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date: Fri, Oct 7, 2016 at 9:49 AM

subject: **Rabbi Yisroel Reisman's Chumash Shiur -  
Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Vayeilech - (Yom Kippur) 5777**

As we prepare for Parshas Vayeilech - Shabbos Shuvah. As we prepare during the Aseres Yemai Teshuvah for the upcoming Yom HaKippurim, for a day of Selicha, Mechila, V'kapparah.

1. Today, I would like to talk about 2 words. The first word is Kippur. Yom Kippur, Kapparah, we usually translate as a day of atonement, a day of forgiveness. In Lashon Kodesh there are three words which refer to three levels of Kapparah; Selicha, Mechila, and Kapparah. What is interesting is that the word Kapparah is almost never used. For example, in Shemoneh Esrei every day we say a Beracha ( מְחַל לְנוּ מִלְּפָנֶיךָ ) (פִּשְׁעֵינוּ). There, we don't use the word Kapparah in the entire paragraph. Before we say the Shelosh Esrei Middos we say (קַל אֲרָךְ אַפַּיִם), we talk about Selicha and Mechila. Before we say the Shelosh Esrei Middos we say Keil Melech Yosheiv Al Kisei Rachamim. We talk about Selicha and Mechila. The word Kapparah does not appear at all.

As a matter of fact, predominantly the word for forgiveness is either Selicha or Mechila. Kapparah is barely ever used. Why then is Yom HaKippurim called Yom Kippur? The word Kippur obviously means something more than just the Day of Atonement.

The truth is that it is a B'feirus in Rashi. In Parshas Vayishlach 32:21 Yaakov sent Sheluchim with an elaborate gift to Eisav. The Sheluchim say (כִּפְרָה פָּנָיו, בְּמִנְחָה הַהֵלֶכֶת לְפָנָיו, וְאֶחָד־בָּן אָרְאַה פָּנָיו, אוֹלֵי ) (כִּי-אֶמַר) וְיִשָּׂא. He said, (אוֹלֵי יִשָּׂא פָּנָי) he will forgive me and the word is (-פי). (אֶמַר אֲכַפְרָה פָּנָיו, בְּמִנְחָה) (כִּפְרָה) here can't mean forgiveness. (פָּנָיו) I will forgive the face of Eisav makes no sense. This Kasha bothers Rashi.

Rashi says that Kapparah is (לְשׁוֹן קְנוּחָה לְשׁוֹן). Kapparah does not mean atonement. It is a Lashon of cleansing of cleaning. Rashi says (וְלְשׁוֹן אַרְמֵי) (הוֹדוּ אַרְמֵי לְשׁוֹן). It is an expression borrowed from Aramaic. Kapparah Lashon Kinuach. The example that Rashi refers to is the Gemara that is found in Maseches Gittin 56a (20 lines from the top) (וְבַעֵי לְכַפּוּרֵי יָדָיָהּ בַּהֲדוּא) (גְּבֵרָא) he wants to wipe his hands (בַּהֲדוּא גְּבֵרָא) in the Sugya of Kamtza and Bar Kamtza. Kapparah does not literally mean forgiveness.

Rashi brings from Ezra Perek Aleph Posuk Yud. The Mizrakim which were basins that were used for blood in the Bais Hamikdash are called (כְּפֹרֵי זָהָב). (מִמְקַנָּה יָדָיו בְּהוֹבֵהֶן יָדָיו מִקְנָה) Again the Lashon of wiping. The Kohanim would wipe the blood off of his hands on the edge of these basins. So Kapparah really does not literally mean forgiveness or atonement, that is Selicha and Mechila. Kapparah means something else. It means to wipe something away. (אֶמַר אֲכַפְרָה פָּנָיו) I will wipe away the anger off of the face of Eisav (אֶמַר אֲכַפְרָה פָּנָיו) with this gift.

We find the word Kapparah in Kappores the covering of the Teiva. We find in Beraishis 6:14 (וְנִכְפַּרְתָּ אֹתָהּ מִכָּפֹת וּמִחֹזָיִם בַּכֶּפֶר) It doesn't mean forgiveness at all. It means to cover, it means to cleanse, it means to get rid of something.

When two people ask forgiveness one person from the other, you never ask your friend for Kapparah. You ask him for Mechila you ask him for Selicha. The word Kapparah is never used for something people do. Only HKB"H can give Kapparah.

The message here is that the goal of Yom Hakkippurim is not a day of atonement, is not just to get forgiveness from Shamayim but it is a day of purification of wiping away the Aveiros a person did.

The Nesivos explains that Yom Kippur is a day to get rid of the Hashpaa of the Cheit of the previous year. You became accustomed to doing things that are not ideal. Naasa Lo K'heter, when you get accustomed to it it continues.

Yom Hakkipurim is a day to wipe away that bad habit that you have, the Hergil that you have. The habit that you have to do something improperly or to fail to do something properly. That effect of Chataim, Yom HaKippurim is a day we cleanse ourselves, not a day of atonement, but a day of cleansing. Only HKB"H can cleanse us and that is what Yom Kippur is all about.

B'derech Zeh we can understand a new meaning to the Posuk that is found in Tehillim 78:38 (וְהוּא יְרַחֵם וְיִסְּרֵנוּ וְיִשְׁחַרְטֵנוּ). Literally, Hashem who has mercy will forgive our sins and not destroy us. We can understand now. HKB"H should give Kapparah, should clean away our sins. (וְלֹא-יִשְׁחַרְטֵנוּ). The sins should not cause us Hashchasa.

The Aveiros we did in the previous year they are Maschis us. We got used to walking in late and missing berachos by Shacharis, it became normal by us. No more. A new normal and new expectations. We got used to going to sleep at night without having some time spent in Kevias Itim L'torah. We got so used to it that it doesn't even bother us. The Hashchasa that the Aveira did to us in that we got used to it, that has to be wiped away. It is a new goal Yom Hakkipurim, for the days that we prepare for Yom Hakkipurim. To get rid of the Hashpo'os of the Chataim of the previous year. A beautiful understanding of a Teitch word, the word Kapparah.

2. Let's move on to a second word that is fundamental for Yom Hakkipurim. That word is Viduy. Viduy we usually translate as confession. A person who says Viduy is Misvadeh, he is Modeh on the Aveiros that he did. There is a problem. We just Lained in Parshas Ki Savo where there is a Parsha of Viduy Maasros. The word Viduy for Viduy Maasros is found in the Mishna in the beginning of the 7th Perek of Sotah, Maseches Maaser Sheini 5:10. Viduy Maasros. What is Viduy Maasros? On which Aveira is a person confessing? He is not confessing on any Aveira at all. By Viduy Maasros he says as it says in Devarim 26:13. He said I didn't do any Aveiros. I did exactly what I am supposed to. That is called Viduy. What is going on? We say Viduy on Yom Hakkipurim so many times. What is Viduy? Is it confessing? It seems not.

To understand the Teitch of Viduy we have to understand that Teshuva requires two Hergeishim, two feelings, two recognitions, two acknowledgements that a person has to have. One without the other is not Teshuva. One is Hakkaras Hacheit. A person has to recognize what he did wrong. He has to recognize that to the degree that he expresses it. That is number one. That is Shiflus Ha'adam. A person realizes how low he has sunk and the mistakes that he made.

There is a second Nekuda. In order to do Teshuva you need a Kabbalah Al Ha'asid L'shapir Maasav, you need a Kabbalah on the future. That is not Shiflus Ha'adam that is Gadlus Ha'adam. That is that a person recognizes his great potential, the things that he could do, the things that he could accomplish. Someone who feels Shiflus without Gadlus cannot do Teshuva. He feels like a failure. There is no Kabbalah Al Ha'asid. It is a waste. On Yom Kippur we have to feel like Malachim because if we don't feel Gadlus Ha'adam then Teshuva is impossible. One without the other doesn't work. The Yesod that without a Hakara of Gadlus Ha'adam a person can't do Teshuva is the fundamental of Viduy.

Who says Viduy for Klal Yisrael? The Kohen Gadol. The Kohen Gadol is a Tzaddik. Why is he saying Viduy? The Viduy for Klal Yisrael should be B'hiddur Mitzvah. It would seem that the Hiddur Mitzvah for Viduy would be to get someone who did piles of Aveiros and let him do a Viduy. His Viduy is a real Viduy. He is being Modeh on Aveiros that he did in the past. The answer is that the key of Viduy is not the recognition of the past that is needed. The key is Gadlus Ha'adam the recognition of what a person is capable of in the future. What a person is able to do in the future. That is Viduy.

Viduy is Gadlus Ha'adam. A person brings Viduy Maasros. It is an expression of the Gadlus Ha'adam. I was tested with a tremendous Nisayon. A farmer has to give away so much of his crop. I was tested and I succeeded. The Hergish of Gadlus Ha'adam after a Nisayon, that is the key to Viduy.

Rav Pam used to say in the Shmuzzin on Parshas Ki Savo which was generally the beginning of Elul Zman that the Avodah of Maaser Sheini, Viduy Maasros and of bringing Maaser Sheini to Yerushalayim is to recognize Gadlus Ha'adam. A person lives in his little town and he thinks that he is a Talmid Chochom that he compares himself to the people around him. He goes up to Yerushalayim and he sees what Gadlus Ha'adam is. He recognizes that he could have a desire, a goal of much bigger and better things. Gadlus Ha'adam is the key to Maasros. This recognition causes pain and brings hope. The fact that we have such a long way to go is painful but it gives us the hope that we can do it. When we see people who can accomplish, we could do it with them.

Who can apologize to another person? When does one person apologize to another? Only when the person who is apologizing is confident and has confidence. If he feels just Shiflus and not Gadlus he would never apologize. If he realizes that he is a person that can do better than he is quicker to apologize.

Shiflus Ha'adam without Gadlus Ha'adam goes no place. That is the key to Viduy. The key to the Al Cheits is the Kabbalah, the understanding that a person can go somewhere with this Hakkarah.

So understanding the Kapparah of Yom Hakkipurim and Viduy of the Viduyim of Yom Kippur are the key to making the coming year a better year and a more meaningful year. With that in mind, I ask everyone for Mechila if I cheated you out of a minute or two during some week or the other. May HKB"H grant that the coming year be a year of inspiration where we grow. We start with the Aseres Yemai Teshuva which is the week that of course everybody will show up at Mishmar. Everybody will put in the hours they need in their Davening, their learning, and in their Gadlus Ha'adam. If you make it to Mishmar tonight there will be a 12:40 Selichos as well IY"H, an extra bonus for coming.

May HKB"H grant everybody a year of Hatzlacha, of Nachas. The Ikkur we should Daven, we Daven that we should have Nachas from our family, we should Daven that the Ribbono Shel Olam should have Nachas from us. Shafru Maaseichem. The Maasim in the coming year should be better, should be Gadlus. May we be Zoche to that. A Gut Gebenshed Yar to one and all!

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From: neshulman@gmail.com

JONAH: IVRI ANOCHI

Rabbi Nisson Shulman

[Based in part on thoughts by Rabbi David Hollander]

Dear Friends,

Remember the story of Jonah, which we read at Mincha? Not the spectacular part we all remember so well about the whale swallowing Jonah, but the early part about the storm. And not literally as the words seem to give it, but reading behind the words, interpreting the story of Jonah for our time, because our Rabbis saw in Jonah a Jew for every period of Jewish history, a Jew for all time.

The story tells that Jonah took passage on a ship. He isn't on the upper deck. He isn't even in second class. He is BEYARKETAI HASFINAH; in the steerage; the cheapest part of the boat, the very bowels of the ship.

Suddenly comes a furious storm. The ship reaches a crisis; OMEDET LEHISHABER. It is about to be dashed to pieces.

The Captain and the officers of the ship frantically search for someone on whom to blame the storm. All the passengers on the upper decks escape their attention. The Captain's eye falls on Jonah the Jew. He is hauled up on deck from the bowels of the ship, and they ask him a series of questions.

"Tell us now, you who has caused this distress, what is your occupation? Where do you come from? What is your country? To what people do you belong?"

What does Jonah answer to all these questions? IVRI ANOCHI. "I am a Hebrew." ET HASHEM ELOKEY HASHAMAYIM ANI YARE. "And I fear the One God."

Jonah! Why don't you answer the questions? They asked you about your occupation, your country, your people, and you answer that you are an Ivri who fears God? The answer is that he is answering the questions, and correctly. He is saying: "Gentlemen: Let us stop beating around the bush. You aren't interested in my occupation, where I come from.... All you want to know is who I am. So I'll make it easy for you. I AM A JEW. I AM A HEBREW. IVRI. Ivri means different, like Abraham HAIVRI, Abraham the different one. Like Abraham, I am different. Even if the whole world were on one side, I am on the other. I would be steadfast in my difference. My values, my philosophy, my outlook on life, are diametrically opposed to yours. And that's why you don't like me. You even fear me. And when there is a crisis, you are trying to put the blame on me.

But I warn you. You may not like my philosophy. And you may overwhelm me by your numbers. But I want you to know that I have a powerful ally. I have a God. True, there are times when, for His reasons, He turns away from us. But even when that happens, it is only temporary. Ultimately, we are under HIS protection, not yours.

That is the early part of the story of Jonah. But isn't it also the story we read in the headlines today?

The ships of State of the world, OMEDET LEHISHABER. States are shuddering and many are breaking up, struck by crisis after crisis, storm after storm; political storms, economic storms, revolutions, civil wars, religious wars and even attempts at genocide, especially terrorism striking deadly fear into even otherwise fearless hearts.

Captains and officers of the ship look around to see who is responsible. On the ship there are very important passengers. Mr. Hamas, Mr. Fatah, Mr. Iran, Mr. Arafat, Mr. Saudi Arabia, Mr. Al Queda, Mr. Asad, Mr. Anti-Semite. Of course, none of them could possibly be connected with the crisis of peace in the Middle East, with the economic storms that threaten nations and their security, with civil wars. Only Jonah, occupying a little strip of geography in the Middle East with perhaps four million people, he must be the obstacle to peace!

All of them are in First Class cabins, with plenty of money; passages bought with oil wealth, with threats and terrorist posturing, passages bought with money tainted with Nazi connections, passages bought by inspiring fear of terror attacks.

If there is a betrayal of his own people by Arafat, if rockets fall on peaceful towns, if busses blow up, even if the World Trade Center is destroyed, if there is any terrorist bombing, blame Jonah! If there is an outbreak of attacks against Jews in France, Amsterdam or Antwerp, our first reaction is, "will they blame Jonah?" If there is a religious leader of half the world who refuses to recognize Jonah, it isn't because he stays away from controversy or because he hasn't made up his mind, for he had before embraced Arafat when Arafat was still a persona grata. It is because Jonah is Jonah, the IVRI, the different one, and that religious leader cannot stand the difference!

Poor Vanunu, now out of jail, elicits the sympathy of the world, but Pollard in years of solitary confinement receives nothing. Pollard defended Jonah the IVRI by giving up to Israel the State Secret that Sadaam Hussein had rockets capable of carrying poison gas; that was espionage and deserved a life sentence, but when Vanunu tells about Jonah's attempts to defend himself, that is an expression of conscience, and to be commended, rewarded with sympathy and praise, because he was only betraying Jonah. If there are no goods on shelves because of a country's lethargy or corruption, if states insist on labeling supermarket products "Produced in Israel"; in order to harm her economy, if Arabs bring destruction on their own economy by forcing Israel to keep them out of the country and the jobs they need because they insist on homicide bombing, it's Jonah's fault, and not because Jonah is dangerous, but because Jonah is different! So that the

accusations may sound ludicrous, but all of them really mean one thing: "You Jew, you are different. You don't belong."

And we answer, IVRI ANOCHI. "Yes, we are different, and we are proud of this difference, even if it means that you expect so much of the Jew that he may not do what anyone else can do.

When the best of people judge us with a different and tilted standard, reserved only for Jews, we are aware that it is because IVRI ANOCHI! And the worst of people invoke a picture of a vague and shadowy presence they conceive as special to the Jewish people, a specter which had been created by the infamous "Protocols of the Elders of Zion" which pictures Jews with a diabolical international power. So that the enemy preys upon this suspicion when it exploits the Jewish lobby in Washington, accuses them of betrayal of our United States, or describes the Jewish businessmen in New York or London as ruining these countries with their economic power. Because we are different!

And we are different! IVRIM ANACHNU!

We read about a policy of "ethnic cleansing" in certain countries in Africa and Europe, a euphemism for mass murder, and I remember, as I am sure you do, how Khoumeni killed 17,000 Iranians, his own people, in a few weeks. I remember the Hama massacre of Iraq's murder of more than 10,000 of its citizens. I remember atrocities in Kuwait, and scud missiles aimed at population centers. And I bear in mind that after 56 years of the State of Israel and the constant threats under which they continue to live, Israel has still not given the death penalty to even one terrorist they have captured; Yes, to prevent terrorism they target murderers seeking to do murder, but when captured alive, no matter how brutal their crimes, no matter that they are from an enemy people sworn to our destruction, no matter that their continued life behind bars in Israel poses an additional terrorist threat each day, from their fellow terrorists bent on terrorizing Israel into letting them go. We are ready, to let scores go if they would embrace peace, but the world will not recognize this, because we are different, IVRIM ANACHNU!

Almost every leader in the world, travels through Europe as well as America in a special bullet proof car to guard against assassination. So does the Pope representing the religion of peace and turn the other cheek. In Italy judge after judge is brutally murdered by families of thugs seeking to rule that country and even parts of the world. Death stalks the streets of most capitols of the world, because political assassination is an every-day occurrence. Genocide is taking place in North Africa. But of course they will condemn Israel's pre-emptive attacks on masterminds of terror, because IVRIM ANACHNU, WE ARE DIFFERENT.

Yes, it is true that Jews have on occasion violated national territorial boundaries. But for what purpose, with what motives, and in what way?

In 1961 we violated Argentine territory to capture Eichmann and bring to justice one of the most infamous mass murderers in the history of mankind.

In 1976 we violated the territory of Uganda to rescue 100 Jews at Entebbe, saving them from almost sure death, for they had already been separated from all the other hostages who had been released, in an Auschwitz like selection.

In 1981 we destroyed the nuclear facility in Iraq, on a Sunday, when no one was to be there, to rescue future generations of Jews from atomic destruction.

In 1987 we captured Vanunu, who was while at large in the rest of the world, the greatest single threat to Israel's security.

How then shall we - who proudly with Jonah declare Ivri Anochi - how shall we retain this uniqueness this special character that gives us so much pride?

After all, what made us different in the past? What gave us this pride and this strength of character? Certainly not genetics! Why is it that after a few generations you frequently find that children can be empty of all Jewishness, and hardly different from those around them?

When today we suffer anti-Semitism, or are treated with prejudice, a Jew has two choices. He could say he doesn't want to pay the price. He can escape easily through assimilation. Many did this in Germany before the

war, only to find that when Hitler came, even if they were 1/8th Jewish there was no escape after all. The other choice is to seek the road to Jewish pride. What is that road?

Chauvinistic nationalistic pride is not enough! Because otherwise, we would be no different than the Chechins, Bosnians, Croates, Iraqis, Iranians, or the Arabs! We are different because, ET HAELOKIM ANI YARE, WE FEAR GOD, We have His Torah! He gave us commandments to make us better people, not only more faithful Jews, mitzvos to temper us and improve us, and that will only work if we take them to heart, if we apply them, if we learn the lesson of Neilah; and in this way we can become more moral, more ethical, more pious, more disciplined.

We all know that even just being in this synagogue building is not enough, for we come to learn from this place, the message of Torah and Yiddishkeit, for Jewish children who are not taught and exposed to Jewish life and the Jewish spirit as found in the Torah will not gain this Jewish pride!

If we are concerned about the values our children learn and copy, if we worry whether our children will have Jewish pride in twenty-five years from now, we must do something about it because they surely will not absorb it from our blood!

There are many ways, but I suggest that learning our faith and our heritage is the most important way, and that is the most important Neilah resolve we can make; to learn even more Torah this year! Your fathers and grandfathers had visions of greatness before them, because they saw in the home and street how Jews were different and how they lived their proud heritage. Will your children have such examples and such pictures before them, pictures of Jewish behavior, Torah study, Jewish commitment, charity and kindness, and especially the example that their own parents are studying Torah, and not forsaking it? Only if you show them that example. And only if you do will they begin to appreciate what the declaration IVRI ANOCHI really means!

Let us this day face tomorrow bravely. Let us do what we can to win friends and influence people, always with pride and in the spirit of the declaration IVRIM ANAHNU, relying with confidence on E---Y HASHAMAYIM, who alone we must revere and worship, faithfully follow, and upon whom alone we can well and safely rely. And let us learn our heritage, and give the example to our neighbors and children, of Jews who are proud of their tradition, Jews who are indeed the people of the book, and who seek to learn it, because IVRIM ANACHNU, We are different, and we are proud of it. And in this merit, God will bless you and yours in the coming year and in future years, AMEN VEAMEN.

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Yom Kippur Tishrei 5776 Vol. 20 Issue #2

Some Minhagei Yom Kippur of **Rav Soloveitchik zt"l**

**Rav Herschel Schachter**

(MTA '58 RIETS '67)

Rosh Yeshiva and Rosh Kollel-RIETS

One who plans not to accept the Kedushas HaYom of Yom Kippur with Hadlokas HaNeros (e.g., if one will be driving to Shul afterwards) may not recite the beracha of Shehecheyanu at that time (Eiruvim 40b).

The Magen Avraham (607:7) quotes the Shaloh who recommends that one follow the opinion of the Ramban that the Vidui (already recited earlier during Mincha) should be repeated again on Erev Yom Kippur after the Seudah HaMafsekes, just before the start of the Yom Tov. It is for this reason that many recite the Tefillah Zakkah composed by the Chayei Adam shortly before Kol Nidrei.

The text of Kol Nidrei should be amended (see Chayei Adam 144) so that it serves both as a Hatoras Nedarim for those vows taken during the past year and as a Mesiras Moda'ah to cancel in advance any vows to be taken during the coming year.

The Rav's practice all year long was that after completing the Shemoneh Esrei of Maariv, he would step back three steps and not return to his original place of Tefillah until the Chazzan had completed the Kaddish Tiskabel. Even on Yom Kippur night, the Rav had the same practice, even though it meant that he would wait, standing with his feet together, at the place where he had stepped back, for perhaps over an hour.

In most communities, Selichos are recited on Yom Kippur only after Maariv and during the Chazoras HaShatz of Neilah. This practice is not proper. For various reasons, the printers simply omitted the Selichos for the other Tefillos of the day from the Machzorim without consultation with the Rabbonim (see Aruch HaShulchan 620). But the correct practice is that Selichos should in fact be recited during the Chazoras HaShatz of Shacharis, Musaf, and Mincha as well. The Rav held that the Yud-Gimmel Middos should be recited seven times during each Tefillah of Yom Kippur. The Vidui is an integral part of the Chazoras Hashatz, and should therefore be recited by the Chazzan out loud. The earlier text of the Vidui consisted of the words "Aval Anachnu Va'avoseinu Chotonu" followed by "Ashamnu, Bogadnu, etc." which should thus be said aloud by the Chazzan. The longer version of the Vidui ("Al Cheit...") was added at a later time (in the days of the Geonim) and the Chazzan therefore need not recite this section aloud in its entirety. In the days of the Geonim, only seven lines of Al Chait were said; in many communities the Chazzonim therefore have the practice of reciting several of the lines out loud, adding up to a total of at least seven.

In the text of Aleinu, both on the Yomim Noraim (in the Shemoneh Esrei) and all year long (at the end of davening), the line "Sheheim Mishtachavim..." should be added. In addition, the words "U'Moshav YeKoro" should be replaced with the words "V'Kisei Khevodo" (see Tur and Nusach Ha-Gra), so the text will not sound so anthropomorphic. During the Avodah (in the Chazoras HaShatz of Musaf), the paragraph "VeHaKohanim V'Ha'am..." printed three times in most Machzorim, should be recited a fourth time, namely, after recounting the Kohen Gadol's declaration of "LaShem Chatas" when identifying the goat to be offered on the mizbeich. The entire tzibbur should kneel on that occasion as well and recite "Baruch Shem, etc."

When the Chazzan recites "Ana BaShem" in the paragraphs of the Avodah which present the Vidui of the Kohen Gadol, he should pause for a moment after the word

"Ana" and then say "BaShem Kapper Na, etc.," unlike at the beginning of each of those paragraphs, when the words "Ana Hashem" indeed go together. (In the volume "Divrei Hashkafah," the Rav quotes this in the name of the Ba'al HaTanya.)

The Rav's tradition was to follow the view of the Mechaber (622:2) to recite the beracha of "Al HaTorah V'Al Ha'Avodah..." at the conclusion of the Birchos HaHaftorah even at Mincha on Yom Kippur. (See Mesorah, Vol. 7, pg. 20, regarding the issue involved, and also how the issue relates to what tune should be used for the berachos on the Aliyos at Mincha, as well as what tune the Ba'al Korei should use then for the Kerias HaTorah itself.) After the conclusion of Neilah (in the middle of Kaddish Tiskabel), the Rav had the practice to blow Tashrat, Tashat, and Tarat (i.e., a full set of teki'os), reminiscent of the blowing of the Shofar on the Yom Kippur of Yovel, and not just one teki'ah.

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from: Shabbat Shalom <shabbatshalom@ounetwork.org>

date: Thu, Sep 28, 2017 at 11:39 PM

subject: Yom Kippur Porgies; Spiritual Safe Space; The Contemporary Rebbetzi

**The Most Personal of Festivals**

Britain's Former Chief **Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks**

A thought for Yom Kippur from the Koren Sacks machzor

The day is intense. The process of preparation and prayer began forty days

ago on Rosh Chodesh Ellul with the blowing of shofar and the saying of Psalm 27 [L'David Hashem Ori]. It gathered pace with the saying of Selichot. It became a courtroom drama on Rosh Hashanah with the shofar proclaiming that the heavenly court is in session and we are on trial for our lives. The case for the defence has been made. We have neither denied nor made excuses for our sins. We have confessed our guilt, individual and collective, and we have appealed for mercy and forgiveness. The trial is now in its final hours. The court is about to rise. The verdict, signed, will soon be sealed.

What has given Yom Kippur its unique place on the map of the Jewish heart is that it is the most intensely personal of all the festivals.

Pesach, Shavuot and Sukkot are celebrations of Jewish memory and history. They remind us of what it means to be a member of the Jewish people, sharing its past, its present and its hopes.

Rosh Hashanah, the anniversary of creation, is about what it means to be human under the sovereignty of God.

But Yom Kippur is about what it means to be me, this unique person that I am. It makes us ask, What have I done with my life? Whom have I hurt or harmed? How have I behaved? What have I done with God's greatest gift, life itself? What have I lived for and what will I be remembered for?

To be sure, we ask these questions in the company of others. Ours is a communal faith. We pray together, confess together and throw ourselves on God's mercy together. But Yom Kippur remains an intensely personal day of conscience and self-reckoning.

It is the day on which, as the Torah says five times, we are commanded to "afflict" ourselves. Hence: no eating or drinking, no bathing, no anointing, no sexual relations, no leather shoes.

If we are men we wear a kittel, a white garment reminiscent, some say, of the white tunic the High Priest wore when he entered the Holy of Holies. Others say it is like a burial shroud. Either way, it reminds us of the truths we must face alone. The Torah says that "No one else shall be in the Tent of Meeting from the time that [Aaron] enters the sanctuary to make atonement until he leaves" (Lev 16:17).

Like the High Priest on this holy day, we face God alone. We confront our mortality alone. Outwardly we are in the company of others, but inwardly we are giving a reckoning for our individual life, singular and unique. The fact that everyone else around us is doing likewise makes it bearable.

Fasting and repenting, I stand between two selves, as the High Priest once stood facing two goats, symbolic of the duality of human nature. There is the self I see in the mirror and know in my darkest hours. I know how short life is and how little I have achieved. I remember, with a shame undiminished by the passing of time, the people I offended, wounded, disappointed; the promises I made but did not fulfill; the harsh words I said and the healing words I left unsaid. I know how insignificant I am in the scheme of things, one among billions who will live, die and eventually vanish from living memory. I am next-to-nothing, a fleeting breath, a driven leaf: "dust you are and to dust you will return."

Yet there is a second self, the one I see in the reflection of God's love. It is not always easy to feel God's love but it is there, holding us gently, telling us that every wrong we repent of is forgiven, every act of kindness we perform is unforgotten, that we are here because God wants us to be and because there is work He needs us to do. He loves us as a parent loves a child and has a faith in us that never wavers however many times we fail. In Isaiah's words, "Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet My unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor My covenant of peace be removed" (Isaiah 54:10).

God, who "counts the number of the stars and calls each of them by name" (Psalm 147:4), knows each of us by name, and by that knowledge confers on us inalienable dignity and unconditional love. Teshuvah means "coming home" to this second self and to the better angels of our nature.

At no other time, barring exceptional circumstance, will we be as close to God as on Yom Kippur. We fast, we pray and we muster the courage to face

the worst about ourselves. We are empowered to do so by our unshakeable belief that God loves, forgives, and has more faith in us than we do in ourselves. We can be better than we are, better than we were. And though we may have stumbled and fallen, God is holding out his hand to lift us, giving us the strength to recover, endure and grow to become the person He is calling on us to be: a blessing to others, a vehicle through which His light flows into the world, an agent of hope, His partner in the work of redemption.

Faith is the courage to take a risk, as Abraham and Sarah took the risk of following the call to leave their land and birthplace to travel to an unknown destination, as the Israelites did when they began their journey into the desert, an "unsown land." To be a Jew is to take the risk of believing that the evils of this world are not inevitable or irremediable; that we can mend some of the fractures of humanity; that we, by loving others as God loves us, can bring the Divine presence into our lives, turning a little of the prose of the human condition into poetry and song.

Jews do not accept suffering that can be alleviated or wrong that can be put right as the will of God. We accept only what we cannot change. What we can heal, we must. So, disproportionately, Jews are to be found as teachers fighting ignorance, doctors fighting disease, economists fighting poverty and lawyers fighting injustice. Judaism has given rise, not in one generation but in more than a hundred, to an unrivalled succession of prophets, priests, philosophers, poets, masters of halakhah and aggadah, commentators, codifiers, rationalists, mystics, sages and saints, people who gave the Divine presence its local habitation and name and taught us to make gentle the life of this world. Judaism has consistently asked great things of our people, and in so doing, helped make them great. On Yom Kippur, God is calling us to greatness.

That greatness is not conventional. We do not need to be rich or successful or famous or powerful to find favour in the eyes of God and our fellows. All we need is *chein*, graciousness, *chesed*, kindness, *rachamim*, compassion, *tzedek*, righteousness and integrity, and *mishpat*, what Albert Einstein called the "almost fanatical love of justice" that made him think his stars he was a Jew.

To be a Jew is to seek to heal some of the wounds of the world, to search out the lonely and distressed and bring them comfort, to love and forgive as God loves and forgives, to study God's Torah until it is engraved in our minds, to keep God's commands so that they etch our lives with the charisma of holiness, to bring God's presence into the shared spaces of our common life, and to continue the story of our ancestors, writing our chapter in the book of Jewish life.

"Wherever you find God's greatness," said Rabbi Yohanan, "there you will find His humility." And wherever you find true humility, there you will find greatness. That is what Yom Kippur is about: finding the courage to let go of the need for self-esteem that fuels our passion for self-justification, our blustering claim that we are in the right when in truth we know we are often in the wrong. Most national literatures, ancient and modern, record a people's triumphs. Jewish literature records our failures, moral and spiritual. No people has been so laceratingly honest in charting its shortcomings. In Tanakh there is no one without sin. Believing as we do that even the greatest are merely human, we also know that even the merely human – us – can also be great. And greatness begins in the humility of recognising our failings and faults.

The greatness to which God is calling us, here, now is "not in heaven nor across the sea" but in our hearts, minds and lives, in our homes and families, our work and its interactions, the tenor and texture of our relationships, the way we act and speak and listen and spend our time. The question God asks us on this day is not, "Are you perfect?" but "Can you grow?"

There are three barriers to growth. One is self-righteousness, the belief that we are already great. A second is false humility, the belief that we can never be great. The third is learned helplessness, the belief that we can't change the world because we can't change ourselves. All three are false. We are not yet

great but we are summoned to greatness, and we can change. We can live lives of moral beauty and spiritual depth. We can open our eyes to the presence of God around us, incline our inner ear to the voice of God within us. We can bring blessings into other people's lives.

And now, in absolute humility, we turn to God, pleading with Him to seal us in the book of life so that we can fulfil the task He has set us, to be His ambassadors to humankind.

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**Rabbi Wein's Weekly Blog**

**YOM KIPPUR**

The sublime holiness of the day of Yom Kippur is ushered in by the declaration of the annulment of vows in the Kol Nidrei service. Obviously we do not want to appear before the Heavenly court with outstanding unfulfilled commitments. But attempting to discharge one's committed, seriously undertaken commitments by cancelling those obligations unilaterally seems, at first glance, to be a slippery way of escaping one's responsibilities.

Why are we so confident that Heaven will agree to this and truly wipe that slate clean for us? The Torah itself appears to be quite strict and exacting in matters of vows and commitments. "All that you verbally commit to shall you fulfill" is apparently the governing principle of the Torah in these matters. Yet we are sure that Heaven will accept our nullification of vows as being valid, both legally and morally.

I believe that the reason for this becoming acceptable and even somewhat noble lies in the majestic concept of Yom Kippur itself. Forgiveness is a Heavenly trait. Human beings may forgive slights and insults and not act vengefully but within themselves the hurt and the grudge remains. Such is our human nature, the instinct of self-preservation that is part of us from our first breath to our last.

But on Yom Kippur we ask Heaven to truly forgive us and to reverse time, so to speak, so that our sins and hurtful behavior appear never to have really occurred. Heaven does not bear grudges. And the day of Yom Kippur is a touch of Heaven here on earth.

What a gift this holy day is to us! The reversal of time makes us all clean and fresh again. The body may feel its years and infirmities but the soul is refreshed and revitalized. Before holidays and special occasions we polish the silver items that we possess so that they gleam with their original luster, Yom Kippur polishes our souls, removing the tarnish that dimmed it over the year.

Since the body is not serviced on Yom Kippur, the soul, for this one day of the year, takes precedence and Heaven restores the soul to its original state of being and with its connection to its Creator. The soul needs no physical nourishment or exterior garments of show. It longs for the tranquility of the day and for the dialogue it conducts with its Creator through the soaring prayers of Yom Kippur.

And because of the magical reversal of time that Yom Kippur endows us with, we are able to relive the experience of the service of the High Priest in the Temple service of Yom Kippur. The past, present and future all merge seamlessly on Yom Kippur because our souls are eternal without barriers of time to distract us. So our inner selves are able to experience what to our physical selves is an unseen and remote occurrence. This ethereal quality of Yom Kippur should be treasured and appreciated by us on this, the holiest day of the year.

*Gmar Chatima tova*  
*Shabbat shalom*  
*Rabbi Berel Wein*

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**"Shabbat Shalom" – Yom Kippur 5778**

**Rabbi Shlomo Riskin**

Efrat, Israel – "...for this reason I hastened to flee to Tarshish, for I know that You are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger, with much kindness, and relenting of evil" [Jonah 4:2].

One of the highlights of the Yom Kippur experience is the reading of Jonah, a book containing profound lessons for the holiest day of the year. God calls upon Jonah, son of Amitai, to implore the people of the city of Ninveh to repent. Jonah refuses to do so, and believes he can escape God by sailing out to sea. The central issue of the book is why the prophet should have found that mission so objectionable.

We must remember that Ninveh was the capital city of Assyria and Assyria, then the arch enemy of Israel. Indeed, Assyria defeated the ten tribes and banished them into exile in the 8th century B.C.E. Jonah cannot understand why God is interested in Assyria's repentance. After all, as long as the Jews have more merits than the Assyrians, the chances of an Israeli victory in battle are far greater. Hence Jonah seeks to escape God by boarding a ship bound for Tarshish.

A raging storm develops at sea, and a drawing of lots makes it clear that Jonah is responsible for the storm [1:4-7]. It is fascinating to note that water is both the major symbol of the Book of Jonah as well as the major symbol of the Tishrei period of festivals.

Water is both the symbol of life as well as of destruction. The Bible opens "and the spirit of God hovered over the face of the waters" [Gen. 1:2], and no life can grow without the presence of water. At the same time, the Bible tells us immediately prior to its description of the life giving waters that "there was darkness on the face of the tehom", usually translated as the depth of the cavernous waters of the netherworld. It was, after all, the waters of the flood that threatened to destroy the world.

At the same time, the Mishna tells us that the Festival of Sukkot is when God judges our merit for the life giving rain which enables fruit and vegetation to provide sustenance for the coming year [Rosh Hashana 1:2]. Rain is therefore a symbol of God's gracious bounty, His purification of His children on the Day of Forgiveness.

As the prophet Ezekiel says in words that we repeat during the Yom Kippur penitential prayers, "And I shall sprinkle upon you the waters of purification and you shall become pure" [36:25]. Hence the festival of Shemini Atzeret, in which we thank God for rain, has a double meaning: God's waters bring physical sustenance as well as spiritual purity, the combination of the two brings redemption.

It goes even one step deeper. We begin giving God praise as the One Who "causes the winds to blow and the rains to flow" on Shemini Atzeret, and these words of praise are incorporated in the Amidah blessing about God, "Who causes the dead to live again." God's purifying waters can even revive us from death and bring us eternal life.

Jonah is cast overboard into the raging waters. He has challenged God, endeavoring to escape the Divine mission, and is therefore worthy of death. God, however, in His infinite compassion, provides a whale, a creature of the water, to follow Jonah and bring him back to life. In Jonah's own words, "I called, in my distress, to God and He answered me. From the belly of the grave I cried out. You heard my voice. You cast me into the depth of the heart of the sea... your waves passed over me... yet You lifted my life from the pit O Lord my God." (2:3-7).

The waters almost destroyed Jonah, and the waters in the form of a water-creature sent by God saved his life. God is trying to teach the crucial lesson that Assyria, which has been so evil and destructive, can and must make a complete turnaround if the world is to be redeemed. And God is also

teaching that He is willing to overlook the evil Assyria has committed if she will indeed repent.

Jonah refuses to accept this. He is, after all, the son of Amitai, a name derived from emet, truth. Truth demands that evil never be overlooked; evil must be punished.

This is precisely how Jonah explains why he refused God's mission: "...for this reason I hastened to flee to Tarshish, for I know that You are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger, with much kindness, and relenting of evil" [Jonah 4:2]. This is not the God in whom I want to believe, the God who described Himself as being "abundant in lovingkindness and truth" (Ex. 34:6).

But Jonah has forgotten that his first name means dove, and that just as the dove was saved from the flood so was he undeservedly saved from the raging waters. The Compassionate One thus teaches the vital lesson that anyone who truly repents (returns) from his sins can benefit from God's life-giving purity. May we all merit to earn that gift this Yom Kippur.

*Shabbat Shalom*

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**Washing on Yom Kippur**

**By Rabbi Yirmiyohu Kaganoff**

*In past years, I have sent out articles on various Yom Kippur topics, including a discussion about the Seder Avodah on Yom Kippur and Reciting Birchas me'ein sheva when Yom Kippur falls on Shabbos. For these and other articles, look up "Yom Kippur" on RabbiKaganoff.com*

Question #1: Comfort

"How do I wash my hands when I finish using the comfort facilities on Yom Kippur?"

Question #2: Knuckle down

"Why do we wash negel vasser only until our knuckles on Yom Kippur, but until the wrist every other morning?"

Question #3: Bride

"May a woman who married during Elul wash her hands and face on Yom Kippur?"

Introduction:

As we all know, one of the mitzvos of the Torah is that we should afflict ourselves on Yom Kippur. Although this mitzvah is observed primarily by refraining from eating and drinking, the Mishnah teaches that it also includes abstaining from washing, wearing shoes and certain other pleasurable activities (Yoma 73b). The Gemara (77b) explicitly states that this includes washing even a small part of one's body, and even forbids resting one's body on wet clay or mud (Yoma 78a). Yet, under certain circumstances, the Mishnah and the Gemara permit even washing on Yom Kippur. Our first goal will be to understand when this is permitted and when not, and why it is so.

Who may wash?

The Mishnah (Yoma 73b) mentions that the king and a bride are permitted to wash their faces. The Gemara (Yoma 78b) explains that, since the posuk requires us to see the king when he is handsome (Yeshayohu 33:17), he should be freshly washed. A bride who married within 30 days of Yom Kippur is permitted to wash her face, and, according to some authorities, also her hands (Rabbeinu Yonasan). This is so that her newlywed husband should not see her in a way that is unattractive (Yoma 78b).

Why thirty days?

We find the timeframe of thirty days in regard to a kallah in a few instances (Yoma 78b; Kesubos 4a). The same principle permits a newlywed bride to wear cosmetics, should she become a mourner, G-d forbid, during the first thirty days of her marriage (Kesubos 4a).

Although the Shulchan Aruch expressly rules that a bride may wash her face on Yom Kippur during the thirty days after her marriage, some prominent later authorities note that this is true only when her husband will see her in the course of the Yom Kippur day. If he does not return home all day Yom Kippur, and will therefore not see her, there is nothing gained by her washing, and therefore she should not (Chayei Odum 145:15).

At this point, let us address the last of our opening questions:

"May a woman who married during Elul wash her hands and face on Yom Kippur?"

If she married within thirty days of Yom Kippur and her husband will return home during the day and see her, the Shulchan Aruch rules that she should. If he will not return all day, then the Chayei Odum rules that she should not. I suggest individuals ask their rav or posek for a definitive ruling.

Walking through water

The Gemara adds several other instances where it is permitted to wash or to get oneself wet on Yom Kippur. One may cross a small body of water on Yom Kippur in order to attend a shiur, to see one's rebbe, or even to check one's field. The Gemara permits someone who wants to see his rebbe to cross a small body of water to do so, but prohibits a rebbe from walking through water to see his talmid on Yom Kippur. In these instances, it is permitted to cross still water, even if the water runs as high as your neck. If the water is flowing, such as a stream, one may walk through it only if it reaches no higher than one's waist. This difference is not because of Yom Kippur concerns, but because of danger. The Gemara forbids walking through flowing water higher than one's waist because of concern that one could be swept away by the current.

Regarding the many other halachic issues involved in these water travels on Yom Tov – such as the questions of carrying water, laundering clothes, squeezing water out of clothes – these issues are raised and discussed by the Gemara and the rishonim. Since our topic is washing on Yom Kippur, we will leave those topics for different articles.

Washing to clean yourself

The Gemara permits washing oneself on Yom Kippur if one gets muddy or dirty (Yoma 77b). Similarly, one may wash off the effects of a nosebleed (Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim 613:1). There is a dispute among early achronim whether one may wash off sweat. Some authorities permit washing off uncomfortable sweat, just as one may wash off dirt (Levush and Magen Avraham 614:1), whereas others prohibit this (Mateh Efrayim, Bach and Taz, Orach Chayim 613:1). The Mishnah Berurah concludes that someone who is an istanis, meaning highly sensitive, may follow the lenient approach, but otherwise one should not.

How much may I wash?

The Rambam (Hilchos Shevisas Asor 3:2, as explained by Magen Avraham) rules that when washing off dirt, one must be careful to wash only the areas that are dirty, but one may not do a general washing. Notwithstanding that this ruling is accepted by all later authorities, a later posek rules that if someone has become dirty in many places and it is easier to wash his entire body, he may do so (Mateh Efrayim 613:1).

Washing out one's mouth is forbidden (Rema, Orach Chayim 613:4), out of concern that one might swallow some of the water (Mishnah Berurah 613:11). Swallowing even a drop of water is prohibited min haTorah. One prominent achron permits washing one's mouth with vinegar or other non-drinkables, since swallowing these items would not violate a Torah law (Mateh Efrayim 613:3).

Washing negel vasser

At this point, let us examine the halachic background behind the second of our opening questions: "Why do we wash only until our knuckles on Yom Kippur, but until the wrist every other morning?"

As we all know, we wash our hands immediately upon arising in the morning three times on each hand, being careful to wash until the wrist. This practice is usually referred to by its Yiddish name, negel vasser. However, on Yom Kippur the practice is modified somewhat. The rishonim discuss whether one is permitted to wash negel vasser on Yom Kippur. The Mishnah and the Gemara do not discuss this question directly, but there is an allusion to it in the following passage:

"A woman may wash one hand in water and give bread to a child, and she need not be concerned" (Yoma 77b). The Gemara explains the reason it is permitted to wash her hand is because of the damage caused by a demon named Shivsa. Rashi explains that one is not permitted to wash negel vasser on Yom Kippur, but there is an exception if one is going to feed children. When one touches the food without washing first, a ruach ra attaches itself to the food. In order to avoid this from happening, one is permitted to wash the hand used to touch the food. Rashi appears to hold that one is ordinarily not permitted to wash negel vasser on Yom Kippur, because of the mitzvah of inuy. Rabbeinu Tam disagrees with his grandfather, Rashi, contending that everyone may wash negel vasser on Yom Kippur morning. This is because having ruach ra on your hand is no different from having dirt on your hand, which one is permitted to wash off. Furthermore, the Gemara (Shabbos 108b) rules that it is harmful for someone to touch his eyes, nose or ears without first washing negel vasser.

According to Rabbeinu Tam, there are two types of ruach ra, one caused by bas melech, which is the one we remove daily when we wash negel vasser, and the other caused by Shivsa. Shivsa is a local demon that was a problem in the Middle East, and, for this reason, on Yom Kippur, even someone who washed negel vasser upon arising washed again before touching food. Shivsa was not a problem in Europe, and, therefore, as long as one washed negel vasser in the morning, there would be no need to wash again before handling food. However, in Eretz Yisroel, one needed to be careful to wash one's hand before giving bread to a child to eat. According to Rabbeinu Tam, this law is true even on Yom Kippur: meaning that if someone hands bread to a child on Yom Kippur, one should wash his hand before touching the bread, or be careful not to touch it.

The later rishonim all accept Rabbeinu Tam's position regarding the permissibility of washing on Yom Kippur for negel vasser purposes upon arising in the morning.



However, there is a dispute whether morning negel vasser washing must be until the wrists, or if it is sufficient to wash until the knuckles. When washing negel vasser the rest of the year, we wash until the wrist. On Yom Kippur, washing until the wrist will cause someone to wash unnecessarily according to the second opinion. We therefore follow the more limiting approach and wash only to the knuckles. In addition, one should be careful to have in mind that he is washing only to remove the ruach ra and not to enjoy the washing (Rema, Orach Chayim 613:2).

When washing after using the bathroom facilities on Yom Kippur, we follow the same approach and wash only until the knuckles, even though the rest of the year we wash until the wrist. I read that Rav Elyashiv paskined that after using the bathroom on Yom Kippur, one should wash only one time, notwithstanding that we usually wash three times when leaving the bathroom. Again, this is because of a dispute as to what the halachic requirement is, and on Yom Kippur being stringent about washing more than the minimum requirement becomes a leniency.

We have now answered our opening question:

“How do I wash my hands when I finish using the comfort facilities on Yom Kippur?”  
Duchening

There is one exception to this rule of washing only until the knuckles, and that is a kohen who is duchening washes until the wrist immediately prior to duchening.

Why?

Now that we understand many of the basic rules concerning washing on Yom Kippur, we need to understand the underlying issue: Why is one permitted to wash oneself clean, or to ford a body of water, if washing even a small part of one’s body is forbidden on Yom Kippur?

The answer is that the Torah prohibits only pleasure bathing; in Hebrew this is called *rechitzah shel taanug*.

However, we need to explain this answer a bit better. The Gemara rallies a source in the Torah to prohibit washing on Yom Kippur. The Gemara notes that the Torah mentions the word *inuy*, the requirement to afflict oneself, five times in its descriptions of the mitzvah of Yom Kippur. The Gemara derives from *pesukim* the five forms of *inuy*, one of which is to refrain from washing. This seems to create a conflict – if washing is considered a form of *inuy* that is prohibited *min haTorah*, how can it sometimes be permitted?

*Min haTorah* or *miderabbanan*?

Among the rishonim, we find two basic approaches to answer this question. Most rishonim conclude that when the Torah required *inuy*, it prohibited only eating and drinking. The other *inuyim* are prohibited only because of rabbinic injunction, and the sources in the *pesukim* have the status called *asmachta*. The word *asmachta*, which can be translated as an allusion, involves a major dispute among rishonim as to what its status entails. According to most early rishonim, *asmachta* is a rabbinic law that includes an oblique reference that has no halachic or Biblical significance (Rambam, introduction to commentary on the Mishnayos; Kuzari; Ramban, notes to Sefer Hamitzvos, Shores 1). Other rishonim understand *asmachta* to be something alluded to by the Torah. According to the latter opinion, although one is not obligated *min haTorah* to observe an *asmachta*, one who does so fulfills a G-d-given mandate. In other words, although it is not required, one is fulfilling Hashem’s non-obligatory request (Ritva, Rosh Hashanah 16a).

Regardless of which interpretation of *asmachta* one follows, those rishonim who explain the *pesukim* used to prohibit washing on Yom Kippur as an *asmachta* understand that it is not prohibited *min haTorah* to wash on Yom Kippur, but only *miderabbanan*.

Therefore, under certain circumstances, Chazal relaxed the prohibition. Most of these cases are when the washing is not for pleasure purposes. Thus, they permitted washing to remove dirt, to remove ruach ra, or to allow travel for certain mitzvah purposes. They also permitted two people, a king and a bride, to wash for aesthetic reasons.

Prohibited *min haTorah*

On the other hand, other rishonim contend that the prohibition against washing on Yom Kippur is indeed *min haTorah*, and the sources quoted by the Gemara are *de’oraysa*.

This opinion agrees that there is a hierarchy within the concept of *inuy*. In other words, the punishment of *koreis* meted out by the Torah for violating *inuy* applies only to someone who eats or drinks on Yom Kippur, but the other *inuyim*, including washing, are still prohibited *min haTorah*.

According to the first approach, someone who went swimming on Yom Kippur or took a shower or bath for pleasure did not violate a Torah law. According to the second ruling, he did violate a Torah law, although he is not punished with the punishment of *koreis*. (There are some differences in halacha that result from this dispute, but, because of space constraints, we will not discuss them in this article.)

It appears that the Rema follows the second approach. The Tur quotes from a *gaon* that an *istanis* who is unsettled if he does not wash is permitted to do so. This implies that that the Tur paskins that washing is prohibited only *miderabbanan*. The Shulchan Aruch

rules this way (Orach Chayim 613:4), but the Rema disagrees, implying that he might hold that washing on Yom Kippur is prohibited *min haTorah*.

The obvious question is: According to those opinions that washing is prohibited *min haTorah*, why is it that the above-listed types of washing are permitted? The answer is that the Torah prohibited only pleasurable washing, and other types of washing are prohibited only because of rabbinic injunction. Chazal, who implemented these injunctions, relaxed them to permit necessary hygiene, whether of the physical or spiritual variety, and to allow travel for mitzvah purposes.  
King and bride?

This answer explains most of the cases that we presented. However, it does not explain why kings and brides are permitted to wash on Yom Kippur, since these are pleasure washings, not for hygiene and not for alternative reasons.

I found two approaches among the rishonim to explain this unusual phenomenon. Some rule that it is prohibited *min haTorah* only to wash one’s entire body, or at least most of it. Washing part of one’s body is prohibited, but only *miderabbanan* (Tosafos Yeshanim). Therefore, because Chazal felt it important that the king and the bride wash their faces, the prohibition was relaxed.

A different approach is that, although the prohibition against washing is *min haTorah*, the Torah delegated to Chazal the authority to determine what is prohibited and what is permitted. Chazal chose to permit a bride and a king to wash their face (Ran).

We find this latter approach mentioned by various rishonim regarding other laws of the Torah. For example, regarding defining what *melacha* is permitted on Chol Hamoed and what is prohibited, the Gemara states that the Torah gave this over (in Hebrew, *moesir*) to Chazal (Chagigah 18a). In that instance, there are three interpretations among the rishonim as to what the Gemara means.

1. Many authorities understand this to mean that the prohibition of performing work on Chol Hamoed is only *miderabbanan*.

2. Among those rishonim who understand that the prohibition is *min haTorah*, there are two approaches. One is that there was an oral chain of transmission regarding what the actual details of these laws are, and this was given over to Chazal to transmit.

3. Alternatively, the Gemara might mean that the Torah handed over to Chazal the decision what to include and what to exclude.

The latter two answers represent differing approaches to explain what it means that the Torah “gave this over” to Chazal. According to interpretation 2 above, the specific details of all the rules are G-d created, but were orally transmitted. Similarly, the Ran might mean that the permission for kings and brides to wash their faces on Yom Kippur was an oral tradition from Sinai that was transmitted to the Sages.

According to the third approach, the Torah handed over to Chazal the ability to decide what these rules would be.

We find this dispute germane to the laws of Yom Tov, where there are rishonim who understand that the decision regarding what type of food preparation is permitted on Yom Tov and what is prohibited was handed over to Chazal to decide.

Conclusion

The Sefer Hachinuch (Mitzvah #313) explains that the reason the Torah commanded us to afflict ourselves on Yom Kippur is to make it easier for us to do teshuvah. One day a year, when we devote ourselves completely to our relationship with Hashem, we are commanded to suspend our physical creature comforts, thereby to invest the day completely with spirituality. Whether we follow those opinions that hold that washing on Yom Kippur is prohibited *min haTorah* or those who contend that it is prohibited only because of rabbinic injunction, observing all the *inuyim* allows us to grow spiritually in a way that we cannot the rest of the year. Wishing everyone a *gmar chasimah tovah!*

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**Yom Kippur: Healing the Universe – Rav Kook**

The Sages made a surprising claim about the power of teshuvah:

“Great is repentance, for it brings healing to the world... When an individual repents, he is forgiven, and the entire world with him.” (Yoma 86b)

We understand that one who repents should be forgiven — but why should the entire world also be forgiven? In what way does teshuvah bring healing to the world?

Responsibility for the World

There are deep, powerful ties that connect each individual soul to the rest of the universe. Not only are we influenced by the world, we also influence it. In Orot HaKodesh (vol. II, p. 351), Rav Kook described this connection as a “powerful underlying influence.” This is not merely mankind’s industrial and technological impact on the world, as we utilize fire, water, electricity, and other forces of nature to do our bidding.



“That is only a partial and superficial aspect of our impact on the world. The Kabbalists taught that the world’s essence, in all of its wholeness and scope, is bound to us with ties of subordination, accepting our influence. This understanding indicates that there is a fundamental integration between the nishmatit [soul-quality] that operates in the world and our own nishmatit.”

This inner connection and influence on the rest of the universe implies a heavy moral responsibility:

“How wonderful is the moral perspective that arises from this great responsibility — a responsibility for all of existence, for all worlds. We have the power to bring favor and light, life, joy, and honor in these worlds. This occurs when we follow the straight path, when we strengthen and gird ourselves with a pure fortitude and conquer paths of life that are good and admired, when we advance and go from strength to strength.

“Yet it is also in our power to bring pain to every good portion, when we debase our souls and corrupt our ways, when we darken our spiritual light and suspend our moral purity.” (Orot HaKodesh vol. III, p. 63)

Given our great responsibility for our actions, the Talmudic statement becomes clearer. Those who correct their ways repair not only the flaws in their own souls but also those aspects of the universe that they damaged. Their teshuvah truly “brings healing to the world.”

#### The Ne'ilah Prayer

This dual responsibility — for the purity of our souls as well as the spiritual state of the entire universe — is hinted at in the final prayer of Yom Kippur. The Ne'ilah prayer, recited as Yom Kippur's gates of forgiveness are closed, concludes with a special passage, אָפְתָהּ יְהוָה לְפָנֶיךָ אֱשָׁמוּנִים (“You extend Your hand to transgressors”). In this prayer we confess that

“There is no end to the fire-offerings required of us, and countless are our guilt-offerings.”

What is the difference between these two phrases: “the fire-offerings required of us” (ishei-chovoteinu) and “our guilt-offerings” (nichochai-ashmateinu)?

#### Restoring the Soul's Purity

Our moral defects and lapses have a detrimental effect on the soul, sully it with the imprints of failure and sin. We seek to cleanse these stains and restore the soul to its previous state of purity.

To repair the damage we have caused to our own soul, we offer an olah offering before God. It is for this reason that the Torah commands us to bring an offering even if we have sinned unintentionally.1

This Ne'ilah prayer refers to these offerings as nichochai ashmateinu, “guilt-offerings.” This term indicates that our actions have tarnished the soul, as it says, “And the soul that was guilty (ashmah)” (Num. 5:6). These offerings are nichochim since they produce a “pleasing fragrance” as they cleanse the soul and enable it to once again draw close to God.

#### Repairing the World

There is, however, a second aspect to our spiritual failures. In addition to defiling the soul, our sins also debase and pollute the universe. Even private failings have a negative impact on the moral and spiritual state of the universe. For this reason the Sages categorized the wicked as those “who destroy the world” (Avot 5:1).

The universe demands that we repair that which we have damaged. This repair is accomplished through teshuvah and offering a chatat offering. The Ne'ilah prayer refers to these offerings as ishei chovoteinu, “our required fire-offerings,” since they reflect our duty and obligation to correct that which we have damaged in the universe.

(Silver from the Land of Israel. Adapted from Olat Re'iyah vol. II, p. 364)

1 So explained the Ramban in his commentary to Lev. 4:2:

*“The reason that one who sinned unintentionally brings an offering (korban) is because all transgressions bring disgrace to the soul, tainting it.... Therefore a soul that erred brings an offering, so that it may merit to become close (le-korvah) to its Creator.”*

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Yeshivat Ateret Yerushalayim

From the teachings of the Rosh Yeshiva

Ha-Rav Shlomo Aviner Shlit"a

**Rav Shlomo Aviner Shlit"a**

Ha-Rav answers hundreds of text message questions a day. Here's a sample:  
Casino

Q: Is it permissible to work for a website which involves casino gambling?

A: No. 1. Gambling is forbidden. 2. It is taking advantage of poor people and people who are addicted to gambling.

#### Time of Zecher Le-Churban

Q: Baruch Hashem, we built in a house in the community of Neriya! When does one have to make the Zecher Le-Churban (part of the wall left undone as a remembrance of the destruction of the Beit Ha-Mikdash) when moving into a new house?

A: One is certainly obligated to make a Zecher Le-Churban. The Halachah however does not say that it is forbidden to live in a house which does not have a Zecher Le-Churban, although the person is lacking the fulfillment of a Positive Mitzvah. Regarding a Mezuzah, there is an opinion in the Rishonim that it is permissible to live in a house without a Mezuzah, but the basic Halachah is that it is forbidden to do so. This is not the case, however, for a Zecher Le-Churban. But obviously, we have a general principle: "The diligent fulfill Mitzvot as early as possible" (Zerizim Makdimim Le-Mitzvot).

#### Musical Instruments during Davening

Q: Is it permissible to play instruments during Hallel?

A: It is forbidden on account of "Chukat Ha-Goyim - following the non-Jewish practices" (Shut Chatam Yoreh Deah #84-96, Choshen Mishpat #192. Kaf Ha-Chaim, Orach Chaim 151:19. Shut Minchat Yitzchak 5:96).

#### Jewish Star

Q: We were told that one should place a Jewish star (Magen David) in his house as protection. Is this true?

A: No. There is no source in Judaism for the Jewish star, though it is obviously a beloved symbol.

#### Mashiach's Kippa

Q: What type of Kippa will the Mashiach wear: knit, black velvet, etc.?

A: We do not know what will happen in times of Mashiach until they happen. Rambam, Hilchot Melachim 12:2.

#### Demographic Problem in Yesha

Q: What does one answer to those who claim that we should leave Yesha on account of the Arab population's higher birthrate than that of the Jewish population?

A: 1. It is a Mitzvah to settle of the entire Land of Israel and Hashem already thought of this issue when He commanded us to do so. 2. If we were originally concerned about this issue, we would not have established the State of Israel. 3. It is a lie. The birthrate among Arabs in Yesha is 2.8 children per family and is decreasing, while the Jewish birthrate is 5.1 children per family and is increasing. It is true that 20 years ago the birthrate in Yesha was 6.0 for Arabs and 2.5 for Jews. Baruch Hashem, the Mitzvah of "Be fruitful and multiply" is being fulfilled by us.

#### Hashem is the King

Q: There is a sticker which says "Hashem is the King". Is this a proper way to publicize the Kingship of Hashem?

A: 1. Throughout the generations, our great Rabbis did not use this method. 2. Faith is deep and not a sticker. By the way, one must cover such a sticker when one enters a bathroom.

#### Bringing the Torah to People to Kiss

Q: Is it permissible to bring the Sefer Torah in the Shul towards people who want to kiss it?

A: No. This is a disgrace to the Sefer Torah. They should approach the Sefer Torah. Piskei Teshuvot 134:6.

#### Anti-Semitism

Q: Will Anti-Semitism ever end?

A: The Rambam explains in Igeret Teiman that the reason for Anti-Semitism is opposition to the word of Hashem. Therefore, when humanity is in love with Hashem, Anti-Semitism will cease.

#### Talit Switching

Q: I accidentally switched my Talit with my friend's, and have been unable to get in touch with him. It is permissible for me to use his Talit?

A: Yes. Since he will also use yours. Piskei Teshuvot 14:11.

Questions in Emunah

Q: If someone has questions in Emunah, does this mean that his faith is somehow lacking?

A: No. His faith is simple, which is a very high level of faith. If he has questions, however, he should learn books having to do with Emunah. See Midot Re'eiyah, Emunah #18.

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**A Yom Kippur Message - 5778**

**A Call to Arms**

**Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky Dean, Yeshiva of South Shore**

*Dedicated by Mr. and Mrs. Mark Honigsfeldin memory of Paul Honigsfeld Chaim Peretz ben Efraim Fishel, a"l*

Yom Kippur, the ultimate day of repentance, has the Jewish nation simultaneously praying, fasting and asking for forgiveness. It begins with the somber, quiet, and melodious intonation of Kol Nidrei and ends with the entire congregation shouting Hashem hu HaElokim! (G-d is the Al-Mighty) seven times in succession after various requests of forgiveness. It seems that at the time when our strength is waning our greatest and loudest pleas are spent. Shouldn't we begin the day with the strong requests for forgiveness and save the subdued prayers for when our bodies are weak from hunger and our lips parched from lack of water?

Rav Yehoshua Heshel Eichenstein, the Ziditchover Rebbe, tells the following story:

One Friday, a man entered the study of the Tchoortkover Rebbe with a request that was very common in those days. "My son was drafted into the army," the man began. "However, we have a way out. On Sunday, we are going to a doctor who will falsely declare him unfit for service. This way he will be spared certain misery, perhaps even death in that terrible army. Rebbe," he asked, "I need your blessing that he evade the draft."

The Rebbe quietly told him that Shabbos was nearing and he could not concentrate on blessings. The man should return to him on Friday evening after his tisch (ceremonious chasidic table).

The man did so. After most of the chasidim had left, the man repeated his request, almost verbatim. Again the Rebbe was non-committal. "Return to me after the morning service."

Unperturbed, the man noted that he would really like to resolve this matter before Sunday morning.

Shabbos morning, after services, the man approached the Rebbe again. Calmly he repeated the predicament. "Sunday morning I am going to a doctor who will falsely declare my son unfit for military service. Please pray that we will evade conscription." The Rebbe was not moved. Again, he deferred until the afternoon.

At the third Shabbos meal, the scene repeated again, precisely the way it had the previous three times. "I understand that you are leaving Sunday morning. Come back to me late Saturday night," said the Rebbe. "By then I will have an answer for you."

By this time, his Chasidim's curiosity was piqued. They had never seen their Rebbe so reluctant to mete a blessing, especially when it was one that would save a Jewish soul from the frightful Polish army.

Saturday night a large crowd gathered as the man approached with his request. Frustrated and disgruntled, the man, once again, repeated his story, almost verbatim, for the fifth time.

Immediately, the Rebbe sprung from his chair and began to shout. "What are you asking me? Why would one even try to evade the service of our

wonderful country? How dare you ask me for a blessing of that sort? Your son would make a fine soldier for our country. I wish him the best of luck in the army!"

The man quickly scurried from the room and left town. The Chasidim stood shocked and bewildered. Never had they heard such an uncharacteristic outcry from the Rebbe.

"I will explain," said the Rebbe. "The man was a fraud. He had no son, and if he did, he wanted him in the army. He was sent by the government to test our loyalty. Thank G-d we passed the test."

"But, Rebbe!" cried the chasidim, "how did you know?"

"Simple," explained the Rebbe. "I watched the level of intensity. From the moment he met me until tonight there was no increase in intensity nor feeling of desperation with each request. The moment I heard his request tonight and it contained no more passion or desperation than his first request on Friday night, I knew he was a fraud."

We stand a whole entire day in prayer, and end with a ne'ilah prayer, after nearly 24 hours of pleading. The litmus test of our sincerity comes as the heavenly gates are being closed. As the sun begins to set, our pleas should intensify. That crescendo assures our sincerity. It also should assure us a Happy & Healthy Sweet New Year.

Have an easy fast, a meaningful Yom Kippur and a Gmar Chasimah Tova.

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