



YOM KIPPUR

Erev Yom Kippur

The Torah commands us to eat on Erev Yom Kippur. This not only gives us the strength to fast, but also provides a way of honoring Yom Kippur with food and drink. Many *tzaddikim* who would usually use only one hand when eating, would use both hands when eating on Erev Yom Kippur.

(שו"ע אדה"ז סי' תרד, לקו"ש חכ"ט ע' 319)

One Erev Kippur, a Roman officer dispatched his servant to buy him a fish. At the market he found only one fish on sale and agreed to pay one gold coin for it. However, a Yiddishe tailor who was standing there approached the seller and offered a higher bid. He and the servant tried to outbid each other, until the Yid won the fish for the sum of five gold coins.

When the officer was told what had happened, he was understandably upset – but also curious.

He sent for the Yid and asked him: "Why did you spend five coins on a fish and not let my servant buy it?"

The Yiddishe tailor answered, "How could I *not* have bought it, even if it had cost ten gold coins? I bought it to eat on a day on which Hashem commanded us to eat and drink, a day when we are certain that He will forgive our sins."

The officer was so impressed that he sent him off in peace.

(טור או"ח סי' תרד)

On Erev Yom Kippur, תרמ"ט (1888), a vintage chossid called Reb Zalman of Tcherbin walked right into the Rebbe Rashab's study after *shachris* and greeted him with a jovial "Gut Yom Tov!"

The Rebbe Rashab, who was seriously engrossed in a *sefer*, replied, "Yes, it is Yom-Tov, and Yom-Tov is a time to be happy. But it is also Erev Yom Kippur, and one must be in a state of *hisorerus teshuvah* (arousal to *teshuvah*) from the depths of one's heart. And *teshuvah* consists of regret over the past and undertaking positive resolutions for the future."

Reb Zalman responded, "Rebbe, we are soldiers. Hashem told us that the first half of Erev Yom Kippur is a Yom-Tov, so we need to be joyful. Only after *chatzos* must one *daven minchah*, say *Al cheit*, and do *teshuvah*."

And he concluded by saying, "Rebbe, give me *lekach*." The Rebbe Rashab, pleased with his answer, took a piece of honey cake from the plate and said, "I am giving you a piece of *lekach*, and may Hashem give you a sweet year."

(סה"ש קי"ח ע"ת ע' 10)

One Day A Year

Chazal say that if not for Yom Kippur the world would not be able to carry on.

Satan complained to Hashem, "Ribono Shel Olam! You have given me power over all the nations of the world, yet over the Yidden I have no power."

Hashem told him, "I will give you power over them on Yom Kippur, but only if you can find them doing *aveiros*."

Yom Kippur finally came, and Satan could not find any *aveiros*, he told Hashem, "You have a nation like *malochim*: they don't eat, they live in peace with each other and are clean from *aveiros*."

Whenever Hashem hears such words, He cleanses the Yidden of any previous *aveiros*.

(פרקי דרבי אליעזר פ' מ"ה)

If a person wants to be forgiven on Yom Kippur, does he first have to do *teshuvah*? This question is the subject of a *machlokes* in the Gemara. Rabbi holds that even if one does not do *teshuvah*, the essence of the day of Yom Kippur – the mere fact that the day has passed – grants atonement, but the Chachomim say that Yom Kippur atones only for those who do *teshuvah*. The Halachah follows the view of the Chachomim.

The Rebbe explains that everyone agrees that the atonement of Yom Kippur is brought about by the *kedushah* of the day; it is only that to attain that *kedushah* one is required to do *teshuvah*.

(שבועות ג' ע"ב, לקו"ש ח"ד ע' 1149)

The Alter Rebbe points out that *kaparah* (atonement) actually means 'scrubbing', scrubbing off the dirt of *aveiros*. The day of Yom Kippur not only cancels punishment, but also removes any 'stains' or 'dirt.' For on this day the inner bond between the essence of a Yid and the essence of Hashem is revealed, and hence any superficial

'stains' are automatically nullified.

(לקו"ש ח"ד ע' 1149)

One year, at the end of Yom Kippur, Reb Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev announced: "It is well known that whenever a person is in doubt as to whether a *brachah* is required, he should refrain from reciting it. It is therefore clear that since we recite the *brachah* stating that Hashem forgives our *aveiros*, this is surely so, without any doubt whatever."

(אג"ק ח"ד ע' 34)

At the end of Yom Kippur, the custom in every Lubavitcher shul is for everyone to sing a march of *simcha* and victory, to express our certainty that we have been completely forgiven.

When this *niggun* was sung at 770, the Rebbe's face would shine. From atop his chair he would dance and encourage the singing with tremendous joy.

(אוצר מנהגי חב"ד ע' רמא)

Motzoei Yom Kippur

Motzoei Yom Kippur is so much a Yom-Tov that on that evening we wish each other a "Good Yom Tov!" It is therefore a *mitzvah* to eat and rejoice at this time, when a *bas-kol* announces "go and eat with joy."

The Rebbeim made a point of washing for a full *seudah*, even though they were no doubt exhausted from their strenuous *avodah* throughout the day. At the table they would sing *niggunim* and share *divrei Torah*.

(שו"ע אדה"ז תרכ"ג סי"ב, תרכ"ד ס"ט, התועדויות תשמ"ו ח"א ע' 446)

CONSIDER THIS!

- Is Erev Yom Kippur a serious time for *teshuvah* or a Yom-Tov? And Yom Kippur itself?
- Why are we so sure that Hashem has cleansed us?



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A WAY OF LIFE

Rabbi Chaim Hillel Raskin
Moreh Hora'ah - Beis Horaa Rechovot

Spots on the Esrog

Which spots are acceptable on an *esrog*?

- The Torah says that the *esrog*, as well as the other three species, must be *hadar* – beautiful.¹ This beauty is defined by criteria set by *Shulchan Aruch*:²
- (1) **Type of Spots:** An *esrog* that is inherently spotted (*menumar*) is invalid. According to the Alter Rebbe only unnatural colors – such as black, dark brown, or white – deem the *esrog* invalid, except when they are the result of peeling.³ Exposure of the inner white flesh is considered unnatural for the outside of the *esrog*.⁴ Extreme care must be taken when attempting to remove impurities. Black dots of dried pesticide or white spots from lack of sunlight are not inherent, and an impartial expert should be consulted.⁵
- “*Bletlach*” are light brown lines and blotches that develop on the *esrog* while it grows. While some permit these marks only if they aren't raised,⁶ the Alter Rebbe permits them regardless – even *lechatchila* – since they are caused by something external and being that they are so common on naturally growing *esrogim*, they are considered part of the normal look of an *esrog*.⁷ Still, one who seeks out a perfectly clean *esrog* for the sake of beautification of the *mitzvah* is praiseworthy.⁸
- If the *esrog* is scratched and develops a brown blotch, it is kosher *bdieved*.⁹ Therefore, if an *esrog* gets banged or scratched, one should wash it off right away so that a mark won't develop.¹⁰ However, brown blotches that result from overuse are kosher *lechatchila* and make the *esrog* even more *mehudar*, since it was used for so many *mitzvos*.¹¹
- (2) **Location:** There is a difference whether the spot is on the upper part of the *esrog* which arches toward the tip, and the lower part. On the upper part, even the smallest noticeable spot is a problem, since it will be easily seen.¹² But on the lower part it is only problematic if it has two spots¹³ or one very large blotch. Some say that spots on the underside of the *esrog* that are not visible when holding it normally do not invalidate the *esrog*.¹⁴
- (3) **Size:** The Alter Rebbe emphasizes that a spot only poses a problem if it is immediately noticeable to the eye while holding it at arm's length.¹⁵ If one has to hold it close or pay attention to notice it, it is not a compromise of *hidur*. There is certainly no benefit in looking with a magnifying glass.

9. מ"ב שם סק"ו. וראה צ"צ חידושים עב ע"ב ד"ה בהרא"ש שדווקא גוון פסול.
10. ספר כשרות ד' מנינים ע"ב מ"ד.
11. חתם סופר חידושים סוכה ל"ו ע"א שאדורבה זהו הידור. וא"ל חט"ו ע"ב לח.
12. שו"ע שם ס"א.
13. למהר"ץ גיאנות במכסה רובו. ולהרא"ב תמים דעים ס"ו ר"ב אפי' במיעוט. וראה שו"ע שם ס"כ וס"ו, והאם צ"ל מ"ב צדדי האחרונות. וראה ס' ארבעת המינים ע"י ר"י.
14. ס' ד' מנינים למהר"ץ ע"י שפט בשם א"א בוטשאטש ס"ו תרמ"ח.
15. שו"ע שם ס"ב.

1. ויקרא כג. מ. סוכה דף ל"א ע"א. וראה שו"ע ר"י ס"ו תרמ"ה ס"ב.
2. או"ח ס"ו תרמ"ה.
3. שו"ע ר"י ס"ו תרמ"ח ס"ו. דלא כמהמיר"ם – ש"י ע"ש סט"ז ומשנ"ב סק"ה. בנקלף באגו למלחלוקת אדה"ז שמהמיר (משמעות שו"ע ר"י ס"ו תרמ"ח ס"ו), וראה ס' ארבעת המינים (שם) והצ"צ שמיקל (חידושים עב ע"ב ד"ה בהרא"ש).
4. שו"ת צמח צדק ס"ו סה.
5. ס' כשרות ד' מנינים עמ"ל ס"ו. וראה שם ע"ב כ"א.
6. ראה רמ"א שו"ע שם ס"ג. מהר"ל הל' אחרונות.
7. תרומות הדשן ס"ו צ"ט. שו"ע ר"י ס"ו תרמ"ח ס"ג, ודלא כמשנ"ב סק"ו שכתב להחמיר אם לא בשעת הדחק.
8. פרמ"ג ס"ו תרמ"ח.

לע"נ מרת ציפא אסתר בת ר' שלום דובער ע"ה

לזכות הילד חנוך שיי וואלף

לרגל האפשרעניש שלו ביום ז' תשרי

שיגדל להיות חסיד, יר"ש ולמדן

נדבת הוריו הרה"ת יצחק וזוגתו חנה שיחיו וואלף

OUR HEROES

Reb Isser der Chazzan



Reb Isser served as *chazzan* for the *Yomim Nora'im* in Lubavitch during the time of the Rebbe Maharash. He was a *yeri shomayim* and very studious in his learning. The Rebbe Maharash said that he had an “iron head” — he would sometimes learn for eight hours straight. His custom was to go to sleep soon after *maariv* and rise at 2:00 am, learning until the morning. The last time he visited Lubavitch was in the year 5653 (1893), and shortly thereafter he passed away.



Reb Isser had a special *nusach* for the “*Avoda*” on Yom Kippur, and for “*V'hakohanim*” - a special tune which was said to be sung in the *Beis Hamikdash*. When Reb Isser would sing “*korim*” there was not a dry eye in the whole *shul*. In Lubavitch there was a strong man who was called Bere Avrohom's who declared that he will not cry during the “*korim*” of Reb Isser. He came to *shul* and stood near the sink. However, when Reb Isser began with great fervor and excitement, Bere Avrohom's began crying and shaking to the point that he was forced to hold on to the sink so as not to fall. The Rebbe Rashab commented that it was more due to the *kavonos* of his father (the Rebbe Maharash) than Reb Isser's *chazonus*, but nonetheless Reb Isser's *chazonus* was also needed.

(ס' השיחות תש"ד ע' 31)



Once in the middle of *davening* on Yom Kippur in Lubavitch, a fire broke out near the *shul* due to a thunder and lightning storm. Reb Isser was in middle of the *Seder Avoda* in *musaf* and was in deep concentration. Everybody ran out of the *shul* to see what was going on and to help extinguish the fire. Only the Rebbe Maharash and Reb Isser remained behind engrossed in their *davening*, not knowing what was taking place around them.

(ס' השיחות תש"ד ע' 30)

A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

No Independence

As a special gesture to the annual *Kinnus Hashluchim* in Eretz Yisroel, the Rebbe would send a unique letter, elaborating on every detail of the official invitation. The date, the name of the city and even the street address would be explained in the light of Chassidus, drawing lessons from them for *avodas Hashem*.

The *kinnus* of 5751 (1991) was held in Migdal Ha'emek on Independence Street (Rechov Ha'atzmaut).

When the invitation arrived at 770, the Rebbe's secretariat immediately prepared a draft of the relevant details. Sure enough, the Rebbe's holy handwriting filled its margins, expounding on lessons derived from the date and venue and so on, to be prepared as a letter.

The street name, however, the Rebbe circled and indicated its omission. Apparently, independence has no place in *avodah*...

Often, the Rebbe would say, “Don't be a *samsaposhnik* (a self-made shoemaker).” A *Yid* must be *botel* to Hashem, and to those who assist in connecting to Him.

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