



Eating on Erev Yom Kippur

By Zachary Rosenberg, Layout Editor, 11th Grade

As many of us know, on Erev Yom Kippur (the ninth of Tishrei) there is a mitzvah to eat and drink. However, a pasuk in Sefer Vayikra says, "And you shall afflict your soul on the ninth of the month in the evening." There's an obvious question here: we don't fast on the ninth, we fast on the tenth!?!? Furthermore, what's the reason for the existence of this mitzvah in the first place?

Gemara Brachos Daf Ches Amud Beis asks this question and provides an answer: if you eat and drink on Erev Yom Kippur it's as if you fasted on Erev Yom Kippur AND Yom Kippur. The acharonim ask on this: why does the Gemara have to say that it's as if you fasted on the ninth and tenth, you're also fasting on the tenth anyways!? It should just say that if you eat on the ninth, it's as if you fasted on the ninth!? The Sfas Emes commenting on Gemara Yuma gives an answer. He explains that the chidush of the Gemara is that just eating on the ninth is like fasting on both days, aside from the fact that you're also fasting on Yom Kippur itself.

There are numerous reasons given for why it's so great a mitzvah to eat on the ninth of Tishrei and equivalent to having fasted. One is that by eating we're showing our joy that the time for our atonement has come, and by extension we are showing that we are concerned with our sins. Additionally, on other

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Starting with a Bang

By Ephraim Herrmann, Layout Editor, 11th Grade

When looking at the beginning of Yom Kippur davening, you will find the following pasuk from Tehillim: "Or Zarua LaTzadik Ul'Yishrei Lev Simcha- Light is sown for the righteous, and for the upright of heart, gladness." However, one would think that the appropriate way to begin davening on the holiest day of the year would be with a forceful and more powerful message. That being the case, Rav Yehuda Prero wonders why davening doesn't just start with the pasuk "Ooteshuvah, Ootifeelah, Ootzedakah." Wouldn't that be the more logical and powerful beginning to a day with such a high level of importance?

To answer this question, Reb Chaim Volozhin explains the difference between someone who is Tzadik and someone who is upright (Yashar). A Tzadik is a person whose Yetzer Harah works incredibly hard to prevent him from doing the right thing. However, this person knows that what he is doing is correct and doing the wrong thing never even crosses his mind. At times he may make mistakes but he is always trying his best to keep on the correct path. In contrast to this, one who is Yashar has improved himself to the point where his Yetzer Harah doesn't give him any problems. He is so set in his ways that he will never stumble off the right path. After Rosh Hashanah

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Torah Teasers

By Rabbi Moshe Erlbaum, 9th Grade Rebbe

**Parshas Ha'azinu
Questions**

1. What are four types of precipitation that are mentioned in the same verse?
2. In this parsha, what letter is written as a complete word?
3. Which part of the body appears in this parsha, and nowhere else in the Torah?
4. Which bird is mentioned in this parsha?
5. In this parsha, which five animals appear together in the same verse?
6. Which two ancient cities appear together the same verse?
7. At the end of the Song of Haazinu, the Torah states: "And Moshe completed (*vayechal Moshe*) speaking all these words to all of Israel" (Deut. 32:45). What 2 other places in the Torah are the words "*vayechal Moshe*" used to describe something that Moshe completed?

Answers

1. Rain, dew, storms and raindrops all appear in Deuteronomy 32:2.
2. The letter *hey* - meaning "Did...?" - is written as a separate word in Deuteronomy 32:6.
3. "The pupil of an eye" is mentioned in Deuteronomy 32:10.
4. An eagle is referred to in Deuteronomy 32:11.
5. Deuteronomy 32:14 mentions cattle, sheep, lambs, rams and goats.
6. Sodom and Amora are mentioned in Deuteronomy 32:32.
7. (1) In parshas Ki Tisa, in discussing that when Moshe "finished" talking to the Jews he would put a mask on his face, the Torah states that "Moshe finished speaking with them" (Exodus 34:33). (2) In parshas Pekudei, when the Tabernacle is completed, the Torah states: "And Moshe completed the work" (Exodus 40:33).

ALIYOT SUMMARY

1st Aliyah - In the First Aliyah, Moshe introduces the Shira of Parshas Haazinu. During this introduction Moshe calls upon the heavens and the earth to be witnesses to what Moshe is saying.

2nd Aliyah - In the Second Aliyah, Moshe tells Bnei Yisroel to remember their history and world history. Moshe also reminds Bnei Yisroel about how Hashem treated Bnei Yisroel like an eagle treats its offspring when they were in the desert and that Hashem alone protected us and guided us in the desert.

3rd Aliyah - In the Third Aliyah, the Shira continues with Moshe speaking to Bnei Yisroel about their future. Moshe speaks about how Hashem will settle Bnei Yisroel in Eretz Yisroel with everything that they need but, unfortunately, Bnei Yisroel was overcome by their focus on Gashmiyus and they abandoned Hashem and instead served idols and did other terrible things.

4th Aliyah - In the Fourth Aliyah, Moshe tells Bnei Yisroel that Hashem will be angry with Bnei Yisroel and that Hashem will hide His face, so to speak, and that Hashem will send enemies and various plagues. Moshe also informs Bnei Yisroel that Hashem almost destroyed them.

5th Aliyah - In the Fifth Aliyah, Moshe says that the nations must understand that when Jewish people suffer it is because of Hashem allowing it to be so and even that suffering comes from the actions of Bnei Yisroel. All of the gods that they worshiped are not able to help them when Hashem punishes them. Hashem also tells Bnei Yisroel that Hashem is the One that causes death and brings life.

6th Aliyah - In the Sixth Aliyah, Moshe tells Bnei Yisroel that in the end of days Hashem will punish all of the nations who oppressed Bnei Yisroel and when that happens the nations of the world will sing the praises of Bnei Yisroel. In this Aliyah the Shira of Haazinu concludes.

7th Aliyah - In the Seventh and final Aliyah, Moshe and Yehoshua teach this song to Bnei Yisroel. Moshe tells Bnei Yisroel to pay attention to this song and they should instruct their children the same. Moshe says that listening to this song and clinging to the Torah will allow Bnei Yisroel to stay in Eretz Yisroel. To conclude the Aliyah and Parsha, Hashem tells Moshe to climb Har Navo and Moshe will see Eretz Yisroel from a distance before he passes away.

**"When you ask for simcha, you ask
for everything."**

- David Nisanov

DRS G.O. President, 12th Grade



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10-Minute Halacha Shiur

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Transcribed by
Ari Keller

Leather Shoes (and Crocs, Sneakers, and Slides) on Yom Kippur

What is the appropriate footwear one should wear on Yom Kippur? Can one wear Crocs, slides, or sneakers?

Before we directly address this question, we must understand the basic Isurim associated with Yom Kippur. There is a Mishnah in Yuma 73b that lists the 5 Inuyim (things that are Asur to do on Yom Kippur), and one of the things listed is "Ne'ilas Hasandal" - wearing shoes.

There is a Machlokes Rishonim about whether the Shaar Inuyim, besides for eating/drinking which is for sure D'Oraysa, are D'Oraysa or D'Rabanan.

Tosfos in Yuma says that they are D'Rabanan, and the Pesukim that the Gemarah quotes are just an Asmachta. Tosfos brings a proof from the Gemarah that wearing shoes is D'Rabanan by the fact that the Gemarah gives us exceptions to the rule, for example a King or a Kallah. So, therefore, it must be D'Rabanan.

However, the Ran disagrees and says that all the Inuyim are D'Oraysa. His proof is from a Gemarah later on that says the difference between eating/drinking and the Shaar Inuyim is that by eating/drinking you are Chayiv Kares, but the rest you aren't. So, the Ran says, if the rest of the Inuyim are D'Rabanan, do we need the Gemarah to tell us that we aren't Chayiv Kares for it if we violate them - of course not! Also, if the rest of them were D'Rabanan, the Gemarah should've made a stronger distinction between the two by saying that eating/drinking is D'Oraysa and the rest are D'Rabanan. Therefore, the Ran says that all of them are D'Oraysa. The Ran deals with all the exceptions about wearing shoes in the Gemarah by saying that the Torah never explicitly mention "wearing shoes", and since the Torah never says it, the Torah is telling the Talmidai Chachamim that it is up to them to define the Isur of wearing shoes.

Now, the question is, what constitutes a shoe? The only description in the Gemarah is "Neilas Hasandal", nothing about the particular qualifications of this term. To understand what this term means, let's take a look at 3 Shitos quoted by the Beis Yosef. He quotes the Baal Ha'Meor as saying anything that protects the foot is considered a shoe. Rashi says that it is only a shoe if it is made out of leather or wood. The Rif/Rash say that only leather constitutes a shoe. The Shulchan Aruch Paskins like the Rif/Rash, and says that only a shoe made out of leather is a shoe. However, the Mishnah Berurah quotes

the Elyah Rabbah saying that it's appropriate to follow Rashi's shita, and that it is better to be more Machmir to wear cloth slippers, or anything that doesn't provide ample protection. The Arcuch Hashulchan agrees to this. Also, the Nefesh HaRav quotes Rav Salaveichik saying that one should not wear comfortable shoes. The Chsam Sofer also writes that one should not wear shoes that you cannot feel the surface of the ground. Rav Shtirnbach says that the Shulchan Aruch only paskined to not wear leather shoes because that was the norm to wear, but really one should wear a lower level type shoe that one normally wears everyday. So, according to him, being allowed to wear Crocs on Yom Kippur depends on what the person normally wears everyday. However, Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach says we are Maykil on this issue and the only Isur is wearing leather shoes.

This debate might revolve around what the Mitzvah of Inuy, afflicting oneself, is on Yom Kippur. Is the Mitzvah to actively suffer or not to luxuriate? For example, wearing Crocs is not suffering, but it is definitely not luxuriating.

Now, how do we define a leather shoe? The Mateh Efrayim says that shoes with a leather sole are definitely a problem. The Maharam Shick says that even the leather stitching that holds the shoe together would be a problem. However, it is clear that a leather design on a shoe, like a Nike swoosh for example, would not be a problem, because it is not a significant part of the shoe.

What if the shoe looks like a leather shoe, but is really made out of plastic? Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach says it is Asur because of Maaris Ayin, namely that people will think you are wearing leather shoes. However, nowadays when so many shoes look like real leather, Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach might change his psak about Maaris Ayin, because this type of shoe is so popular now.

Let's now conclude with a few exceptions to the Isur. The Shulchan Aruch says women that are Chayos, within 30 days of child birth, or a Choleh can wear leather shoes, because they are vulnerable to cold weather. However, the Nishmas Avraham says that nowadays there is no reason why Chayos or a Cholim would wear leather shoes, because there are so many non-leather shoes that are comfortable that they can wear.

SPARKS OF CHASSIDUS



*With Max
Blumenthal*

The first Rebbe of Peshischa, Reb Simcha Bunim, taught, "The primary judgement of Yom Kippur isn't based upon our sins; it's based on the fact that we didn't do Teshuva. Many people often have excuses as to why they act how they act, even some that are valid. But the question is why didn't they do teshuva? Why didn't they say viduy?"

This idea is clearly expressed in the following story. In the beis medrash of the Beis Yisrael of Ger, there were two people who were constantly speaking during davening on Shabbos. The Beis Yisrael said to one of them, "Since you spoke during tefillah, you can't come into the beis medrash for two weeks." The man exclaimed, "I didn't speak! I was only listening to someone else talk to me!" The Beis Yisrael responded, "Now you can't come back for six weeks." The Beis Yisrael then went to the person who was actually talking and told him he couldn't return for 2 weeks. With respect, the man admitted that he was wrong and promised not to do it again. The Rebbe then responded, "You may now return right away." The deeper meaning of this story is that not admitting to your sin is even worse than actually doing it.

The Midrash on Parshat Naso explains that after Adam ate from Eitz Hadaas, Hashem pleaded with him to do teshuva, but Adam refused. This is the true reason why he wasn't allowed to go up to Gan Eden. He gave excuses as to why he sinned, blaming Chava and the tricky snake and never recognizing his own sin. Hashem's offer to Adam clearly highlights the idea that Adam's punishment was the result of a failure to take responsibility, not the sin itself.

Reb Simcha Bunim was teaching us that Hashem understands that we, as mere mortals, make mistakes very often. However, upon sinning, Hashem expects to take accountability for our actions. This Yom Kippur, we again have the opportunity to take responsibility for our sinful actions. Hopefully Hashem will see us taking responsibility for our sins and bring the ultimate redemption speedily.

(Ephraim Herrmann- Continued from page 1)

and during the Aseret Yemei Teshuvah we try to do Teshuvah for all the bad things that we may have done the previous year. Then, we say Viduy the afternoon before Yom Kippur as a way to prepare ourselves for the holy and important day. Hopefully by the time we have reached Yom Kippur night we will have already reached the level of a Tzadik. We know that we have done regretful sins in the past but we will continue to try our best to atone for those sins. On Yom Kippur we go before Hashem to do Teshuva and ask for Him to help us in the future. We hope that our davening combined with the importance of the day will make us pure and achieve the level of Yashar. Therefore we start off Yom Kippur davening with the words "Or Zaru'a." It reminds us that we must take advantage of the day in order to achieve (or maintain) the status of Yashar.



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Joseph Cohen

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THE LAST CHANCE OF THE MIDDLE MAN

If the average person was asked, "Do you consider yourself a Tzadik?" it is highly likely that he will respond with a no. Similarly, if asked "Do you consider yourself a Rasha?" they would also say no. Where, then, do these individuals lie? The Gemara in Rosh Hashanah (16b) explains: "Three books are opened on Rosh Hashanah, one of wholly wicked people, and one of wholly righteous people, and one for the people in the middle [of both the righteous and the wicked]". The common man, a man who is neither a Tzadik nor a Rasha, would fall into this category.

The Gemara further explains: "Wholly righteous people are immediately written and sealed for life; wholly wicked people are immediately written and sealed for death; and middling people are left with their judgment suspended from Rosh Hashanah until Yom Kippur. If they merit through the mitzvot that they perform during this period, they are written for life; if they do not merit so, they are written for death." It seems that the middle man is not completely judged on Rosh Hashanah but is rather given a grace period where he can do last minute Teshuva and Mitzvot- a final attempt to be sealed in the book of life.

But why this period of grace? What is so special about this ten day period leading up to and throughout Yom Kippur? The answer is simple: Teshuva! The Gemara (Rosh Hashanah 18a) explains that it is during these days that an individual's prayers and requests are especially listened to by God and answered. The importance and weight that these days have is astronomical - for the middle man, these days are crucial for his success.

Yet, people fail to realize the power these days have: if utilized properly, these days can rip up evil decrees and secure you a position in the book of life. As the Gemara (Rosh Hashanah 17b) explains: "Great is Teshuva, for it tears up the sentence issued against a person." The days leading up to and including Yom Kippur should be filled with Teshuva, Torah, and Mitzvot. Do not stand idly by - take advantage of this opportune time. This is the one time where God answers one's prayers individually and should not be taken lightly.

The day of Yom Kippur, the most serious day of the year, is your last chance for God to hear you. It is your time to explain how you have changed, to enumerate all the good you have done, and to recall the kindnesses you bestowed upon others. When you enter Shul this Yom Kippur, remember that it's your last chance, your last opportunity to stand out to God. How am you going to show Him you changed and deserve to be sealed in the book of life?

(Zachary Rosenberg- Continued from page 1)

Yomim Tovim we eat fixed meals to express our happiness in having the chance to fulfill mitzvot. Since we obviously can't eat on Yom Kippur, we do so on Erev Yom Kippur instead. Furthermore, by eating on Erev Yom Kippur we have the physical strength needed on Yom Kippur to focus on the prayer and reflection that leads to teshuvah. The Tur says that Hashem commanded His people to fast so that their sins could be atoned, but He also commanded them to eat and drink the day before so they can fast easily.

There's a story in Medresh Bereishes Rabbah that is illustrative of the importance of performing the mitzvah of eating on Erev Yom Kippur. There's a minhag to eat fish in the morning on Erev Yom Kippur. The Medrash goes as follows: One time in Rome on Erev Yom Kippur a Jewish tailor went to the market to buy fish. There was only one fish left, but both the tailor and a servant of the Roman governor wanted to buy it. They each kept raising the price until it reached twelve dinar, which the tailor paid. During the governor's meal, he asked his servant why there wasn't any fish. The servant explained what had happened that morning. The governor asked the servant who this Jew was. The Jew was brought before the governor and questioned about his actions. The tailor replied, "Sir! We have but one day during which all the sins that we commit throughout the year are atoned for. Shall we not honor that day when it comes?" The governor let him go for his explanation, and G-d repaid the tailor with a precious jewel in the fish and sustenance for the rest of his life.

The mitzvah of eating on Erev Yom Kippur is an important one and considered to be a great deed, and at the same time easy to perform.

STORIES OF GREATNESS

TOLD OVER BY: YOSEF SCHAFLER

It was the night of Yom Kippur, the holiest time of the year. As all the Jews were gathering in shul anxiously awaiting their rebbe's arrival to begin the prayer services, Rabbi Shneur Zalman, also known as the Alter Rebbe, mysteriously left the small European village. Some of his devoted and admiring chassidim speculated that their beloved leader went to heaven, connecting to G-d and His angels in the heavenly spheres in preparation for this holy time. Where was their beloved leader? As the Rebbe's chassidim waited worriedly for him to arrive, he was climbing deep into the woods, with a sack on his back, to chop down wood. They later learned that he then proceeded to bring the firewood and the sack into the lonely little house of an impoverished widow who had just given birth and her five small children. Saving a life is so important, that chopping wood and creating fire—normally forbidden on the holy day—are permitted. No task was beneath this great Torah scholar as he created a blazing fire in the fireplace, unpacked the food and clothes from the sack, lovingly fed the children and left the woman with many kind and caring words. Perhaps we could say that the Alter Rebbe went to a place even higher than heaven. True goodness and giving often involves nurturing and caring in little ways that go unseen. What is true goodness? What is true giving? Judaism gently teaches us through the stories of the scroll that true goodness is not carried out in a blaze of glory. True goodness and giving often involves nurturing and caring in little ways that go unseen. Often when it's hard. Often when it hurts. Often when it's not really "my job." Impacting this world is not reserved for the knight in shining armor, for the airbrushed faces of Hollywood. It is the responsibility and right of every one of us—with all of our talents and strengths, and yes, with all of our weaknesses. We, and our loved ones, are immortalized long after we are gone, through the kind acts on this earth—the comforting whisper to a frightened child, the mending of a broken heart, the giving of Tzedakah when we need to dig deep, the patience to a bad-tempered relative, the nourishing home-cooked meal delivered with love . . . It is through this goodness and giving that we are able to ascend higher than heaven.

Adapted from Chabad.org

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YONAH'S HIDDEN LESSON

MOSHE CRANE 12TH GRADE

As Yom Kippur is fast approaching, it is important to reflect upon the reason for the importance of Yom Kippur. Yom Kippur, in the broadest sense, is all about repentance. As a result, it would seem fitting that the portion of Tanach read during Yom Kippur would come from a place that is primarily concentrated on the discussion of Teshuva. Seemingly, the Book of Yonah is not the most fitting place from which to read from on Yom Kippur, since, despite the brief episode of Nineveh's Teshuva and subsequent salvation, the majority of the Book of Yonah concentrates on the journey of Yonah, not Teshuva. The obvious question is, then, why is the Book of Yonah read on Yom Kippur?

Rather, the Book of Yonah must teach us something more fundamental than Teshuva about Yom Kippur. To discover this, we must ask two questions about the story of Nineveh. First, why does Yonah originally say no to Hashem and run away? He is, after all, a prophet and therefore someone who would be seemingly be more likely to listen to Hashem's commands. Secondly, at the end of the story, after Hashem saves Nineveh as a result of their Teshuva, Yonah becomes upset about their salvation, leaves the city and tells Hashem he wants to die. In response, Hashem gives Yonah a gourd to provide shade as a result of the intense heat outside the city. Then, Hashem takes it away and because of the returning heat, Yonah wants to die again. Hashem tells Yonah, "Just like you had compassion for the gourd you never worked for, don't you think I should have compassion on Nineveh, a city with people who are not yet mature enough to tell their left from their right?" (Yonah 4:9-11) What lesson is Hashem trying to teach Yonah? Furthermore, why would Hashem call Yonah's fondness of the plant "compassion"; the only reason Yonah liked the plant was that the plant provided shade, not because Yonah somehow took pity on it? In short, how is this a good analogy?

The deeper answer lies in the difference of perspective about Nineveh between Yonah and Hashem. Yonah originally ran away, became upset, and wanted to die because Yonah saw the world as one purely of justice, where all sins are punished straightaway. As a result, Yonah was furious that Nineveh, a city with large amounts of sinners, was able to sidestep the punishment that he saw as a necessary consequence, and therefore wanted no part in Nineveh's salvation. Hashem, as seen through His forgiveness of Nineveh's sins, His taking away of Yonah's shade, and subsequent lesson given through the analogy, is showing Yonah that this world has a balance of both compassion and justice, where sinners are given an opportunity to do Teshuva before their punishment is enacted. As a result, according to Hashem, it is necessary to give a second chance to a city with "people who are not yet mature enough to tell their left from their right."

The lesson to be learned from Yonah is that there is really a balance between these two perspectives. In the same way that Teshuva has little meaning in a world of pure justice, there is little reason to do Teshuva in a world of pure compassion. Yom Kippur is really the last time that one can seek Hashem's compassion before our judgements for the year are passed down, and we are then subject to Hashem's Justice. Teshuva cannot change the past, but does change the future. This Yom Kippur we should strive to show why we are deserving of His Compassion, for then we will receive Hashem's favorable Justice.

Gmar Chasimah Tova! Have an Easy and Meaningful Fast!

Opportunity of a Lifetime

David Benhamu

12th Grade

Yom Kippur, known as the day of judgement, is upon us. This description of Yom Kippur poses a question: If Yom Kippur is the judgement day why is it happening after Rosh Hashana? Aren't we judged before the new year so we can enter the new year feeling vindicated? On the same note, we know there is a well known custom to try to be more stringent on many halachot during the Aseres Yemei Hateshuva. But this seems pointless? Do we really believe that Hashem can be fooled?

Let's bring one answer to all of our questions. That is, Hashem ideally wants to give us the fresh start which comes with a new year prior to our judgment day so that we have a chance to do some good. And at that time Hashem is willing to be "fooled". His desire is to judge us favorably, and he's willing to ignore almost an entire year in exchange for a ten-day span in which we act our best. Now, why is Hashem so kind as to allow us to make up for a year of sins in one ten-day span? Because He hopes that those days of acting well will stick with one, and inspire him to do just as good over the rest of the year.

To conclude, we see that the reason Yom Kippur is after Rosh Hashana is so that we have the ability to have a "clean slate" before the Yom Hadin. As well, Hashem allows us to "fool" him by doing the right things right before Yom Kippur. This shows us that Hashem cares for us; he wants to forgive us, all we have to do is put in the required effort. As an analogy to this, consider the Midrash in Shir Hashirim that says that if one makes a pinhole, Hashem will widen it. So, if we start the process by performing Teshuvah, Hashem will guide us towards a complete redemption. Let's use this opportunity to our benefit and have a happy and healthy year!

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