

The Weekly *Farbrenge*



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EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

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 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 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"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 סי"ט, התועודיות תשמ"ו ח"א ע' 446)

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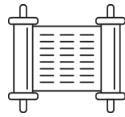
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YOM KIPPUR BOWING

When bowing to the ground in shul, when is it necessary to put something down as a separation?

The Torah states, "You must not lay an even maskis — a pavement of stones — on which to prostrate yourselves." This ritual may only be performed for Hashem in the Beis Hamikdash, not anywhere else.

The prohibition min hatorah applies specifically when it is done: (1) on a floor of stone, (2) one is fully prostrated with spread out arms and legs (hishtachava'a), (3) one's head is facing straight towards the floor and not tilted to the side.

As a safeguard, Chazal prohibited even cases that meet two of three conditions. Thus, bowing down without lying flat on the ground (kidah) is prohibited on a stone floor miderabonon. On a non-stone floor, one may bow, or one may even prostrate completely if they tilt their face so that it doesn't touch the floor. Kneeling without bowing is permitted even on a stone floor.

When bowing on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, our custom is to touch our foreheads to the floor, but we don't prostrate ourselves totally, meeting two out of the three criterion. To avoid the prohibition, we put down a cloth when bowing on stone. The separation must be between one's face and the ground, not at the knees. One who doesn't have any cloth (or tallis) to separate should tilt his head away from the ground.

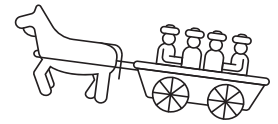
In discussing the bowing, the Rama requires a separation, presumably referring to a shul with a stone floor. While some poskim require, as an extra precaution, to place a cloth even when bowing on floors of other materials (wood or even carpet), Minhag Chabad does not require any separation for a non-stone floor. Marble, granite, and cement are like stone, but brick isn't. Tiles of porcelain and ceramic are the subject of dispute.

What about bending down to get something or while doing exercises? Contemporary poskim write that one may bend down on a kitchen or bathroom floor to retrieve something or to bathe a child since one does not intend to bow at all. Similarly, exercise (e.g., push-ups) may be done even on a stone floor since one does not intend to bow.

1. ויקרא כו, א. מגילה כ"ב ע"ב. רמ"א שם ס"ח.
2. ראה שו"ע"ר שם ס"א.
3. משנ"ב שם סק"מ.
4. רמ"א ס"ל תרכ"א ס"ד. שו"ע"ר שם ס"י"ב. וראה אוצר מנהגי חב"ד ע"ל 132.
5. ע"פ רמב"ם הל' ע"ז פ"ו ה"ז. אליה רבה ס"ל קל"א ס"ק ט"ו.
6. ראה מטה אפרים ס"ל תרכ"א ס"ד. וראה משנ"ב ס"ל קל"א סקמ"ד שמשנה הגירסא מאם יציעו לאו יציעו.

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

Our Heroes



R. YEKUSIEL LYEPLER

Reb Yekusiel Lyepler, a salt merchant from Lyeple, was one of the great chassidim of the Alter Rebbe, Mittlerer Rebbe, Tzemach Tzedek, and for a short while, the Rebbe Maharash. He was a baal midos and baal hispaalus (full of life). Though a simple man by nature (he even found it difficult to learn Chumash with Rashi), he toiled tremendously until his understanding developed, and the Mittlerer Rebbe wrote the sefer Imrei Bina especially for him, a profound essay in Chassidus.

R. Yekusiel once jumped onto the Alter Rebbe's second story porch and exclaimed, "Rebbe! Please chop off my left half!" (Referring to the yetzer hora, which resides in the left side of the heart). The Alter Rebbe motioned for him to descend from the porch.

R. Yekusiel fasted and entered the Alter Rebbe's room a little while later as the Alter Rebbe was wearing his Rabeinu Tam tefillin. The Alter Rebbe leaned his head on his hands, then picking up his head he said in his characteristic sing-song, "Master of the Universe, it is said that you give life to everyone!"

When R. Yekusiel left the room, he was a new man.

(רשימות היומן ע"י ש"ו)

From that moment onward, Reb Yekusiel became a different person and his heart opened, for the Alter Rebbe "shined" into his neshama the ability to see Elokus as one sees something physical.

This shine of his neshama (which he would refer to as "the chossid") would come and go and his avoda would vary greatly depending on the current expression of his neshama. If while walking down the street, it would start to reveal itself, he would start to dance, exclaiming, "Chossid prishol, the chossid has come!" He would grab whoever stood nearby to dance with him.

Once while standing and waiting in the Borisov post office, his neshama began to shine, and he broke out in dance with the gentile post office clerk.

(רשימת היומן ע"י ש"ו)

After the Tzemach Tzedek's histalkus, R. Yekusiel came to Lubavitch to choose which of the sons of the Tzemach Tzedek would be his Rebbe. Eventually he connected to the Rebbe Maharash, saying, "Until now you were a 'you' to me, now you are my Rebbe. Please put on your hat and tell me Chassidus."

(ס' התולדות אדמו"ר מהר"ש ע"ל 68)

A Moment with The Rebbe



HOW PARNASSA IS DICTATED

Traveling to the Rebbe, spending time in 770, has always a cornerstone in the ruchniusdike life of a chossid. In one exchange, the Rebbe explained how this can also affect one's livelihood.

One chossid, who would spend time regularly to in 770, didn't come for the month of Tishrei 5715.

A few weeks later, the Rebbe sent him the following letter:

"I was surprised that you weren't seen

here at all over Tishrei. As much as you are involved in parnassa, you must know, and not forget, that parnassa is dictated on high during Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur. And a Yid's parnassa on high is dictated in accordance with his spiritual standing."

The Rebbe concludes the calculation with how one can improve his spiritual standing: "When one spends time among Chassidim, frisht men zich up, one becomes refreshed!"

(Teshura Simpson Elul 5771)

Dedicate an issue of The Weekly Farbrengen in honor of a simcha or yahrtzeit

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