to “remind” You how incredible Your children are??

And that’s when I started dreaming of Yom Kippur and the Seder haAvodah.

Elul, Selichot and Rosh Hashana were only the beginning of this process.

The stage has been set.

The parameters have been established.

Now comes the intimate part.

The mending and improving of my personal relationship.

That is this week.

And then comes Yom Kippur—the precious, holiest day.

Our own journey into the Kodesh HaKodashim.

We can imagine what it feels like for our sins to be transformed, for our slate to be wiped clean, for the Kohen Gadol to emerge radiant and for the entire nation to breathe again.

And perhaps that is part of the magic of Yom Kippur.

We are given permission to dream of the ending.

To believe that forgiveness is possible.

To believe that transformation is within reach.

To believe that after everything we have carried into this year, we can walk out lighter.

Cleaner. Closer.

לא נפלאות היא ממך ולא רחוקה היא.

It is not beyond us. It is not too far away.

The Kodesh HaKodashim is closer than we think. ■

The **Airleys** have built **Beit Binyamin**, a retreat center in Tzfat for those directly affected by the war. Soldiers, Zaka members, security forces, bereaved families and widows can come for respite, relaxation and rejuvenation. For more information and to donate, visit Beitbinyamin.org



SHOSHANA JUDELMAN

TORAH TIDBITS CONTRIBUTOR

YOM KIPPUR

A Return in Uman

On Rosh Chodesh Av, I was in Uman with my husband.

We had traveled to Ukraine to daven at the Kivrei Tzadikim. It had been an intense year, and both of us felt the need for a journey to nourish our souls and give us strength for the year ahead.

I think I also needed to wash myself free of the accumulated weight of a year of treatments, anxiety, and all the ways illness can wear on the soul.

It was six in the morning. I had just finished davening and opened my Tehillim when, suddenly, a wave of emotion rose up in me.

The whole year came rushing back. The uncertainty. The fear. The sadness. The

questions. The thoughts I had carried quietly for months.

And the floodgates opened.

I ran to the Tziyun and collapsed against it, crying. Not graceful tears. Sloppy tears. Heaving sobs.

I poured everything out.

To Rebbe Nachman.

Because he had invited me to.

Rebbe Nachman's Torah makes space for coming to Hashem exactly as we are: broken,

frightened, angry, ashamed, carrying thoughts and feelings we wish we didn't have.

It's the deepest kindness, to know that we do not have to clean ourselves up before we come. We can bring it all. The dark. The painful. The parts of ourselves

we do not understand.

Rebbe Nachman teaches again and again that there is always a way back.

אין שום יאוש בעולם כלל

There is no despair in the world.

Not because there isn't pain, but because that isn't the end of the story.

Rebbe Nachman's Torah has often felt to me like a life-saving net—something that catches you when you fall and gives you the strength to stand again.

So, I cried.

And I let myself believe that I could be held. Slowly, the tears quieted. My breathing



Kever of Rabbi Nachman of Breslov

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changed. I returned to my seat and wiped my face.

I felt emptied out in the best possible way. Cleansed.

As though I had finally been able to put down something I had been carrying for far too long.

And with that came a new understanding of the pasuk:

סור מרע ועשה טוב

We often hear these words as instructions for how to behave. But sitting there in Uman, they felt like an invitation into a process.

First, make space.

First, let go.

First, allow what is weighing you down to leave.

And then there can be room for the tov.

I opened my Tehillim again.

Dovid HaMelech's heartbreaking beautiful words filled the space my tears had cleared. They soothed me.

I sat there in wonder at how much better I felt. I had not solved anything. And yet something inside me had shifted.

About an hour later, a cleaning lady entered the ohel.

I watched as she sprayed cleanser onto the plastic covering the kever and, section by section, wiped it clean.

And something inside me smiled.

In that moment, with my heart still raw and newly opened, it felt like something more.

As if, section by section, she was wiping my slate clean.

I felt as though Hashem was accepting my tears as a teshuva offering. A sense of calm came over me.

Teshuva does not mean pretending the past year was easy. It does not mean convincing myself that I had no fears and no questions.

It means bringing all of that to Hashem and believing that He will hold it.

Coming back to Him again and again. And believing that the dark parts don't define us.

Coming back with everything we have been carrying.

And trusting that when we finally place it down, Hashem is there.

Wiping the slate clean, and making room for us to begin again. ■

Shoshana Judelman is passionate about learning and growing through Chassidus. She gives shiurim to women in many communities around Israel, including Efrat, Elazar, Raanana and Jerusalem as well as at Midreshet Rachel V'Chaya. Shoshana also guides groups at Yad Vashem and leads journeys to Poland and other countries around Europe for JRoots.



A vibrant poster for a Sukkot Singles Soirée event. At the top left is a blue battery icon with the word 'RECHARGE' and a small 'shiva' logo. To its right is a logo for 'Jewish Singles' with the text 'Jewish Singles NYC' and 'Jewish Singles NYC'. The background features a night view of Jerusalem with the Dome of the Rock and palm trees. The main text reads 'IN ISRAEL FOR SUKKOT? STEVE EISENBERG INVITES YOU. SUKKOT Singles Soirée'. Below this, it says 'LIVE MUSIC | DRINKS | REFRESHMENTS' and 'OPTIONAL SPEED DATING'. A blue diamond icon is next to the text 'EXCLUSIVELY FOR JEWISH SINGLES IN THEIR 20S & 30S AGE STRICTLY ENFORCED'. The event details are 'WED, SEPT 30 7-10 PM' and 'JERUSALEM GREAT SYNAGOGUE'. Pricing is '\$25 / BONIS UNTIL SEPTEMBER 28 \$30 / 100 NIS AFTER / AT THE DOOR' with 'ACTIVE SOLDIERS FREE'. A registration link is 'REGISTER: bit.ly/sukkot26'. At the bottom, it says 'FACILITATORS PRESENT' and lists logos for 'RAJE', 'JERUSALEM CITIES', 'JERUSALEM CITIES', and 'JEWISH SINGLES'.

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Wishing our OU Israel Community a Chag Sameach.

Please note most community shiurim
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Rebbetzin Shira Smiles' weekly shiur will
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- Yerushalayim (Baka Matnas) -Wednesday, Sept. 16
- Kiryat Moshe (Matnas, 27 Nijara St) - Wednesday, Sept. 16
- Efrat (Makom Litzmoach) -Thursday, Sept. 17, 7:15 PM
- Chashmonaim (Rimon Shul) -Tuesday, Sept. 22
- Modi'in (Kehillat Darchei Tzion) - Tuesday, Sept. 22
- Beit Shemesh (Menorat Hamaor) -Wednesday, Sept. 23
- Netanya (Hartum 30) - Wednesday, Sept. 23
- Rechovot (Beit Chatam) - Wednesday, Sept. 23
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Women's Seminar in Yerushalayim

Finding Meaning in an Ordinary Month



ZEMIRA OZAROWSKI

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Shana Tova, and thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

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RABBI ELI OZAROWSKI

GUEST CONTRIBUTOR

SUKKOT

Halachot of Dwelling in the Sukkah

INTRODUCTION

One of the most central mitzvot of Sukkot is the mitzvah to dwell in the sukkah. The Torah states that one should dwell in sukkot for seven days (Vayikra 23:42), and Chazal understand that our dwelling in the sukkah commemorates either Hashem's protecting us with the Clouds of Glory or the actual sukkot that Hashem provided for us in the wilderness after leaving Egypt (Sukkah 11b; see *Shulchan Aruch* [S.A.], *Orach Chaim* [O.C.] 625:1). In the rest of this article, we will summarize many of the key halachot concerning the proper fulfillment of this precious mitzvah. Readers are also welcome to contact the author at ozarowsk@gmail.com with questions.

BEFORE SUKKOT

Some are particular to begin building the

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sukkah on Motzai Yom Kippur (Rema, O.C. 624:5), i.e., Monday night this year. Ideally, one should try to build the sukkah on the day after Yom Kippur (*Mishnah Berurah* [M.B.] 625:2). By Erev Sukkot, one should ensure the sukkah is complete and kosher (*Piskei Teshuvot* 651:1).

In order to have an appetite to fulfill the mitzvah of sukkah properly on the first night of Sukkot, one should not eat bread or other grain products after the tenth halachic hour (approximately 3:30 pm in Israel this year), similar to Erev Pesach (M.B. 639:27; *Chazon Ovadia, Sukkot* p.121). According to many *poskim*, one may eat small amounts of bread or grain products after this time (R. Asher Weiss, cited by R. Moshe Harari, *Mikraei Kodesh, Sukkot*, 9:77 and n.237). Some Sephardim are strict from halachic midday (*Ben Ish Chai, Ha'azinu* 3). Other foods may be eaten, but one should not become overly full (M.B. 471:3).

FIRST NIGHT OF SUKKOT

Before the meal begins on Friday night, the first night of Sukkot, it is customary to invite the "*Ushpizin*" (holy guests, beginning with Avraham) before Kiddush. The same is done on each subsequent night of Sukkot (Zohar, *Emor*; *Piskei Teshuvot* 643:1). Many have the custom to recite *Shalom Aleichem* and *Eishet Chayil*, like on every other Shabbat. Kiddush for Yom Tov is then recited, including *Vayechulu* and the references for Shabbat in the second *beracha*. This is followed by the *beracha* of *leishev basukkah* and then *Shehechyanu* (S.A. 643:1).

We will discuss below that men are obligated in the mitzvah of sukkah, while women are exempt because it is a timebound mitzvah. On the first night, there is an obligation for men to eat in the sukkah, while on the rest of Sukkot, there is no independent obligation to enter the sukkah if one is not eating there. Therefore, men, to whom the obligation applies, must eat at least a *k'zayit* of bread on the first night (approximately 28 cc, though some require more, as by matzah on Pesach), and preferably a *k'beitza* (approximately 55-60 cc), in the sukkah (S.A. 639:3; M.B. 639:22). The *k'zayit* should ideally be eaten within four minutes (*Piskei Teshuvot* 639:13; *Mikraei Kodesh* 9:67), though some permit eating continuously at any pace, even *lechatchila* (R. Yaakov Ariel, cited in *Oholei Halacha, Sukkot*, p.115; *Peninei Halacha, Sukkot* 3:3).

Before eating on the first night, one should have in mind to fulfill the mitzvah of dwelling in the sukkah and that it recalls how Hashem sheltered Israel in the wilderness with clouds of glory (M.B. 625:1).

THE PARAMETERS OF THE MITZVAH OF SUKKAH

The mitzvah of sukkah is expressed primarily through making the sukkah one's dwelling during Sukkot. Chazal explain that when the Torah says, "you shall dwell [*teshvu*] in sukkot for seven days, it means that one should live in the sukkah in the manner that he normally lives in his home (*Sukkah* 26a). Thus, the mitzvah applies to the activities that are considered part of normal dwelling, particularly eating and sleeping. Men are obligated in the mitzvah, while women are exempt because it is a time-bound mitzvah, though women may choose to fulfill the mitzvah as well. When they do so, Sephardic

women generally do not recite a *beracha*, while Ashkenazic women do, like men (S.A. 640:1; M.B. 640:1; *Chazon Ovadia*, p. 149).

The obligation to eat in the sukkah applies when eating more than a *k'beitza* (approximately 55-60 cc) of bread (S.A. 639:2), which is often calculated between one-half to two-thirds of an average slice of bread (*V'zot Haberachah, Berurim* 1). Many *poskim* apply the same rule to *mezonot* foods made from the five grains.

There is, however, a difference regarding the circumstances in which a *beracha* of *lei-shev basukkah* is recited. Sephardim generally recite the *beracha* on *mezonot* only when eating an amount of approximately 200 to 230 grams, which is considered a fixed meal (*Ohr L'tzion* 4:29). Ashkenazim, on the other hand, generally recite the *beracha* when eating more than a *k'beitza* of *mezonot* and remaining in the sukkah afterward; therefore, Ashkenazim should ideally remain in the sukkah for some time after eating to avoid uncertainty regarding the *beracha* (M.B. 639:16). As noted above, the same rules concerning the *beracha* apply to Ashkenazic women who eat *mezonot* in the sukkah.

Foods requiring *ha'eitz*, *ha'adama*, or *she-hakol* do not ordinarily require one to eat them in the sukkah. Nevertheless, it is proper

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on his 13th yearzeit - כ"ב תשרי**

Cohen, Eliaz and Aharoni families

to eat such foods in the sukkah when they are part of a meal, though without reciting a *beracha* on the sukkah (S.A. 639:2; M.B. 639:13, 15). Some *poskim* go further and maintain that when a person is making a meal without bread, he should not eat it outside of the sukkah even when it consists primarily of foods such as chicken, fish, and potatoes (*Oholei Halacha*, p. 93; *Teshuvot V'hanhagot* 1:371).

One who drinks wine outside of a meal is generally not required to do so in the sukkah. If, however, he establishes a fixed session for drinking, he should do so in the sukkah, although he does not recite *leishev basukkah* (S.A. 639:13). When reciting *Havdalah*, one should do so in the sukkah. Most *poskim* maintain that one does not recite *leishev basukkah* in this case unless he plans to eat bread or a large amount of *mezonot* afterward, though some disagree (M.B. 639:30; Piskei Teshuvot 639:10).

With regard to the order of the *berachot*, the *beracha* of *leishev basukkah* is recited after the *beracha* on the food but before eating (Rema 643:2). Some Sephardim stand, recite *leishev basukkah*, sit, recite the *beracha* on the food, and then eat (S.A. 643:2–3; *Yechaveh Da'at* 5:47). On Shabbat day, opinions differ as to whether *leishev basukkah* should be recited after Kiddush or

after *hamotzi* (M.B. 643:9). One who forgot to say *leishev basukkah* can do so while still in the middle of the meal, and Ashkenazim may even do so after *Birkat Hamazon* if one remains in the sukkah (M.B. 639:28; Chazon Ovadia, p.178).

Men are obligated to sleep in the sukkah, even for a short nap (S.A. 639:2), though according to most later *poskim*, one does not recite a *berachah* on sleeping or other activities alone without eating in the manner discussed above (S.A. and Rema 639:8 and M.B. there). For this reason, it is preferable to avoid dozing off in other locations on Sukkot to avoid this problem. Some, however, maintain that one need not wake someone who has fallen asleep outside the sukkah in some cases (see *Bikurei Yaakov* 639:34; *Sefer HaSukkah*, *Miluim* to ch.18).

One who recited a *berachah* in the sukkah and then leaves the sukkah for more than approximately an hour should recite another *berachah* when returning to the sukkah according to the guidelines given above for eating (M.B. 639:47; Shevet Halevi 10:2).

CASES WHEN ONE IS EXEMPT FROM THE SUKKAH

Although the sukkah should ideally be a person's primary dwelling during Sukkot, there are circumstances in which a person is exempt from eating or sleeping there. These exemptions are based on the principle known as *teshvu k'ein taduru* – the Torah requires a person to dwell in the sukkah in a manner similar to the way he normally lives in his home. Just as a person does not remain at home under circumstances in which he would normally leave, there are situations in which he is not required to remain in the sukkah.

One such exemption from the mitzvah of

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sukkah is granted to a person who is *mitzta'er*, meaning that he is suffering significant discomfort in the sukkah. The basic principle is that if the conditions would cause a person to leave his home under similar circumstances, he is not required to remain in the sukkah (S.A. 640:4; Rema 639:5). Examples can include significant rain, extreme cold, strong winds, unpleasant odors, or insects that make it genuinely difficult to remain in the sukkah. In the Diaspora, where Sukkot often falls during colder weather, this exemption is one of the reasons for the widespread custom not to sleep in the sukkah (see Rema 639:2).

Minor inconveniences do not exempt a person from the mitzvah. In addition, if one can easily remove the inconvenience, such as by using a fly trap, wearing a sweater, or bringing a blanket to sleep when the weather is a bit chilly, one would not be exempt (*Ohr L'tzion* 4:30; *Piskei Teshuvot* 639:17). One should also try to construct one's sukkah in a place where he expects to be comfortable (S.A. 640:4). In addition, if the same discomfort exists outside the sukkah, one remains obligated to stay in the sukkah (Rema 640:4). For example, a person who is uncomfortable because of the weather but would be equally uncomfortable inside his home would still be obligated in the mitzvah.

On the first night, the Rema holds that men are obligated to eat at least a *k'zayit* of bread in the sukkah, even when it is raining. Therefore, even in inclement weather, such as a strong rainstorm, one should try to recite Kiddush and eat at least a *k'zayit* in the sukkah (Rema 639:5; *Kaf HaChaim* 639:73). However, the *Shulchan Aruch* maintains that one is exempt from eating in the sukkah when it is raining, and many Sephardim adopt this

position (*Chazon Ovadia*, p.125). In such cases, no *beracha* on sukkah is recited according to all opinions (*Ibid.*; M.B. 639:35).

Another exemption from the mitzvah pertains to a person who is traveling during Sukkot. Such a person is exempt while in transit but should try to find a sukkah to use when lodging overnight somewhere, if possible. If no sukkah is available, a traveler may continue rather than interrupting his journey in order to find one (S.A. and Rema 640:7-8; M.B. 640:40-42). Some exempt even one traveling a short distance outside of the city during the day, if no sukkah is available nearby (M.B. 640:40; *Ashrei Ha'ish* 26:31). Many *poskim* do allow one to rest while traveling, such as on a bus or train, as is common during the year (*Piskei Teshuvot* 639:6).

The application of this exemption to recreational travel is more complicated. Some distinguish between someone traveling for business and someone traveling for pleasure and rule that one should not deliberately plan a pleasure trip to a place where there will be no sukkah (*Igrot Moshe*, O.C. 3:93). Other *poskim* are more lenient regarding recreational outings and trips, particularly when touring in Eretz Yisrael (see R. Asher Weiss and R. Dov Lior, cited in *Mikraei Kodesh*, Nis-pach 11; *Oholei Halacha*, p. 127). Ideally, trips should be arranged so that meals can be eaten in a sukkah when reasonably possible or in a manner that the men can eat only snacks and foods that do not require a sukkah. Nevertheless, there is a basis for leniency for those who eat normally on such trips.

A third exemption applies to those who are involved in the performance of a mitzvah. If such a person cannot sit in the sukkah while performing the mitzvah, they are exempt. However, if they can do so without any

difficulty, they should do so (S.A. 640:7; M.B. 640:38). Likewise, soldiers, police officers, or other security personnel are exempt from the mitzvah while they are on duty, though if a sukkah is nearby and eating there does not detract from their ability to perform their responsibilities, they should try to fulfill the mitzvah (Chazon Ovadia, p.196; Oholei Hala-cha, p.128).

SANCTITY OF THE SUKKAH

We will conclude our discussion by noting that since the sukkah has a degree of sanctity, one must treat it accordingly. Thus, trash or other undignified items, such as dirty clothing, a toolkit, and the like should not be kept in the sukkah (Rema 639:1), and washing dishes and changing children's diapers should not be done there (M.B. 639:9; Chazon Ovadia, p.129). Likewise, speech and behavior should be conducted with respect for its sanctity (M.B. 639:2). May we merit to keep our sukkah as a sanctified location and thereby elevate our Sukkot experience. ■

Rabbi Eli Ozarowski serves as editor of the *Tzurba M'Rabanan* English Series, an innovative, systematic learning program covering hundreds of major topics in the Shulchan Aruch from Tanach through modern-day halachic application. He is also the author of the OU's Torat Imecha Halacha Series. Rabbi Ozarowski received semicha from the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary (RIETS) and holds an M.A. from the Azrieli Graduate School of Jewish Education and Administration. He lives in Mitzpeh Yericho with his wife, Zemira, who serves as Director of Women's Programming at OU Israel, together with their nine children.

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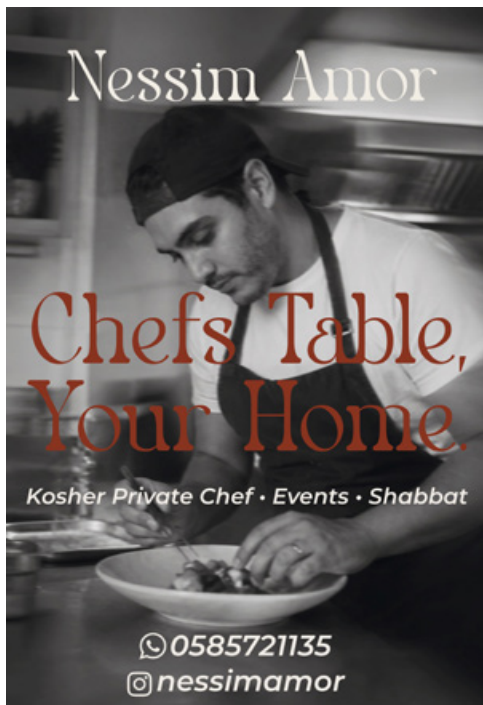
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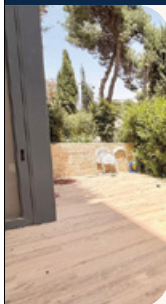
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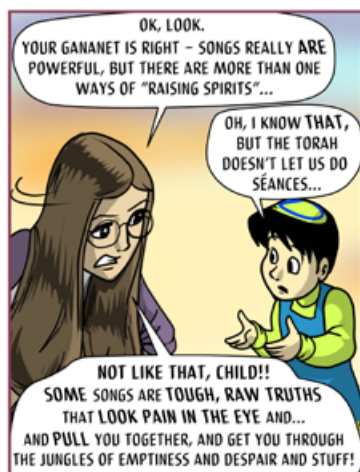


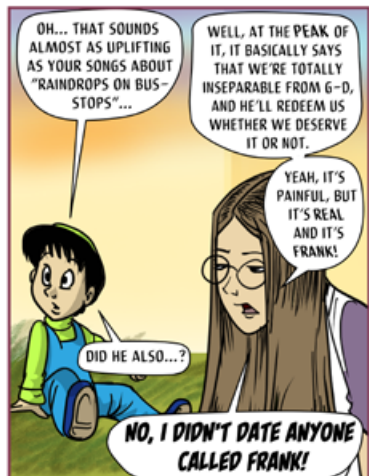
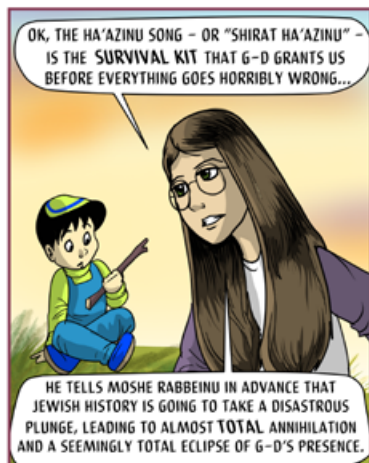
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SUKKOT

VAYIKRA 22:26-23:44



1ST ALIYA (VAYIKRA 22:26-33)

An offering may not be brought in the first 7 days of the animal's life. An animal and her offspring may not be killed on the same day. A thanksgiving offering must be eaten within one day. Do not profane My Holy Name, rather sanctify My Name, the One who brought you out of Egypt to be Your G-d.

The Torah reading for the first day of Sukkot is the whole of Chapter 23 in Vayikra, which lists the entire yearly cycle of holidays. Curiously, we begin 8 verses before that chapter with a paragraph describing various rules concerning offerings.

But it is the last line that is the connection to Yom Tov. Sanctify My Name because I brought you out of Egypt to be Your G-d. That is a perfect intro to the holidays. While each holiday

has its own meaning, they all share an overarching meaning; connecting with our G-d.



2ND ALIYA (23:1-3)

Here are the holy days: Shabbat is a holy day to G-d.

Shabbat differs from the other holidays in that it is not a once-a-year occurrence as the others are. However, it shares the broader theme as a holy day of connecting with G-d.



3RD ALIYA (23:4-8)

Pesach is on the 14th of the 1st month. For seven days consume Matza. Day 1 and Day 7 are holy, no work is to be done.

The holidays are all called "mikra'ei kodesh", holy gatherings. The Ramban understands this to mean that we endow the day with holiness by gathering. In shul. For tefilla and for Hallel.

Attending services on Yom Tov is not merely public prayer; it is a mitzvah of the Torah, accomplishing "mikra'ei Kodesh", gathering for holiness.



4TH ALIYA (23:9-14)

On the day after the Yom Tov, bring a measure of the first harvest of barley as an Omer offering, accompanied by a sacrifice. The new grain may not be consumed until this Omer is offered.

The description of the Omer offering seems out of place; it isn't a holiday in its own right, it is brought on the second day of Pesach. Though each holiday has an offering, the emphasis of this section is not offerings but holidays, chagim. The day the Omer is



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brought is not a yom tov.

But, similar to the holidays, it has a specific calendar date. Hence this section would more accurately be called, not a list of chagim, or holidays, but a list of special national events that occur on a specific day in the calendar; calendric events.



5TH ALIYA (23:15-22)

Count 7 full weeks from this offering and on the next day, the 50th bring 2 baked breads of chametz accompanied by sacrifices. The Kohen shall wave these 2 bikkurim breads. That day is a yom tov, no work is to be done. When harvesting your fields leave the corners and gleanings for the poor and foreigner.

The 2 breads brought on Shavuot are the bookends of the Omer. The Omer was barley, brought the 2nd day of Pesach and matza, as most grain offerings. The 2 breads on Shavuot are wheat, chometz bread, the first wheat offering of the new crop.

The Omer matza offering on Pesach allowed *consumers* to now be able to use the newly harvested grains. But in the Temple, the new grain cannot be used until 7 weeks later, with the offerings of the 2 chometz breads on Shavuot.

The contrast of the matza that is offered on Pesach and the chametz of this bread offering on Shavuot invites our curiosity. Why matza and why chametz?

Perhaps, it matza and chometz express 2 different qualities of service of G-d but that need to be in their proper time.

Pesach is the holiday of history. In history you need to move, move fast. Don't let the dough rise. Seize the moment; don't miss it. Speed.

But on Shavuot, in the context of holy offerings, patience is king. Wait. 7 weeks. Patience.

Let the dough rise, become chometz. Wait. While history demands speed, holiness inheres in restraint.



6TH ALIYA (23:23-32)

The first day of the 7th month is a day of Teruah, a yom tov. But the 10th day of the month is Yom Hakippurim. Afflict yourself for it is a day of atonements. It is a holy day; no work may be done. Afflict yourself from the 9th in the evening, evening to evening.

Rav Soloveitchik pointed out that in spite of the fasting on Yom Kippur, there is still a mitzvah of simcha. How can one feel simcha when the Torah itself says we are to afflict ourselves?

True simcha is a deep feeling of the soul, not fleeting moments of pleasure of the body. Simcha is the profound sense of meaning, of standing before G-d. Our greatest joy is the knowledge that G-d reaches for us and infuses our life with ultimate meaning. And that is the atonement of Yom Kippur.



7TH ALIYA (23:33-44)

The 15th of the 7th month is Sukkot for 7 days. The first day is a yom tov as is the 8th day. Take a lulav and etrog and rejoice for 7 days before G-d. Dwell in Sukkot for 7 days so you will know that G-d had your ancestors dwell in Sukkot when leaving Egypt.

Sukkot rounds out the year of chagim. It is the end of the cycle of holidays that began with Pesach.

As such, it is a celebration not only of itself but a celebration of the completion of the chagim of the year. This notion that Sukkot is the end of the cycle of chagim is expressed through linking the cycle of Torah reading with the conclusion of Sukkot. End of the chagim; end of the Torah readings. ■

	SUKKOT DAY #1		SHMINI AZERET	
	Candles	Havdala	Candles	Havdala
Yerushalayim / Maale Adumim	5:56	7:07	5:47	6:58
Aza Area (Netivot, Sderot et al)	6:14	7:10	6:05	7:01
Beit Shemesh / RBS	6:15	7:08	6:06	6:59
Alon Shvut	6:12	7:08	6:03	6:59
Raanana / Tel Mond / Herzliya / K. Saba	6:13	7:09	6:04	7:00
Modiin / Chashmonaim	6:12	7:08	6:03	6:59
Netanya	6:13	7:09	6:04	7:00
Be'er Sheva	6:13	7:09	6:04	7:00
Rehovot	6:13	7:09	6:04	7:00
Petach Tikva	5:56	7:09	5:47	7:00
Ginot Shomron	6:12	7:08	6:03	6:59
Haifa / Zichron	6:02	7:09	5:53	6:59
Gush Shiloh	6:11	7:07	6:02	6:58
Tel Aviv / Givat Shmuel	6:13	7:09	6:04	7:00
Givat Zeev	6:16	7:08	6:07	6:59
Chevron / Kiryat Arba	6:12	7:08	6:03	6:59
Ashkelon	6:14	7:10	6:05	7:01
Yad Binyamin	6:13	7:09	6:04	7:00
Tzfat / Bikat HaYarden	6:04	7:07	5:55	6:57
Golan	6:10	7:06	6:01	6:57
Nahariya/Maalot	6:01	7:08	5:52	6:59
Afula	6:11	7:07	6:02	6:58
Rabbeinu Tam (Jerusalem):	7:47		7:38	

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Customs vary regarding these prayers.

אושפיזין Ushpizin



הריני מוכן ומזומן לקיים מצות סֶכָה כְּאִשּׁר
צוּנִי הַבּוֹרָא יִתְבָּרֵךְ שְׁמוֹ בַּסֻּכּוֹת תֵּשְׁבוּ שְׁבַעַת
יָמִים כָּל הָאָזְרַח בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל יֵשְׁבוּ בַּסֻּכּוֹת. לְמַעַן
יִדְעוּ דּוֹרוֹתֵיכֶם כִּי בַּסֻּכּוֹת הוֹשַׁבְתִּי אֶת בְּנֵי
יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּהוֹצִיאִי אוֹתָם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם:

תיבו תיבו אושפיזין עילאין תיבו תיבו אושפיזין קדישין תיבו תיבו
אושפיזין דמהימנותא זכאה חולקיהון דישראל דכתיב כי חלק ה' עמו
יעקב חבל נחלתו. לשם יחוד קודשא בריך הוא ושכינתה ליחדא שם י"ק
בו"ק ביחדא שלים על ידי ההוא טמיר ונעלם בשם כל ישראל.

ויהי נועם ה' אלקינו עלינו. ומעשה ידינו כוננה עלינו. ומעשה ידינו כוננהו.

יהי רצון מלפניך ה' אלקי, ואלקי אבותי, שתשרה שכינתך בינינו, ותפרוס
עלינו סכת שלומך, בזכות מצות סֶכָה שאנחנו מקיימין, ליחדא שְׁמָא
דקודשא בריך הוא ושכינתה, בדחילו ורחימו ליחדא שם י"ק בו"ק ביחדא
שלים בשם כל ישראל, ולהקיף אותם מזיו כבודך הקדוש והטהור, נטוי
על ראשיהם מלמעלה כנשר יעיר קנו, ומשם יושפע שפע החיים לעבדך
(your name ben/bat mother's name) אַמְתֵּךְ, ובזכות צאתי מביתי
החוצה ודרך מצותיך ארוצה, יחשב לי זאת כאלו הרחקתי נדוד, והרב
כבסני מעוני ומחטאתי טהרני. ומאושפיזין עילאין אושפיזין דמהימנותא
תהינה אנך קשבות רב ברכות, ולרעבים גם צמאים תן לחם ומימם
הנאמנים, ותתן לי זכות לשבת ולחסות בסתר צל כנפיך בעת פטירתי מן
העולם, ולחסות מזרם וממטר, כי תמטיר על רשעים פחים, ותהא חשוכה
מצות סֶכָה זו שאני מקים, כאלו קימתיה בכל פרטיה ודקדוקיה ותנאיה
וכל מצות התלויים בה. ותיטיב לנו החתימה, ותזכנו לישוב ימים רבים על
האדמה אדמת קדש בצבדך וביראתך. ברוך ה' לעולם אמן ואמן.

רבון כל העולמים, יהי רצון מלפניך, שיהא חשוב לפניך מצות ישיבת
סֶכָה זו, כאלו קימתיה בכל פרטיה ודקדוקיה, ותרי"ג מצות התלויים

continued on next page...

בה, וכאלו כונתי בכל הכונות, שכונו בה אנשי כנסת הגדולה.

אזמין לסעודתי אושפיזין עילאין, אברהם יצחק יעקב משה אהרן יוסף ודוד.

First Day

במטי מינד אברהם אושפיזי עילאי דיתבי עמי ועמד כל אושפיזי עילאי
יצחק יעקב משה אהרן יוסף ודוד.

Second Day

במטי מינד יצחק אושפיזי עילאי דיתבי עמי ועמד כל אושפיזי עילאי
אברהם יעקב משה אהרן יוסף ודוד.

Third Day

במטי מינד יעקב אושפיזי עילאי דיתבי עמי ועמד כל אושפיזי עילאי
אברהם יצחק משה אהרן יוסף ודוד.

Fourth Day

במטי מינד משה אושפיזי עילאי דיתבי עמי ועמד כל אושפיזי עילאי
אברהם יצחק יעקב אהרן יוסף ודוד.

Fifth Day

במטי מינד אהרן אושפיזי עילאי דיתבי עמי ועמד כל אושפיזי עילאי
אברהם יצחק יעקב משה יוסף ודוד.

Sixth Day

במטי מינד יוסף אושפיזי עילאי דיתבי עמי ועמד כל אושפיזי עילאי
אברהם יצחק יעקב משה אהרן ודוד.

Seventh Day

במטי מינד דוד אושפיזי עילאי דיתבי עמי ועמד כל אושפיזי עילאי
אברהם יצחק יעקב משה אהרן ויוסף.

סדר נטילת לולב Seder N'tilat Lulav

יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְפָּנֶיךָ ה' אֱלֹקֵי וְאֱלֹקֵי אֲבוֹתַי, בְּפָרִי עֵץ הָדָר וּכְפַת
תְּמָרִים וְעֵנָף עֵץ עָבֹת וְעֵרְבֵי נָחַל, אוֹתִיּוֹת שְׁמֶךָ הַמְיֻחָד תִּקְרָב אֲחָד
אֶל אֲחָד וְהָיוּ לְאַחַדִּים בְּיָדִי, וְלִידַע אֵיךְ שְׁמֶךָ נִקְרָא עָלַי וְיִירָאוּ
מִגֹּשֶׁת אֵלַי, וּבִנְעָנוּעֵי אוֹתָם תִּשְׁפִּיעַ שְׁפַע בְּרָכוֹת מִדַּעַת עֲלִיוֹן לְנוֹה
אֶפְרַיִם לְמִכּוֹן בֵּית אֱלֹקֵינוּ, וְתִהְיֶה חֲשׁוּבָה לְפָנֶיךָ מִצְּנוֹת אֶרֶבֶּעָה
מִיָּנִים אֵלּוּ כְּאֵלּוּ קִימְתִּיהָ בְּכָל פְּרֻטוֹתֶיהָ וְשִׁרְשֶׁיהָ וְתִרְכִּיג מִצְּנוֹת
הַתְּלוּיּוֹת בָּהּ, כִּי בְּנוֹנְתִי לִיחָדָא שְׁמָא דְקַדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא וְשִׁכְנִיתִיהָ
בְּדַחִילוֹ וּרְחִימוּ, לִיחָד שֵׁם יִי"ק בְּוִי"ק
בְּיַחְוָדָא שְׁלִים בְּשֵׁם כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל, אָמֵן.
בְּרִיךְ ה' לְעוֹלָם, אָמֵן וְאָמֵן.

**בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹקֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ
הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו
וְצִוָּנוּ עַל נְטִילַת לולב**

First time only

**בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹקֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
שֶׁהֲחִינּוּ וְקִיַּמְנוּ וְהִגִּיעֵנוּ לְזֶמֶן הַזֶּה**



Insights and Instruction for N'tilat Lulav

Even though LULAV is only one of the Four Species - it is the most prominent; it is named in the B'RACHA and the mitzva is referred to as N'TILAT LULAV.

*Remember: Lulav & Etrog are not taken on the Shabbat during Sukkot.

The mitzva of the Four Species [L&E] is fulfilled while **STANDING**. The mitzva of L&E is to take the Four Species in hand together. Therefore, one gets ready to do the mitzva by holding the Lulav "bundle" in the right hand and the Etrog in the left, but does not hold them together, and preferably has specifically in mind **NOT** to fulfill the mitzva **YET**; then says the bracha (AND shehecheyanu the first time as well), and **THEN** holds the L&E **TOGETHER** and **UPRIGHT** with the intention of fulfilling the mitzva.

After the bracha/brachot and the joining of the L&E, the mitzva is done. The custom is to wave the L&E in six directions. Keep the L&E upright; hold them close to the chest and then extend your hands forward. With the L&E in front of you, gently shake them. Bring your hands back to your chest. Repeat in the same direction two more times. Now do the same thing three times to the right. Then three times behind you. Try not to turn too much in the direction of the NA'ANU'IM (waving); rather face front as best as possible and move the L&E in the different directions. Then to the left three times. Up three times. Down three times. Extend, shake, retract. Three times in each of the six directions.

Another custom for the order of directions for NA'ANU'IM: SOUTH, NORTH, EAST, UP, DOWN, WEST



Hoshanot

The Hoshana prayers are recited with the Arba Minim in hand (except for on Shabbat). The Ark is opened and a Torah is removed and held at the Bimah. One may say Hoshanot at home as well.

We begin with:

הושענא, למענך א' להינו, הושענא.
הושענא, למענך בוראנו, הושענא.
הושענא, למענך גואלנו, הושענא.
הושענא, למענך דורשנו, הושענא.

See opposite page for Day 1...

Day 2 (First Day Chol Hamoed - Sun. Sept. 27th)

למען אמתך. למען ברייתך למען גדלך
ותפארתך. למען דתך. למען הודך. למען
ועודך. למען זכרך. למען חסדך. למען טובך.
למען יחודך. למען כבודך. למען למוךך.
למען מלכותך. למען נצחך. למען סודך.
למען עזך. למען פאריך. למען צדקתך. למען
קדשתך. למען רחמיך הרבים. למען
שכינתך. למען תהלתך.

Day 3 (Second Day Chol Hamoed - Mon. Sept. 28th)

אערוך שועי. בבית שועי. גליתי בצום
פשעי. דרשתיד בו להושיעי. הקשיבה לקול
שועי. וקומה והושיעי. זכור ורחם מושיעי.
חי כן תשעשעי. טוב באנגק שעי. יחיש
מושיעי. כלה מרשיעי. לכל עוד תרשיעי.
מהר אלהי ישעי. נצח להושיעי. שא נא עון
רשעי. עבור על פשעי. פנה נא להושיעי.
צור צדיק מושיעי. קבל נא שועי. רומם קרן
ישעי. שדי מושיעי. תופיע ותושיעי.



Day 4 (Third Day Chol Hamoed - Tue. Sept. 29th)

אבן שתיה. בית הבחירה. גרן ארנן. דביר
המצנע. הר המורה. והר יראה. זבול
תפארתך. חנה דוד. טוב הלכנו. יפה נוף
משוש כל הארץ. כלילת יפי. לינת הצדק.
מכון לשבתך. נוה שאנן. סכת שלם. עליית
שבטים. פנת יקרת. ציון המצינת. קדש
הקדשים. רצוף אהבה. שכינת כבודך. תל
תלפית.

Day 5 (Fourth Day Chol Hamoed - Wed. Sept. 30th)

אל למושעות. בארבע שבעות. גשים
בשועות. דופקי ערך שועות. הוגי שעשועות.
וחדיתם משעשעויות. זעקים להשעות. חוכי
ישועות. טפולים בך שעות. יודעי בין
שעות. כורעיד בשועות. להבין שמועות.
מפיד נשמעות. נותן תשועות. ספורות
משמעות. עדות משמיעות. פועל ישועות.
צדיק נושעות. קרית תשועות. רגש תשאות.
שלש שעות. תחיש לתשועות.

Day 6 (Fifth Day Chol Hamoed - Thur. Oct. 1st)

אדון המושיע. בלתך אין להושיע. גבור ואב
להושיע. דלותי ולי יהושיע. האל המושיע.
ומציל ומושיע. זועקך תושיע. חוכך
הושיע. טלאך תשביע. יבול להשפיע. כל
שיח תדשא ותושיע. לגיא כל תרשיע.
מגדים תמתיק ותושיע. נשיאים להסיע.
שעירים להגיע. עננים מלהמגיע. פותח יד
ומשביע. צמאך תשביע. קוראך תושיע.
רחומך תושיע. שוחרך הושיע. תמימך
תושיע.



Day 1 (Shabbat Sept. 26th)

**הושענא, למענך אלהינו, הושענא. • הושענא, למענך בוראנו, הושענא.
הושענא, למענך גואלנו, הושענא. • הושענא, למענך דורשנו, הושענא.**

הושענא Each phrase is preceded and followed by

[הו] אום נצורה ככבת. [הו]

[הו] בוננת בדת נפש משיבת. [הו]

[הו] גומרת הלכות שבת. [הו]

[הו] דורשת משאת שבת. [הו]

[הו] הקובעת אלפים תחום שבת. [הו]

[הו] ומשיבת רגל משיבת. [הו]

[הו] זכור ושמור מקימת בשבת. [הו]

[הו] חשה למחר ביאת שבת. [הו]

[הו] טורחת כל משישה לשבת. [הו]

[הו] יושבת וממתנת עד כלות שבת. [הו]

[הו] כבוד וענג קוראה לשבת. [הו]

[הו] לבוש וכסות מחלפת בשבת. [הו]

[הו] מאכל ומשתה מכינה לשבת. [הו]

[הו] נעם מגדים מנעמת לשבת. [הו]

[הו] סעודות שלש מקימת בשבת. [הו]

[הו] על שתי כפרות בוצעת בשבת. [הו]

[הו] פורטת ארבע רשיות בשבת. [הו]

[הו] צווי הדלקת נר מדלקת בשבת. [הו]

[הו] קדוש היום מקדשת בשבת. [הו]

[הו] רנן שבע מפללת בשבת. [הו]

[הו] שבעה בדת קוראה בשבת. [הו]

[הו] תנחילה ליום שכלו שבת. [הו]

אני יהו הושיעה נא

אני יהו הושיעה נא

הושיעה את עמך, וברך את נחלתך, ורעם ונשאם עד העולם. ויהיו דברי אלה אשר התחננתי לפני ה', קרובים אל ה' אלהינו יומם ולילה, לעשות משפט עבדו ומשפט עמו ישראל, דבר יום ביומו. למען דעת כל עמי הארץ, כי ה' הוא האלהים, אין עוד.

The following is said after each day's Hakafa (Shabbat has its own), and after the 7th Hakafot of Hoshana Rabba. It is said back at one's seat in shul.

אֲנִי וְהוּא הוֹשִׁיעָה נָא.

כְּהוֹשִׁיעַת אֱלִים בְּלוֹד עַמֶּךָ, בְּצֹאתְךָ לַיָּשָׁע עַמֶּךָ, כֵּן הוֹשִׁיעָנָא.

כְּהוֹשִׁיעַת גּוֹי וְאֶלֹהִים, דְּרוֹשִׁים לַיָּשָׁע אֶלֹהִים, כֵּן הוֹשִׁיעָנָא.

כְּהוֹשִׁיעַת הַמּוֹן צָבָאוֹת, וְעַמָּם מִלְּאֲכֵי צָבָאוֹת, כֵּן הוֹשִׁיעָנָא.

כְּהוֹשִׁיעַת זָכִים מִבֵּית עֲבָדִים, חֲנוּן בֵּינָם מִעֲבָדִים, כֵּן הוֹשִׁיעָנָא.

כְּהוֹשִׁיעַת טְבוּעִים בְּצוּל גְּזָרִים, יִקְרָךְ עַמָּם מִעֲבִירִים, כֵּן הוֹשִׁיעָנָא.

כְּהוֹשִׁיעַת כְּנֶה מְשׁוֹרְרֵת וַיּוֹשָׁע, לְגִזְחָהּ מִצִּינַת וַיּוֹשָׁע, כֵּן הוֹשִׁיעָנָא.

כְּהוֹשִׁיעַת מֵאֲמָר וְהוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם, נִקּוֹב וְהוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם, כֵּן הוֹשִׁיעָנָא.

כְּהוֹשִׁיעַת סוֹכְבֵי מִזְבֵּחַ, עוֹמְסֵי עֲרֵכָה לְהַקִּיף מִזְבֵּחַ, כֵּן הוֹשִׁיעָנָא.

כְּהוֹשִׁיעַת פְּלֵאֵי אֲרוֹן כְּהִפְשָׁע, צִעַר פְּלִשְׁתַּת בַּחֲרוֹן אָף וַנּוֹשָׁע, כֵּן הוֹשִׁיעָנָא.

כְּהוֹשִׁיעַת קַהְלוֹת בְּבִלָּה שְׁלֵחַת, רַחוּם לְמַעַנָם שְׁלֵחַת, כֵּן הוֹשִׁיעָנָא.

כְּהוֹשִׁיעַת שְׁבוֹת שְׁבִטֵי יַעֲקֹב, תָּשׁוּב וְתָשִׁיב שְׁבוֹת אֶהְיֶי יַעֲקֹב, וְהוֹשִׁיעָה נָא.

כְּהוֹשִׁיעַת שׁוּמְרֵי מִצְוֹת, וְחוֹכֵי יְשׁוּעוֹת, אֵל לְמוֹשְׁעוֹת, וְהוֹשִׁיעָה נָא.

אֲנִי וְהוּא הוֹשִׁיעָה נָא.

הוֹשִׁיעָה אֶת עַמֶּךָ, וּבִרְךָ אֶת נַחֲלֶתְךָ, וּרְעֵם וּנְשָׂאֵם עַד הָעוֹלָם. וַיְהִי דְבָרֵי אֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר
הִתְחַנַּנְתִּי לִפְנֵי ה', קָרְבִים אֵל ה' אֶלְהֵינוּ יוֹמָם וּלְיָלָה, לַעֲשׂוֹת מִשְׁפָּט עִבְדּוֹ וּמִשְׁפָּט
עִמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל, דְּבַר יוֹם בְּיוֹמוֹ. לְמַעַן דַּעַת כָּל עַמֵּי הָאָרֶץ, כִּי ה' הוּא הָאֵלִים, אֵין עוֹד.

Hoshana Rabah (Fri. Oct. 2nd)

Please see your machzor for the extensive Hoshanot for Hoshanah Rabbah.



Before leaving the Sukkah for the final time at the end of Hoshana Rabah one can recite the following prayer:

יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְפָּנֶיךָ ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאַלֵּקֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ, כְּשֶׁם שֶׁקִּימְתִּי וְיִשְׁבְּתִי בְּסוּכָה זוֹ כֵּן
אֲזַכֶּה לְשָׁנָה הַבָּאָה לִישֵׁב בְּסֻכַּת עוֹרֹי שֶׁל לוֹיִתָּן.

רְבוּנָא דְעֵלְמָא יְהֵא רַעְנָא מִן קַדְמָךְ שְׁאוּתָן מִלְאֲכִים הַקְדוֹשִׁים הַשִּׁיכִים לְמִצְוֹת
סִכָּה וְלִמְצוֹת ד' מִיָּנִים לוֹלֵב וְאַתְרוֹג הַדָּס וְעֵרְבָה הַנוֹהֲגִים בְּחַג הַסֻּכּוֹת, הֵם יִתְלוּ
עִמָּנוּ בְּצִאֲתָנוּ מִן הַסִּכָּה, וְיִכְנָסוּ עִמָּנוּ לְבִתְיָנוּ לְחַיִּים וְלִשְׁלוֹם, וְלִהְיוֹת תָּמִיד עֲלֵינוּ
שְׁמִירָה עֲלִיּוֹנָה מִמַּעַן קִדְשֶׁךָ וְלִהְצִילָנוּ מִכָּל חָטָא וְעוֹן וּמִכָּל פְּגָעִים רָעִים וּמִכָּל
שְׁעוֹת רָעוֹת הַמִּתְרַגְּשׁוֹת לָבָא לְעוֹלָם, וְהַעֲרָה עֲלֵינוּ רוּחַ מִמְרוֹם וְחַדָּשׁ כְּלִיּוֹתֵינוּ
לְעִבְדֶּךָ בְּאַמֶּת בְּאַהֲבָה וּבִירָאָה, וְנִתְמִיד מְאֹד בְּתִלְמוּד תּוֹרָתְךָ הַקְדוֹשָׁה לְלִמּוּד
וְלִלְמִד, וְזִכּוֹת אֲרֻבָּעָה מִיָּנִים וּמִצְוֹת סִכָּה יַעֲמוּד לָנוּ שְׁתֹּאֲרִיד אַפָּךְ עַד שׁוּבָנוּ אֵלֶיךָ
בְּתִשׁוּבָה שְׁלִימָה לְפָנֶיךָ וְנִתְקַן כָּל אֲשֶׁר פָּגַמְנוּ, וְנִזְכֶּה לִשְׁתֵּי שְׁלַחֲנוֹת בְּלִי צַעַר
וְיָגוֹן אָנִי וּבְנֵי בֵּיתִי וְיוֹצְאֵי חֻלְצִי, וְנִהְיָ כָּלנוּ שְׁקֵטִים וְשְׁלוֹמִים דְּשָׁנִים וְרַעֲנָנִים
וְעוֹבְדֵי הַשֵּׁם בְּאַמֶּת לְאַמְתּוֹ כְּרַצוֹנְךָ הַטּוֹב בְּכָלל כָּל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: יְהִי לְרָצוֹן אִמְרֵי
פִּי וְהִגִּיוֹן לְבִי לְפָנֶיךָ ה' צוּרִי וְגֹאֲלִי.

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SUKKOT

The Rhythm of the Chagim

The major holy days are divided into two very different themes.

Firstly we have the ימים נוראים - The Days of Awe, Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Rosh Hashanah as we know is the day of Judgement, in fact the entire world is judged on Rosh Hashanah. (The Chofetz Chayim once remarked that if the nations of the world would realize this, everyone would purchase a Machzor!)

Following Rosh Hashanah there is a period of reflection and ideally transition.

Yom Kippur is a day of Teshuvah and forgiveness. Our hope is that Hashem will adjust our Din based upon our Teshuvah. It is not coincidental that Yom Kippur was the day we received the Torah again on Har Sinai. Yom Kippur is a new beginning.

Secondly we have the שלוש רגלים, Pesach, Shavuot and Succot. The Torah describes these holy days with agriculture references. Pesach, חג האסוף, the springtime festival, is the time of זריעה - planting. The beginning of

the agrarian process.

Shavout חג הקציר, the season of reaping the harvest which has arrived.

Succot is חג האסוף, the festival of gathering. We bring our produce home.

There certainly was a time at the beginning of the history of Am Yisrael that a significant majority of our people were farmers but this was not meant to be the sole occupation of the people. Clearly this is a metaphor best described by the Maharal (מ"ו : ספר גבורות). These festivals speak to the spiritual destiny of our people.

Pesach, the Exodus from Egypt was the birth of a nation. The spiritual seeds were planted.

Shavuot, when Hashem gave us the Torah and we received it. We reaped our spirit harvest.

Sukkot, we brought the harvest home and began to nourish ourselves with the fruit of Torah and Mitzvot. The in gathering process taking us eventually to the סוכת שלום, the Beit Hamikdash in Eretz Yisrael.

Rav Hutner presents a majestic idea based on a strange Midrash (ויקרא רבא י"ג) that links Yom Kippur to Sukkoth. To paraphrase, the Midrash compares the Jewish people holding their lulav high to a victorious soldier holding his sword returning victoriously from the battle of Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur.

Unlike Pesach and Shavuot which occur at

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independent times of the year, Sukkot immediately follows Yom Kippur. The two seemingly disparate sets of holy days are now actually blended together into one unit. Sukkot is the “closer!” For both and makes them into one unified spiritual journey.

Notwithstanding the fact that the mitzvah of simchat Yom Tov applies to all three of the זמן שמחתנו, Sukkot alone is called the Festival of Simcha, the festival of ingathering. We all come home. Those with less, those with more all exit their material surroundings and enter the Sukkah. A level playing field representing the reality that we have successfully travelled the journey of Rosh Hashana, Yom Kippur, Pesach, Shavuot and Sukkot.

We have come home to embrace real life, the glorious life imbued with Torah and mitzvot.

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SUKKOT

A Joyful Symphony

It is a widely accepted custom to read the book of *Kohelet* on *Shabbat Chol Hamoed Sukkot*. (This year, when there is no *Shabbat Chol Hamoed*, we will read *Kohelet* in Eretz Yisrael on the first day of Sukkot, and in *Chutz La'aretz* on *Shemini Atzeret*.) It is curious since *Kohelet* speaks of the vanities of this world and has a somewhat depressing tone, while Sukkot is a time of joy and celebration. Why was it chosen to be read at this time?

In *Sukkos: A Symphony of Joy*, Rabbi Immanuel Bernstein cites the *Avudraham*, who relates that Shlomo Hamelech would deliver numerous discourses to the people on *Sukkot*, which were then compiled into the book of *Kohelet*. Indeed, the word “*Kohelet*” derives from the root word *kahal*—assembly. The Ramban notes that many people from among the nations of the world gathered to hear these speeches, hence, the universal tone of the *sefer*. The *Netziv* points out that gentiles would specifically come at this time to

Yerushalayim since Sukkot was when special offerings were brought in the Beit Hamikdash on behalf of the seventy nations. The *Netziv* further notes that this is one of the reasons Shlomo Hamelech exclusively employs the name *Elokim* throughout the *sefer* as it is a universal name of Hashem and the audience came from many diverse places.

The Gemara understands *Kohelet's* theme to be that all pleasures found “under the sun,” meaning in the temporal realm, are of limited value. However, pleasures found “above the sun,” those of spiritual value, have meaning and joy. This is truly in sync with the sukkah’s message; we leave our secure, physical structures to remind us of life’s transience. We enter the sukkah, like a mini-Beit Hamikdash, to experience the joy of closeness to Hashem.

Halachically, a kosher sukkah must have at least 2 full walls plus part of a third wall. The Arizal teaches that this symbolizes a “hug from Hashem,” embracing us and elevating us to a higher sphere. The special atmosphere of the sukkah invites the *Usphizin* to join us, underscoring the primacy of spiritual values in our lives. “*Sof davar hakol nishma et ha'Elokim yira ve'et mitzvotav shemor ki zeh kol ha'adam*—The end of the matter, everything having been heard, fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the entire man.” *Kohelet* 12:13)

The *Netivot Shalom* describes the goal of *Sukkot*; channel your love toward Hashem and distance yourself from love of the material because it will create a barrier to achieving this goal. He quotes the Rebbe of Kobrin zy”a,

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who teaches that the world is filled with light and sweetness, available to those who are not immersed within it. This same world will feel dark and bitter to those who are consumed with its physicality.

Reading *Kohelet* guides us to shift our focus and pursue true simchah, the joy and light found in the context of authentic *avodat Hashem*. ■

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As the Baal Shem Tov haKadosh sat in his *sukkah*, a great tumult raged outside.

In the early days of the Chasidic movement, some of its revolutionary practices, as well as the spiritual awakening of the followers of the Baal Shem Tov, drew prejudice, strife and legal controversy. While detractors and opponents were always on the lookout for an opportunity to attack the *tzadik* and undermine the fledgling movement, this time it seemed there was good reason to make their claims.

The Ba'al Shem Tov had constructed what looked to be a highly questionable *sukkah*, stitching together a patchwork of materials that seemed to barely pass even the minimal halachic requirements. The rickety looking hut relied on so many *kulahs* in Jewish Law and all the loopholes detailed in *masechet Sukkah*, it was barely recognizable to the rabbis

who were now gathering at the Sukkah, ready for a confrontation, and to accuse him of blatant laxity in halacha.

A debate ensued between the scandalized scholars and the *tzaddik*. They summoned a variety of sources and opinions denouncing the *sukkah*, while the Baal Shem Tov calmly defended it on each count. Finally, the rabbonim of Brodt bluntly declared it to be *pasul* and a spiritual danger to the community.

Seeing that his explanations had fallen on deaf ears, the Ba'al Shem Tov closed his eyes, entered a meditative state and began to pray. The *rabbonim* were unsure how to react. At that moment, a piece of paper fell from the *s'chach*, a note signed by no less than an angel from heaven, *Matat Sar haPanim*, attesting to the validity of the *sukkah*: "The *sukkah* of the Baal Shem Tov is kosher!"

Opening his eyes, the Baal Shem Tov then began an instructional shiur, explaining the intricate laws of constructing a *sukkah*, listing the various 'leniencies' that he had relied on, such as *dofen akumah*, *gud achis mechitztah*, *gud asik*, *lavud*, *avir*, and others. He also detailed how each particular *halacha* and its structural application related to a different spiritual state and level of observance.

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knowledge and observation. The *sukkah* is kosher,” concluded the Baal Shem Tov, “and so are the *Yidden*.”

בַּסֵּכֶת תִּשְׁבּוּ שִׁבְעַת יָמִים כֹּל־
הָאָדָם בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׁבּוּ בַּסֵּכֶת:
“For seven days... all who
belong to the people of
Israel will live in *sukkos*”
(*Vayikra*, 23:42)

ללמד שכל ישראל ראויין לישב בסוכה אחת.
...This teaches that it is fitting for all of Israel
to sit in one *sukkah*. (*Sukkah*, 27b)

“One ought to bind themselves and be
focused on being part of the entire *klal*...and
strive to fill their home with great love and
shalom, so that their love shine outward and
spread forth; In that way, it will be considered
as if all of Israel dwells together in one *suk-*
kah.” (Reb Nosson of Breslov, zy’a)

Zeman simchaseinu, the simcha of the Fes-
tival of Sukkos, flows forth from the *Yamim*
Noraim. Our exuberant joy is framed by the
gravity and *achrayus* of our committed rela-
tionship with the *Ribbono Shel Olam*. The
celebration of Sukkos is an invitation for us
to actualize our declarations and intent. It is
a call to Divine intimacy, welcoming us into
the ineffable embrace and union between *Am*
Yisrael and *Hashem Yisborach*.

Knesses Yisrael, Hashem’s beloved Kallah, is
summoned to enter:

הַבִּיאֵנִי הַמֶּלֶךְ חֲדָרָיו נְגִילָה וְנִשְׂמָחָה בָּךְ
“The King has brought me into His cham-
bers, we will be joyful and happy together.”
(*Shir haShirim*, 1:4)

Beneath the stars and sky, under a can-
opy held up by poles and prayers, and the

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‘*chuppah*’ of *s’chach* hovering over us, we
are a royal bride and Groom entering into a
covenant of *Kidushin*, sanctity and exclusive
commitment. As a bride and groom fast in
preparation for their new beginning, we fast
on Yom Kippur. Just as they celebrate a week
of ‘*sheva brachos*’, we celebrate seven days
in the *sukkah*, rejoicing in our new state of
union. At each of the seven festive meals
we welcome *panim chadashos*, ‘new faces’:
the *Ushpizin Kadishin*, different holy guests
each night, who join us in celebrating our
wedding.

The Navi describes the *ananei ha-kavod* as a
chuppah that covers us from above and enve-
lopes us in Divine love:

וּבָרָא ה' עַל כָּל־מִכּוֹן הַר־צִיּוֹן וְעַל־מִקְרָאָהָ עָנָן יוֹמָם
וְעָשָׂן וְנִגְהָ אֵשׁ לְהִבָּה לְיִלְהָ כִּי עַל־כָּל־כְּבוֹד חֻפָּה...
וְסֻכָּה תִּהְיֶה לְצִל־יוֹמָם מִחֹרֵב וּלְמִחְסָה וּלְמִסְתוֹר מִזֶּרֶם
וּמִמְטָר:

“Hashem will create a cloud by day and
smoke with a glow of flaming fire by night
hovering over the shrine and meeting place
of Har Zion; Indeed, over all the glory shall
hang a canopy, and it shall serve as a *sukkah*
for shade from heat by day and as a shelter
for protection against drenching rain.” (*Yesha-*
yah, 4:5)

The Baal haTurim (*Vayikra*, 23:42) invokes
the specific term *chuppah*, and suggests an

additional aspect to the *ananei haKavod*. They imply intimacy and loving connectivity, the manifestation of a marital bond in which two individuals become one. Sheltering together in Hashem's Presence, we are bonded together, and become one in the *sukkah*.

.....

In the tradition of the Baal Shem Tov, the day after Yom Kippur is referred to as *Gott's Numen*, 'God's Name'. Having spent *Aseres Yemei Teshuvah* addressing the Ribbono Shel Olam with the honorific *haMelech haKadosh*, we begin to use the more intimate and familiar name, *haKeil haKadosh*. These four days between Yom Kippur and Sukkos are days of closeness, corresponding to the four letters of our Beloved One's name, שם הוי"ה, the Tetragrammaton. And perhaps this is the source for Rebbe Pinchas of Koretz's statement that the days between Yom Kippur and Sukkos are a particularly auspicious time for a wedding (*Imrei Pinchas*, 7:91). We are Hashem's pure, radiant kallah, walking toward the *chuppah*, where we will circle Him with *hakafos* of joy, remove our veil and see each other face to face.

There is much we can learn from the Ba'al Shem Tov's *sukkah*. In cultivating and creating *yichud*, in building a shared dwelling place together, we are called to focus on the *tov*, the good that is there, not what is lacking. Yiddishkeit provides the tools to construct

a life of holiness and joy and a home that is suffused with love, firm on the foundations of *ayin tovah*, inclusivity and Ahavas Yisrael. Such a home is surrounded by *ananei haKavod* all year 'round, and filled with mutual respect and peace.

It is indeed "fitting for all of Israel to sit in one *sukkah*"; there is nothing more beautiful — and precious to Hashem — than individuals uniting, coming together in love and friendship. May we all merit to celebrate together during these auspicious days, to give ourselves over to the purity of Yom Kippur and the intimacy of the *sukkah*. May all be blessed to build homes filled with אהבה ואחווה, שלום ורעות.

.....

*Excerpt from newly released **Baderech: Along the Path of the Torah**, (Mosaica Press, Elul 5786) ■*

Rav Judah Mischel is executive director of Camp HASC, the Hebrew Academy for Special Children. He is the founder of Tzama Nafshi and the author of the "Baderech" series. Rav Judah lives in Ramat Beit Shemesh with his wife Ora and their family.

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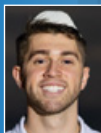
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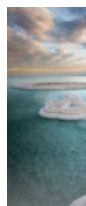
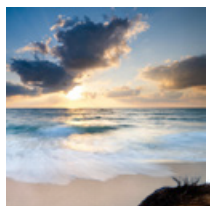
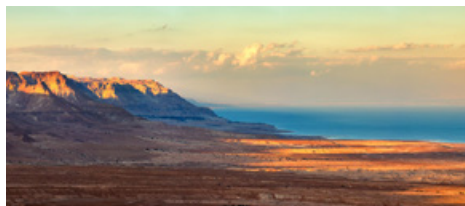
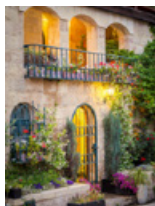
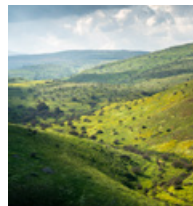
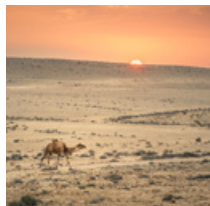
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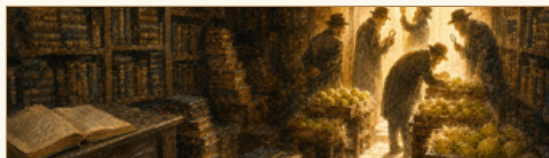
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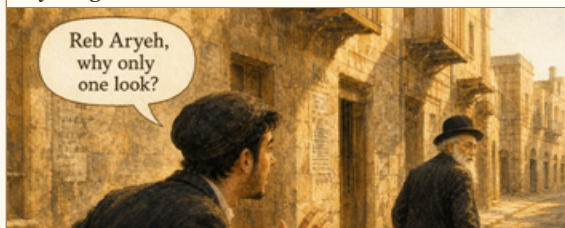


Jerusalem, 1963, just before Sukkot. In a Meah Shearim bookshop doorway, men studied etrogim under magnifying glasses.



Reb Aryeh Levin asked for the etrog they had saved for him. One look, and into his pocket it went.

A young man ran after him.



Pri etz hadar · Vayikra 23:40



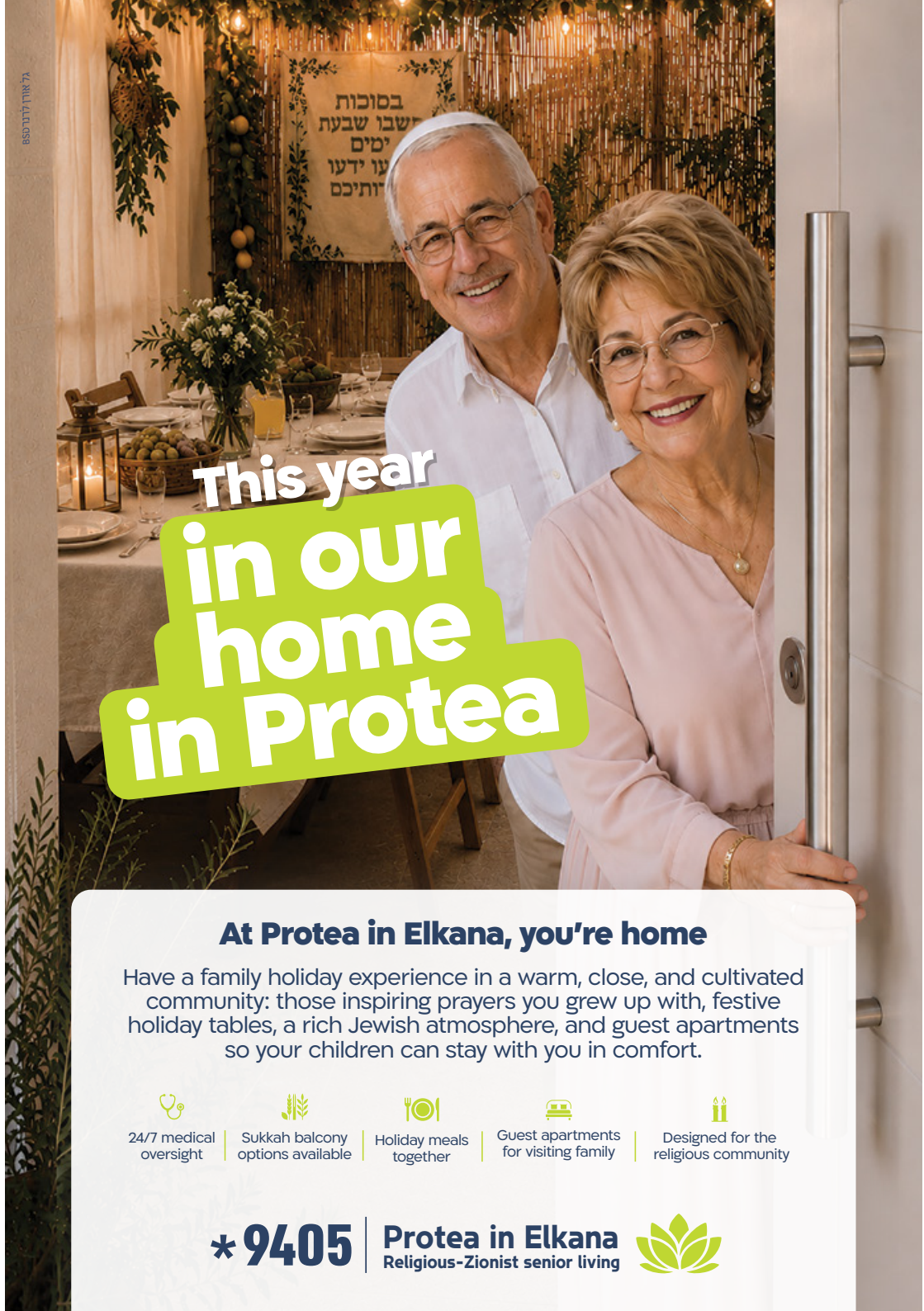
Reb Aryeh was carrying repaired false teeth for an elderly man who could not chew.

*V'hadarta pnei zaken
Vayikra 19:32*

The young man understood: for Rav Aryeh, the most beautiful mitzvah was caring for another Jew in need.



Source: Haim Be'er, "Reb Aryeh's Etrog," *Tablet* (2018), translated by Jeffrey Saks.
Rav Aryeh Levin (1885–1969), the Tzaddik of Jerusalem.



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SIMCHAT SHMUEL

BY RABBI SAM SHOR
DIRECTOR, TORAH INITIATIVES,
OU ISRAEL

SUKKOT

One of the most beautiful customs associated with the *yom tov* of *Sukkot*, is welcoming the *Ushpizin* (special guests) to our *Sukkah* each night. Of course these seven *Ushpizin* represent the early generations and greatest lights of the Jewish People. Each night we welcome a new guest to our *Sukkah*, to join the other special guests who have gathered in our *Sukkah* as the *yom tov* has progressed. We welcome *Avraham*, *Yitzchak*, *Yaakov*, *Moshe*, *Aharon*, *Yosef*, and *David*. Aside from the great symbolism of surrounding ourselves metaphorically with the presence and great *ruchniyut* of our ancestors, what is the significance of this beautiful custom of welcoming these *Ushpizin* into our *Sukkah*?

There is an interesting *midrash* in *Breisheet Rabbah*, which introduces us to the meaning behind the *mitzvah* of *yeshiva b'sukkah*, and sheds some light on the significance of the practice to welcome the *Ushpizin*.

The *midrash* points to the verse, where *Avraham Avinu*, greets the *melachim* who have come to visit him and share the tidings that *Sara* will finally be blessed with a child. *Avraham Avinu* invites the *melachim* to rest in the shade, under the branches of the trees. So too, our sages taught, *Avraham's* descendants will merit to sit in the shade of Divine Protection, under the branches which cover the roof of the *Sukkah*, and to welcome guests to join them! Just as our ancestors engaged in acts of

chesed, the *ushpizin* continue to remind us of the special opportunity that the *yom tov* of *Sukkot* offers each of us to welcome guests and engage in *chesed*.

The *Iturei Torah* points out that many *sefarim* suggest that *Sukkot* is called *Zman Simchateinu*- literally the time of our joy, and that the word *zman*-time, is connected to the words *zimmun*-to invite, and *hazmana*- invitation! The very essence of the *yom tov* of *Sukkot* is to extend hospitality to others, even as we leave the comfort of our home's regular dining room, and enter the temporary dwelling of our *sukkah*.

The *Netivot Shalom*, the *Slonimer Rebbe zy'a*, offers another beautiful insight related to *Sukkot* as *Zman Simchateinu*. The Rebbe likens the experience of the *Yom Tov* of *Sukkot*, to the

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experience of a marriage, in this case between *Am Yisrael* and *HaKadosh Baruch Hu*. The *Sukkah* itself, represents the *chupa*, standing underneath the canopy of Divine protection. The seven days of *Sukkot*, explains the Rebbe, correspond to the seven celebratory days, beginning with the wedding, where family and friends gather together to rejoice and offer the special *sheva brachot* to gladden the *chatan* and *kallah*.

Perhaps this beautiful insight of the *Netivot Shalom*, can also help us to understand the significance of the custom to welcome the *Ushpizin* as well. One of the criteria for hosting a celebratory *Sheva brachot meal*, is that each time the family and friends assemble to celebrate with the *chatan* and *kallah*, we invite *Panim Chadashot*, new faces, new guests who have not yet had the *zechut* or opportunity to fulfill the *mitzvah* of rejoicing before and gladdening the *chatan* and *kallah*. Perhaps if the entire Yom Tov of *Sukkot* is indeed meant to parallel those seven days of celebration for the bride and groom, then perhaps our *Ushpizin*, our honored guests serve as our proverbial *Panim Chadashot* for each day of celebration.

As we welcome the *ushpizin* to our *Sukkah* this year, may we indeed be blessed to feel as if we have entered into the security of standing under the canopy of Divine protection that the *Sukkah* represents; to feel the joy and excitement of celebrating with a new special guest each night, and may we be blessed to experience these days with complete and utter *simcha*!

Chag Sameach! ■

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Are the Four *Minim* *Muktzeh* on Shabbat?

לעילוי נשמת
 יואל אפרים בן אברהם עוזיאל זלצמן ז"ל

Question: If someone forgot to find a good place for his four *minim* before Sukkot, which starts this year on Shabbat, can he move them on Shabbat?

Answer: Since it is forbidden to do the *mitzva* of the four *minim* on Shabbat (Sukka 42b), the *lulav* is purposeless and *muktzeh* (Rama, Orach Chayim 658:2). The Rama calls it “like wood.” In other words, unlike a shofar, which is a *kli shemelachto l'issur* (Rama, OC 588:5), which can be moved if it is getting in the way, a *lulav* (and *aravot*) has no usage other than a *mitzva* that does not exist on Shabbat. As *muktzeh machmat gufo*, it cannot be moved to use it or to get it out of the way. (The Taz 658:3 is a minority opinion that a *lulav* too is a *kli shemelachto l'issur*.)

However, the Rama (OC 658:2) rules that an *etrog* is not *muktzeh* on Shabbat because it can be used for smell. The *gemara* (Sukka 37b) interestingly asserts that although objects used for *mitzva* become forbidden to use for

other things, only the main non-*mitzva* usage is forbidden. For *hadasi*, *muktzeh l'mitzvato* forbids smell; for *etrog*, it forbids eating, but smell remains permitted. The usage for smell keeps an *etrog* non-*muktzeh*. (See Magen Avraham 268:1 for explanations of how we avoid the problem that we generally should not make a *beracha* on smelling an *etrog* on Sukkot.)

In contemporary times, several *poskim* view the Rama's leniency as functionally inapplicable. Shemirat Shabbat K'hilchata (22:55) cites Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, and *Dirshu* (658:5) cites Rav Elyashiv, as holding that modern owners are uniquely meticulous with their *etrogim*. Consequently,



Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Auerbach zt"l (on the left)

the *etrog* becomes *muktzeh machamat chisaron kis*—a severe type of *muktzeh*. The Aruch HaShulchan (OC 308:17) already implies a similar viewpoint. This presents a conceptual difficulty: while this assessment seems to accurately reflect contemporary reality, it is hard to assume that historical *etrogim*, which were far scarcer and relatively more valuable, were handled less sparingly. Rather than dismissing the applicability of earlier precedent

based on modern assumptions, some suggest deferring to the Rama's lenient assessment of the *etrog*'s status (see Be'er Moshe 8:73). On the other hand, it is somewhat difficult for *poskim* to defer to a **lenient** assumption which they do not see as accurate in their own times.

It is actually not fully clear to what extent Shabbat changes the overall *muktzeh* status of the four *minim*. The Yerushalmi (Sukka 3:11) says that even on a regular *Yom Tov*, once one has finished doing the *mitzva* and has put down the *lulav*, he can no longer pick it up. Many *poskim*, including the Rama (Darchei Moshe, OC 652:1), assume we do not follow the Yerushalmi, based on the concept of "there is no *muktzeh* for half of Shabbat" (Beitza 26b) or the fact that if one wanted to, there may be value in extra holding of the four *minim* (see discussion in Mishneh Halachot VIII:242 about the *minhag* in Yerushalayim of carrying the *lulav* around throughout the day (Sukka 41b)). One way or the other, *halacha l'ma'aseh* we assume that only on Shabbat are they *muktzeh*. (The fascinating discussion – see Teshuvot V'hanhagot V:212 – about why it would not be a problem to move the *lulav* before daybreak (the beginning of the *mitzva*) is beyond our scope.)

In most ways, there is not a difference in this regard whether the first day is on Shabbat or any other day. However, it is possible that being on the first day could make the matter more lenient. At least part of the *muktzeh* problem stems from the fact that the *minim* are set aside for the *mitzva* and the *mitzva* does not exist on Shabbat. However, until the

mitzva has been carried out once, the *mitzva* preparations are called "*hazmana*" and are not halachically impactful (see Rama, OC 638:1). Although *lulav* and *aravot* are anyway not unusable, since *hadasim* can be used for smell, they are very possibly not *muktzeh* on Shabbat this year (Shoneh Halachot 568:3). ■

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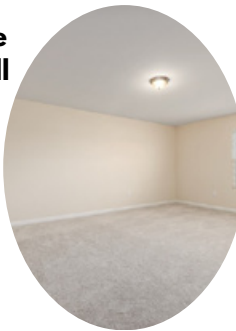
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MESSAGE FROM NCSY ISRAEL LEADERSHIP

Becoming More: From Inspiration to Action



RABBI MICHAEL KAHN,
Executive Director, NCSY Israel
RABBI YOSEF GINSBERG,
Regional Director, NCSY Israel



Yom Kippur gives us a day filled with thoughts, words, reflection, and emotion. But then comes Sukkot. We leave the Beit Kneset, pick up the *Arba Minim*, build a Sukkah, eat in it, celebrate in it, and bring our renewed commitments into everyday life. The transition from Yom Kippur to Sukkot reminds us that inspiration is only the beginning. **Growth becomes real when it becomes action.**

That message feels especially meaningful as we reflect on a year of growth at NCSY Israel. In 5786, more than 750 unique teens participated in NCSY Israel and Chai programming, a 34% increase over the previous year. We welcomed 405 first-time participants and recorded more than 3,000 attendances across 170 programs and events. But behind every number is a teen who showed up, connected, learned, questioned, led, or took another step forward. You can see more of our 5786 Year in Review in this week's *Torah Tidbits*.

Now, as we launch 5787, our challenge is not simply to **do more**, but to **become more**. And becoming more happens through action. Choose one new commitment to Torah or *tefillah*. Work on one *middah*. Reach out to someone who needs a friend. Take responsibility when it would be easier to wait for someone else. Step into a leadership role. Turn an idea you believe in into something you actually do.

As Yom Kippur comes to a close, we naturally think about *teshuvah*: what we want to change, what we can improve, and who we hope to become in the year ahead. But perhaps *teshuvah* is about something even bigger. Chazal teach that *teshuvah* was created before the world itself (פסחים נד). **Rav Yerucham Levovitz (1875–1936), the famed Mashgiach of the Mir Yeshiva**, asks: If *teshuvah* exists only to repair sin, why was it created before there were people capable of sinning? His answer changes our understanding of *teshuvah*. *Teshuvah* is not merely about fixing the past. It is a fundamental capacity Hashem placed within us: the ability to grow, to return to ourselves, and to become closer to the people we are capable of being.

The Torah tells us: כי קרוב אליך הדבר מאד, בפיו (דברים ל, יד). ובלבבך לעשותו (דברים ל, יד). The progression is powerful: בפיו - what we say; בלבבך - what we feel; but ultimately לעשותו - what we do.

As we move from Yom Kippur into Sukkot and begin a new year of NCSY Israel, may 5787 be a year in which the thoughts of our minds and the aspirations of our hearts become the actions of our lives. May Hashem give our entire community the courage to keep growing, to keep acting, and ultimately to **become more of who we were created to be.**

גמר חתימה טובה וחג שמח!



YIGAL MARCUS

Board Chair, NCSY Israel Friends

A few years ago, before October 7, I met a teenager at an NCSY Israel Shabbaton whom I will call “Moshe.” As we discussed his future, he told me that he hoped to fulfill his national service through one of Israel’s sports programs rather than enlist in a traditional IDF role.

I remember thinking about his remarkable potential. Moshe was charismatic, influential, and naturally gifted at connecting with others. With the right encouragement, he could use those qualities to serve his country and strengthen those around him.

When I saw Moshe again recently, he was wearing an IDF uniform. He had set aside his athletic plans and chosen to join a combat unit.

What changed? What inspires a young person to embrace a greater responsibility?

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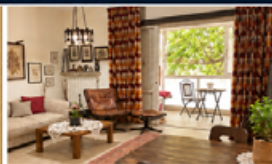
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taught me that our young people possess extraordinary, often untapped potential.

The best coaching does not simply tell teenagers what they can accomplish. It creates a culture of self-discovery, inspiration, and high expectations in which they recognize that potential for themselves—and choose to pursue something worthy of it.

That is what NCSY Israel did for Moshe. Through meaningful relationships and dedicated mentors, it helped him understand that he had a unique contribution to make to Klal Yisrael.

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks taught: “Leaders are not born; they are made, and they are made when people have the opportunity and the responsibility to lead.”

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SHMINI ATZERET / SIMCHAT TORAH

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SHMINI ATZERET/ SIMCHAT TORAH

We read the parsha of V'zot Habracha, a short parsha of 41 verses. And the beginning of Breishit which itself is 34 verses.

Moshe is about to die, to take leave of the people before they enter the Land of Israel. In his last words to his people, Moshe blesses all 12 tribes of the Jewish people. He ascribes to each tribe a different quality, pointing out the qualities that a rich and varied society in the impending nation of Israel will need. Leadership, consistency, legislature, judges, business, agriculture, warriors, minerals. In this Moshe speaks mostly to G-d, not to the people, illustrating to Him the greatness of the people he is to take leave of.



1ST ALIYA (DVARIM 33:1-7)

Moshe blesses the people before his death. G-d approached us at Sinai, although He has all nations; we were the ones who received His utterances. He is the King over Israel. Reuven endures as does his progeny. Yehuda, G-d hears his voice, he is powerful, and be his help.

Moshe does not bless the tribes in a way that we think of blessing. A blessing would be: may you have success or may you have peace. Rather, Moshe describes the unique quality of each of the tribes. Perhaps the blessing is: use

the qualities you have been endowed with to serve our great nation in our Land.

Reuven is the consistent one. Enduring. Always at the ready. Yehuda is power and leadership, the eventual monarch.



2ND ALIYA (33:8-12)

Levi, He is Your pious one, with-standing trials by listening to Your covenant. They will teach Your Torah and serve You. Bless him and gird him in the face of adversaries. Binyamin, the beloved of G-d, He protects him, while he dwells on His chest.

The Jewish people need religious leaders and that is Levi. Binyamin is the seat of the Mikdash, the physical partner to Levi's religious service.



3RD ALIYA (33:13-17)

Yosef, his land is blessed, from the sweet of the land, mountains and hills. He has power through both Ephraim and Menashe.

Yosef is agricultural bounty, strength in economy and strength in numbers.



4TH ALIYA (33:18-21)

Zevulun is pleasing in his journeys, Yissachar in his dwellings. People gather at the mountain, enjoying the bounty of the sea and of the earth. Gad is blessed, dwelling as a lion. His portion is legislation, leadership, righteousness and justice.

Zevulun is the merchant marine, Yissachar the philosopher prince. Gad is the backbone of national institutions, of justice and the rule of law.



5TH ALIYA (33:21-29)

Dan is a lion cub, enjoying the Bashan. Naftali, satisfied, full of

blessing, the sea and the south. Asher, blessed more than children, beloved by brothers, feet of oil, shoes of iron and copper. None is like G-d, riding the heavens in your aid, splendid.

Dan protects the northern border, while Naftali the west and the south. Asher is the peace maker, with "soft oiled feet but shoes of iron", a metaphor for stepping softly but with principles when needed. The peace maker.



CHATAN TORAH (34:1-12)

G-d of ages surveys, under Him strength, repelling enemies. The Jewish people dwell safely, wheat and wine, oil like dew. Fortunate are you Israel to have such a Protector. Moshe ascended Har Navo, looking out over the Land. G-d told him, this is the Land I promised to you, though you will not enter it. Moshe died, buried, though his burial spot is not known. His strength was with him to the end. The people mourned for 30 days. Yehoshua was filled with Divine spirit, though none will ever be as Moshe, knowing G-d, face to face, performing all the wonders which he did in front of all Israel.

Moshe's life comes to an end. Perhaps a

tinge of tragedy, failing to enter the Land he worked toward his whole life. But, in mentioning Yehoshua, and in following his poetic description of the spectrum of talent the Jewish people display, he leaves the world satisfied. His goal was not to enter the Land; his goal was to successfully lead his people to enter the Land. He leaves the world satisfied that all that is needed for success is right there in front of them. His life's mission was accomplished.



CHATAN TORAH, BREISHIT (1:1-2:3)

So as to continue the lifelong learning of our Torah, following the conclusion of the Torah we jump right in and continue with the beginning of the Torah, reading the story of Creation from day 1 through Shabbat. ■

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A SHORT VORT

BY RABBI CHANOKH YERES
RAV, BEIT KNESSET BEIT YISRAEL, YEMIN MOSHE

"And the time of weeping and mourning was over." (34:8)

וַיֵּתְמוּ יָמֵי בְּכִי אֲבֵל מֹשֶׁה (לד:ח)

By the case of Moshe Rabbeinu's demise, we are told that the days of weeping and mourning "came to an end".

The Ozneyim LaTorah (Rabbi Zalman Sorotzkin 1881-1966 Lithuania-Jerusalem) asks why by the death of Yaakov Avinu there is no mention of when the weeping came to an end?

Rabbi Sorotzkin answers that when Moshe passed away, even though full of anguish and sadness, nevertheless they were encouraged by the forthcoming embarking into the land of Eretz Yisrael. This jubilant occasion was able to galvanize their feelings. However, with the death of Yaakov was the impending danger of enslavement and exile. For this reason, the Torah omits any reference to weeping or mourning "coming to an end." Shabbat Shalom

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Shemini Atzeret – Separation Anxiety

ביום השמיני עצרת תהיה לכם כל מלאכת עבודה לא תעשו.

“The eighth day shall be an atzeret for you; you shall perform no work of labor.” (Bamidbar 29:35)

The day following the seven-day holiday of Succot is called *Atzeret*. What does this term mean? Rashi explains that *Atzeret* means “restriction”, on that day, one is restricted from performing work. But if so, why isn’t every day of Yom Tov called an *Atzeret*? Why is the eighth day singled out solely as *Atzeret*?

Rashi on this pasuk offers a second explanation: *atzru milatzeit* - “They were restrained from leaving.” This refers to the halacha of *ta’un lina*, which mandates that when one offers a sacrifice, they must remain near the Beit HaMikdash for an additional night.

Rashi then presents a third explanation from the Midrash Aggada:

ומדרשו באגדה, לפי שכל ימות הרגל הקריבו כנגד ע’ אומות, וכשבאין ללכת, אמר להם המקום, בבקשה מכם עשו לי סעודה קטנה כדי שאהנה מכם.

“During the days of the holiday, the nation sacrificed on behalf of the seventy nations, and when they were ready to leave, the Almighty said: ‘Please make me one additional meal so I can rejoice with you.’”

Throughout Succot, Bnei Yisrael offered seventy sacrifices on behalf of all the non-Jewish nations. Hashem requested that Bnei Yisrael stay one more day, so they could rejoice together — alone. Rashi explains *Atzeret* as a term of endearment, akin to a father who holds back his children from leaving, saying: “Your departure pains me.” After the intense celebrations of Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and Succot in the Beit HaMikdash, Hashem finds it hard to let us go.

The *ba’alei mussar* ask: How does one more day help? Doesn’t it just prolong the pain? Any kindergarten teacher will tell you that when dropping a child off, the best approach is a quick departure; lingering only makes the separation harder. So why does Hashem prolong it?

CELEBRATING TORAH

Rav Yitzhak Mirsky¹ suggests that Hash-

1. Rav Yitzhak Mirsky, *Hegyononei Halacha* vol 3 p78



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em's reluctance to see us leave is because He does not want us to forsake the spiritual level attained over the holidays. The *Yamim Noraim* are a time of intense spiritual elevation. How does an extra day strengthen our bond and commitment to Torah?

Shemini Atzeret is combined with Simchat Torah (in Israel, they are on the same day). Through celebrating Torah, we affirm its central role in our lives. This ensures that we never truly “depart” or separate from Hashem as long as we continue learning and living by the Torah's precepts.

On Simchat Torah, we dance and encircle the *bima*. Why not just dance in a circle? Rabbi Yitzhak Isaac Schorr (cited by Rav Mirsky) explains that dancing around the *bima* symbolizes the Jewish people's connection to Torah study. We don't just revere the Torah scrolls locked away in the *Aron*. The Torah's place is on the *bima*, the site of active learning and engagement. Torah without learning does not connect us to HaKadosh Baruch Hu. We carry Torah with us, celebrating study as a living bond.

Hashem requests one more day, a day without the *shofar*, *lulav*, or *succah*. A day devoted solely to celebrating Torah, the glue that binds us to Him throughout the year.

A UNIFIED NATION

Another explanation, offered by some Hasidic masters, focuses on the phrase “*kasheh alai predatchem*” - “Your departure is difficult for Me.” While the simple meaning refers to God's sadness at Bnei Yisrael leaving Jerusalem to return home, the word *predatchem* (“**your** departure”) can also mean “your separation.” This hints not at separation from God (which would have been depicted by “*predateinu*”), but separation from one another.²

Hashem grieves when He sees us part after

2. *Predateinu* would refer to a separation between Hsahem and Am Yisrael.



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experiencing our national unity during the holidays. Therefore, He asks for one more day to witness all his people celebrate together. He does not want us to return to our homes divided; instead, we come together to dance around the Torah, acknowledging that despite differences, the Torah unites us as one nation.

HEART ON THE LEFT

Man was created with his heart on the left side of his body. Usually, the right side is



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viewed as stronger and more important. Why, then, is such a vital organ placed on the left?

One suggestion is that when we face another person, their heart aligns with our right side. Our hearts are designed to focus on and connect with others — whose hearts are on our right.

CONCLUSION

Shemini Atzeret teaches us that with Hashem, there is never truly a “goodbye.” The Yamim Nora'im and Succot may end, but Hashem draws us close one more time to remind us that the bond of Torah and the unity of Am Yisrael are not seasonal experiences, they are eternal.

On this day we learn that our connection to God is not found in dramatic rituals alone - not in the shofar, not in the lulav, not even in the succah, but in the daily embrace of Torah, which accompanies us everywhere. We also learn that our hearts were fashioned to beat

in rhythm with one another. To feel the cry of another Jew, to rejoice in each other's joy, to dance together around the Torah that belongs to us all.

May we live with that awareness that the Torah is our anchor, that every Jew is our family, and that Hashem is always holding us close, until the ultimate day when all of Am Yisrael will dance together in Yerushalayim, in everlasting joy. ■

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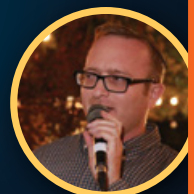
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Birchot HaShachar: A Daily Reminder of Hashem's Gifts

After beginning our davening by thanking Hashem for our neshamot (*Modeh Ani* and *Elokai Neshama*), and for our bodies (*Asher Yatzar*), and then preparing ourselves properly for the day ahead through *Birchot HaTorah*, we now begin *Birchot HaShachar*.

Birchot HaShachar is a series of 16 brachot in which we praise and thank Hashem for many of the basic blessings and functions of our daily lives - for giving us clothing, sight, strength, freedom, and more. The **Mishna Berura** explains that the reason we recite these brachot is based on the famous statement in **Gemara Brachot 35a** that one is not permitted to benefit from this world without first making a bracha. Just as this is true for every food we eat, it is also true for the many pleasures and benefits we experience throughout our lives. We need to stop and appreciate what Hashem has given us each and every day.

The Gemara in Brachot describes how, as a person prepares for the day, he should make a bracha at each step along the way. For example, when he opens his eyes, he says *Poke'ach Ivrim*—"Who opens the eyes of the blind." When he gets dressed, he says *Malbish Arumim*—"Who clothes the

naked." This process helps us visualize all of the blessings Hashem has placed in our lives and develop a greater appreciation for them. Nowadays, we recite the entire list together as part of our set tefillah, but the underlying idea remains the same - to pause and recognize just how much Hashem gives us every single day.

In this article, we will focus on the first three brachot.

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם, אשר נתן לִשְׂכֹנֵי
בֵּיתָנוּ לְהַבְחִין בֵּין יוֹם וּבֵין לַיְלָה:

We praise and thank Hashem for giving the "שכני" the ability to distinguish between day and night. שְׂכָנִי can refer both to a rooster and to the heart.

As we hear the rooster's "cock-a-doodle-doo," announcing the arrival of a new day, we are reminded that we, too, (like the rooster) have been granted a special ability to distinguish. From a young age, we learn to differentiate between good and evil, safe and dangerous, hot and cold, and right and wrong.

This innate ability is something we often take for granted, but it is essential to our daily functioning. More specifically, our ability to distinguish between day and night and to recognize the passage of time gives our lives structure and meaning.

When the days begin to blur together and time loses its significance, life can begin to feel less meaningful and consequential. We thank Hashem for giving us the gift of time - the opportunity to wake up each morning with new goals and ambitions, and to recognize the uniqueness and potential of each new day.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שְׁלֹא עֲשִׂנִי גוֹי

We thank Hashem for having created us as Jews. The Midrash relates that Moshe Rabbeinu was so overcome with emotion at Matan Torah, as he received the Torah and mitzvot, that he cried out with this bracha (**Midrash Abachir**). When we recite this bracha, we should take a moment to focus on the incredible gift we have been given - the privilege of belonging to Klal Yisrael, of recognizing and serving HaKadosh Baruch Hu, and of having the opportunity to learn His Torah and fulfill His mitzvot.

Try picturing for a moment what our lives would be like without the Torah to guide us. When we truly stop to think about this, we can be overcome with gratitude and happiness that our hearts are, as the **Yesod V'Shoresh HaAvodah** describes it, “on fire” with appreciation.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שְׁלֹא עֲשִׂנִי עֶבֶד

We thank Hashem for having created us as free people. Rabbi Ephraim Oshry, who

recorded and answered halachic *she'eilot* during the Holocaust in his sefer **ממעמקים**, was asked a powerful question: How could Jews continue to recite the bracha שלא עשני עבד when they were literally being enslaved in the most brutal circumstances?

Based on the **Avudraham**, he explains that the bracha must be recited even by someone who is, in fact, a slave. The bracha is not referring only to physical freedom, but also to spiritual freedom. A person may be physically enslaved, but he can still retain the ability to serve Hashem. And even when that ability is taken away by oppressors, we know that such a situation is only temporary. We are still given bechirah chofshit (free choice), the ability to choose how we respond, how we behave, and how we conduct ourselves.

We saw a powerful expression of this in



Birchot HaShachar

Birchot HaShachar is a series of 16 brachot in which we praise and thank Hashem for many of the basic blessings of our daily lives—for giving us clothing, sight, strength, freedom, and much more.

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that one is not permitted to benefit from this world without first making a bracha. Just as this is true for every food we eat, it is also true for the many pleasures and benefits we experience throughout our lives.

We need to stop and appreciate what Hashem has given us each and every day.



Cut and paste into your siddur



recent years, when some of the hostages, despite being physically imprisoned and enduring unimaginable circumstances, chose to begin keeping Shabbat and other religious practices. Even when their physical freedom was taken from them, they found ways to exercise their spiritual freedom and strengthen their connection to Hashem.

This is an important reminder for all of us. No matter what difficult circumstances we may face, there is always an inner freedom that cannot be taken away: the freedom to choose our response and the person we want to be.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שְׁלֵא עָשִׂי אֲשֶׁה

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שְׁעָשִׂי כְּרִצּוֹנִי

Men thank Hashem for having given them the ability to focus on their Avodat

Hashem, to be able to spend hours studying Torah and to be devoted to all of the Mitzvot, without some of the additional responsibilities that were granted to women, and to therefore be fully obligated in all of the Mitzvot. This bracha should be a reminder every day to commit oneself to this special responsibility and privilege.

Women here acknowledge that they were created as Hashem willed. Hashem created man and woman together as one being and then separated them into two distinct beings, with separate roles and identities (**Bnei Yissaschar**). This was Hashem's will, and we thank Him for giving us our unique role and responsibilities, including the privilege of balancing building a family with our own Avodat Hashem.

Next week, iyH, we will continue our exploration of Birchot HaShachar. ■

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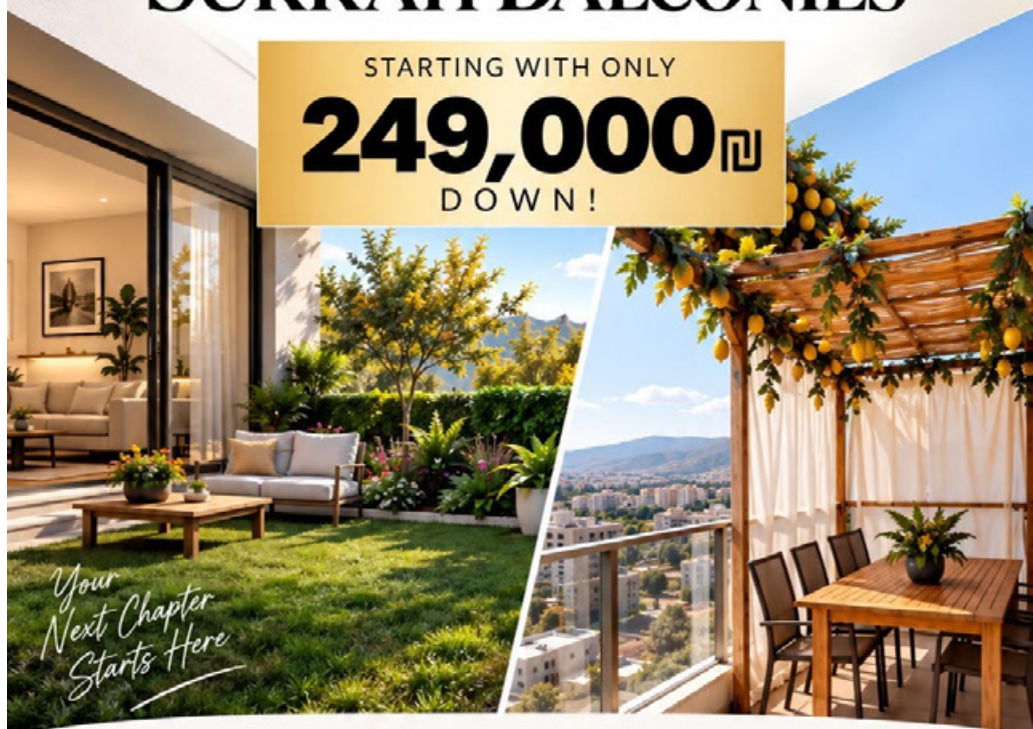
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Torah Values or Torah Tests?

לעילוי נשמת
מאיר יצחק בן יוסף אליהו הכהן ז"ל

Yechiel asks:

My candidate is very frum and connected to Torah, and it's important for him to build a relationship based on Torah. Every first date he tries to assess the match according to how they can discuss Torah values and topics, but he ends up giving a "Shmus" and scaring away the girls. It's not easy to find someone as frum as he's looking for, and till I do he runs them through tests... What can I do?

Aleeza answers:

I actually think your candidate has a beautiful goal. He doesn't just want someone who is frum on paper. He wants a relationship where Torah is alive, where they can talk about values, hashkafa, growth, and build a home together around something meaningful.

The problem isn't what he wants. It's how he's testing for it.

Right now, it sounds like he's walking into a first date thinking, "Let me see if she can have the kind of Torah conversation I want in a marriage." So he brings up a topic, starts

sharing his thoughts...and before he knows it, she's sitting through a "shmus" she never signed up for.

He may walk away thinking, "She wasn't interested in Torah." She may walk away thinking, "He wasn't interested in me."

Those are two very different things.

Here are five things I'd coach him to do differently:

1. Listen before asking to be listened to.
Before you find out whether she can engage with your world, engage with hers. What lights her up? What does she care about? What kind of Torah does she connect to? Which leads us to...
2. Cater the Torah to the person.
If she loves family, talk about something connected to building a Jewish home. If she's passionate about her career, ask about balancing ambition and values. If she's deep, maybe she'll love discussing emunah. Torah is enormous. Find the doorway that interests her.
3. Set the stage, and then stop talking.
You don't need a ten-minute introduction to make a Torah point. Give her the idea in a minute or two and ask, "What do you think?" "Does that resonate with you?" "How do you see that?"
4. Check that she's still with you.
Halfway through, pause. Is she engaged? Asking questions? Adding thoughts? Great. Keep going. Is she smiling politely

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while you're delivering part three of a five-part shiur? Change course. A date is not a shiur.

5. Look for compatibility, not identity. He doesn't necessarily need someone who talks about Torah exactly as he does. He needs someone who respects how important Torah is to him and wants it to be central to the home they build. Those are not always the same thing.

Most importantly, remind him: don't test for marriage before you've built communication. First dates are for discovering a person, and developing the connection.

He wants a wife he can talk Torah with. The "with" is just as important as the Torah.

May you help him find a woman who shares his Torah values, appreciates his passion, and turns all those future "shmusim" into beautiful conversations.

Blessings,
Aleeza ■

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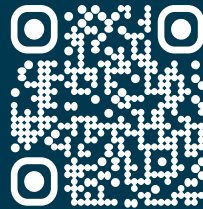
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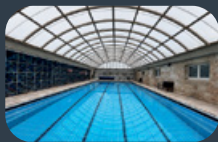
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1

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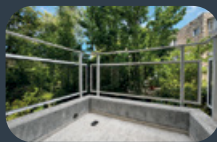
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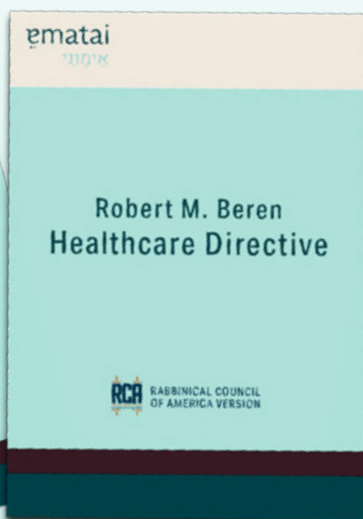
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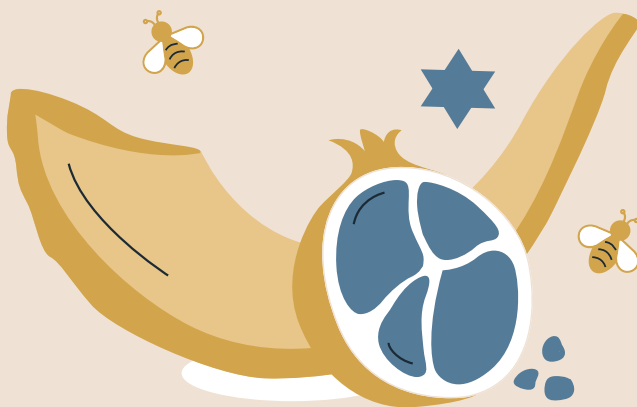
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