

The Weekly Farbrengens


MERKAZ ANASH
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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 Yom 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 אור"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 קיץ הש"ת ע' 10)

CONSIDER

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?

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)

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)

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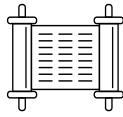
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GOOD NEWS.



CONFESSION - VIDUY

I need to do *teshuva* for an *aveira* not listed in the *al chet*, how do I go about it?

Viduy, verbally confessing the sin, is an integral component of *teshuva*. In fact, the Rambam only lists *viduy* as a *mitzva* and not *teshuva*. The Minchas Chinuch argues that *teshuva* isn't a *mitzva* but a choice that one makes, and *viduy* is the Torah's instruction for how to make one's *teshuva* accepted.¹

Reciting *viduy* without doing *teshuva* is compared to immersing in the *mikva* while holding onto an impurity, which is ineffective. Before reciting *viduy*, one should intend to fulfill the *mitzva* of confessing one's sins.² *Viduy* is to be recited with proper intention and not in haste.³

The Tzemach Tzedek explains that every *aveira* has a body and a soul. Doing *teshuva* destroys the *aveira*'s soul, but an action is needed to destroy its body. Verbalizing the words of confession is considered an action and this destroys the sin's body.⁴

The *mitzva* of *viduy* applies all year whenever one transgresses. It is also commendable to do a serious *cheshbon hanefesh* from time to time by *Kerias Shema Al Hamita* along with *viduy* and *al chet*.⁵ Yom Kippur is the designated day of atonement for the Jewish people and is therefore a time when everyone confesses their sins.⁶ The ideal time is at the onset of Yom Kippur, yet we continuously say *viduy* Yom Kippur since we may have sinned on Yom Kippur itself and we wish to remain pure throughout.

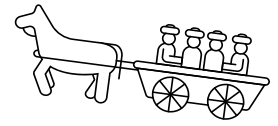
What constitutes *viduy*?

Inherently, it is sufficient to say "*chataisi*," "I have sinned." Yet, it is proper to list the specific sins one transgressed, to arouse feelings of embarrassment and regret from the depth of the heart. Specific sins that aren't public knowledge should be recited silently, since announcing sins implies that one isn't ashamed. The standard text of *al chet* isn't considered listing sins since everyone says it, and it may be read aloud.⁷

If one has a specific sin that he needs to mention, he can add it to *al chet* or *ashamnu* silently.⁸ One may recite *al chet*, or add mention of specific sins, in any language one understands. Even sins that one previously confessed may be repeated by *viduy* in subsequent years. On the contrary, it is commendable to continually repeat them, as the *posuk* says, "My sin is always before me."⁹

1. ראה מנחת חינוך מצוה שס"ד, לקו"ש חל"ח ע"י 18.
2. רמב"ם הל' תשובה פ"ב ה"ב.
3. מטה אפרים סי' תרי"ט סע' מ"ד.
4. ראה דרך מצוותיך מצוות וידוי ותשובה.
5. ראה פלא יועץ ערך וידוי, וראה סה"ש תש"ה ע"י 125 וסה"ש תש"ז ע"י 75.
6. שו"ע י"ד או"ח סי' תר"ז סס"א.
7. שו"ע י"ד שם ס"ד וס"ה.
8. על פי חיי אדם סוף כלל קמ"ג.
9. שו"ע י"ד או"ח סי' תר"ז ס"ט.

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



R. REUVEN HASOFER

R. Reuven Hasofer of Yanovitch was the Alter Rebbe's personal sofer. The Alter Rebbe taught R. Reuven how to write the letters and also how to manufacture the ink, and he would only use *parshiyos* written by R. Reuven. The *parshiyos* written by R. Reuven are the primary source for the Alter Rebbe's *ksav*.

Someone once tried to slander R. Reuven to the Alter Rebbe by saying that he mixes some ingredient into his ink to make it shine. The Alter Rebbe replied, "Indeed, I know about that. He mixes *yiras Shomayim* in his ink, nothing else!"

R. Aizil Homiler related:

The Alter Rebbe once told his son the Mittler Rebbe, "I am going to lie down. Stand by the door and wake me up for Mincha." Standing by the door, the Mittler Rebbe was surprised to see the bed moving about.

The Alter Rebbe suddenly walked out of the room and said, "Quick! Call Reuven the sofer to come with a *retzuah*." When R. Reuven came, the Alter Rebbe showed him his new method for tying the knot on the head *tefillin*.

When R. Yehoshua Falk Gurary (older brother of the Rashag) was in Lubavitch, someone offered to sell him *parshiyos* written by R. Reuven for a high price.

R. Yehoshua replied that he would like to show them to the Rebbe Rashab, and if the Rebbe confirms that they are R. Reuven's writing, he will consider it.

R. Yehoshua brought them to the Rebbe Rashab who confirmed that they were unquestionably R. Reuven's writing and added, "Take them, you need them! If you don't buy them, I will." Hearing this from the Rebbe, he gladly paid the price.

The Alter Rebbe once sent a messenger to bring a *mezuzah* from R. Reuven. The messenger came to R. Reuven and asked for two *mezuzos*: one for the Rebbe and one for himself.

When the sofer gave him the *mezuzos*, he told him which one to give to Alter Rebbe. The messenger figured that the Rebbe's *mezuzah* was better, so he switched them and took the Rebbe's *mezuzah* for himself.

When the Alter Rebbe received the other *mezuzah*, he looked at it and expressed surprise that this is what the sofer had sent him. The *shliach* was ashamed and told the Rebbe that indeed the sofer had sent another *mezuzah*. The Rebbe took one look at that one and said, "This is a *mezuzah*!"

Seeing the messenger's disappointment with his inferior *mezuzah*, the Alter Rebbe reassured him that they were identical aside from one difference: at the Alter Rebbe's request, his *mezuzah* was not written on a cloudy day.

A Moment with The Rebbe



THE LAST YOM TOV AT HOME

Before leaving the Soviet Union together with the Frierdiker Rebbe in 5688 (1927), the Rebbe spent *Simchas Torah* with his parents in Dnepropetrovsk.

Rebbetzin Chana described that *yom tov* in her memoirs:

"My son was particularly joyous, as if his intent was to erase from our hearts the fact that this may be his last *Simchas Torah* dance at home, under the same roof as his family.

"No one besides my husband and I knew that he was about to set out on this long journey.

"Every time he danced past the place where I was standing, he looked at me with eyes that told me how painful it is for him to have to leave us...

"But his eyes also said to me, 'Mother, don't worry.'"

(Di Yiddishe Heim, Kislev 5725)