



The Chabad Online Weekly Magazine

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Inside this Week's Edition...

*Seasons of
the Soul*

Once A Year: A Yom Kippur Anthology

It is a courtroom decked in white, a fast day and a festival, the holiest day of the year but also a time that is beyond holiness. If we can't explain Yom Kippur, let's talk about it...

Voices

Does G-d Care When I'm Sad?

Or perhaps it's the other way around: we care, simply and only, because You, G-d, care

Story

The Paper Chicken

"How I do kaparot?" repeated Rabbi Elimelech. "I do what everyone else does. I hold the rooster in one hand, the prayer book in the other, and recite: This is my exchange, this is in my stead, this is my atonement..."

Inner

Dimensions

Reverse Biology

Why do we fast on Yom Kippur? A common perception is that it's to de-emphasize our physicality on the most spiritual day of the year. According to Chassidic teaching, the very opposite is the case

Parsha

Haazinu Deuteronomy 32:1-52

He found him in a desert land
In the waste howling wilderness;
He led him about
He instructed him
He kept him as the apple of His eye...

Yom Kippur Torah Readings — Leviticus 16:1-34; 18:1-30

The "annual singularity" (achat bashanah) brought together the holiest day of the year, the loftiest soul on earth, and the holiest place in the universe



Yom Kippur 5764 (2003)

Quote for the day

"Seek G-d when He may be found, call upon Him when He is near" (Isaiah 55:6)-- These are the ten days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur"

(Talmud, Rosh Hashanah 18a)

Daily Thought

Broken and Whole

When you find the Infinite, where will you put it? In your broken vessel? It will not stay. In a new whole one? It will not fit.

Let the heart be broken in bitterness for its confines. Let it be whole in the joy of a boundless soul.

This is the secret that Man holds over the angels: Only the human heart can be broken and whole at once.

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COMMENT

At-onement

by: Tzvi Freeman

The Yom Kippur *Machzor* (prayer book) translated into English resembles a graceful bird of flight, an albatross, clumsily waddling along the ground; a ballerina in an astronaut's suit — on Jupiter; a romantic sonata performed by a jug band. All the more amazing, then, that there is one word — a key word — that the English language got right. Not just right, but exquisitely right. One could say, even better than the original. And that is “atonement”. For this is certainly what Yom Kippur is about in its very essence: A day of “at one-ment.”

How did this language know? Our sages had picked up on it long ago, that the Torah speaks about Yom Kippur as a day “once in the year”. Of course, that could simply mean it is a unique day, distinct from every other day in all regards. But in a deeper sense, at the core of Yom Kippur lies a theme of “onement” and our act of being there — at that onement.

Yes, you'll tell me, I've got it all wrong. “Atonement” is simply the translation of the Hebrew *Kapparah* — any act that effects forgiveness, cleanses our souls of the stains it has acquired over the year and allows us and G-d to make up and get on with things. What has that got to do with “oneness” or “onement”?

Everything. First of all, because atonement achieves at-onement. When the inner soul of man below and the Essence of Being above forgive and make up, they are at one once again.

And because at-onement achieves atonement. Because, in order to achieve atonement we must first arrive at onement.

But the rest of the year we are not at onement. Why? Because of the way we see things.

Looks are deceiving. With our fleshly eyes we see ourselves as aliens in a universe harshly cold and silent to the drama of emotions and desires, agony

and ecstasy, aspirations, failures and achievements that make us human beings.

But a deeper sense tells us that, no, deep within this reality and entirely transcendent of it is an essence that resonates with the stirring of our inner hearts. For do not we also emerge out of this universe? If we have a heart, a mind, a soul, must not the universe also have such? “The One who formed the ear, does He not hear?”

We call that Essence, “G-d.” And so, we pray.

All year round we live apart from this Essence. Yes, we have a conscience driving us not to fall out of harmony with it in a sort of *pas de deux*. But it is a harmony of “should”: We would rather do “this,” but that other voice says we should do “that.” So we do. But sometimes we don't. At least, not exactly as we “should.” We fall out of sync. Like two musical notes not quite in tune, a dissonance ensues. We fall further apart. Our backs are turned to each other. There is no dance, no duet, only the friction of two disparate travelers acting out their own scripts.

But on Yom Kippur we embrace, our essence with that Essence Within and Beyond. And we say to one another, “The dance may be faulty, but the hearts are one.” There is no longer “should”. There is “is”. All is forgiven. At onement.

Based on the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe; rendered by Tzvi Freeman, tfreeman@chabadonline.com

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VOICES

Does G-d Care When I'm Sad?

by Chana Weisberg

Recently, at our Institute of Jewish Studies, I organized a mini-summer series entitled “Tears of Joy, Tears of Sorrow.”

Several guest speakers examined joy and sorrow from different vantage points — from a mystical perspective all the way to the psychological aspect. Rabbis dealt with the spiritual aspects of joy and taught the source texts that describe a time of eternal joy. A psychiatrist explained the emotions we experience which plunge us to the depths of the worst feelings of helplessness, and provided practical tools to emerge from “pieces to peace.”

And then I had asked a friend of mine to speak from a personal perspective. I titled her lecture, “Does G-d Care When I'm Sad?”

I wasn't sure how comfortable my friend would be to open up on a personal level. But I figured that the topic was broad enough for her to broach as distantly, or — hopefully — as intimately as she chose. What I was sure was that this friend had experienced her share of sadness and tragedy. I was positive that she had grappled with this very question, many a time.

Though only in her twenties at the time, my friend, Esther, had fought and overcome two bouts of cancer. As if that wasn't enough, she had lost a child in the most trying of circumstances.

Esther had tucked her two-year-old under his covers one night, with a simple case of childhood chicken pox. She awoke the next morning to discover her child dead in his bed. An infection of the blood had fulminated during his sleep, and in the silent black night the child's organs collapsed, one by one.

At what moment her child closed his eyes for the last time, as well as whether he actually called to his parents, is anyone's guess. But the hard fact of reality confronted Esther in the morning, with the cold body of her child lying before her disbelieving eyes.

Our community was in a state of shock with the abrupt snuffing of this young life. But no one could possibly fathom the immense shock and grief felt by this young mother.

Several years had now passed since that tragic night, and Esther had given birth to several more children. But the trauma of such an immense loss is a wound that never heals entirely. While the pain numbs slightly, the empty hole is carried forever.

My friend began her speech by saying, “While I do not know many of you, I do know why Chana has asked me speak tonight.”

At the outset Esther asked us, “Please do not to mind my tears, since this is the first time that I am publicly speaking about such a personal issue. But when Chana called me, I felt that the time had come to confront the challenge and see if I could share my experience.”

She explained briefly the events of her child's passing and continued to refer to it as “that night” because it was, understandably, too difficult to enunciate the words “death of my child.”

Esther elaborated on the many steps that she went through in coping with her loss. During the first year, it took all of her energy to merely wake up in the morning and get dressed. She described how she had asked my father, her rabbi, while he visited her during the *shivah*, to tell her something — anything, any lesson, any words of comfort. He answered wisely, “No, not now. Now is not yet the time.”

Esther explained how this validated the need for someone experiencing the loss of a loved one to mourn, to feel the depths of pain, while still blinded by grief, before searching for any understanding.

Esther read us passages from her personal diary. She showed us through her entries, her poetry and her reflections, how she progressed through the various stages of healing. She described her deep closeness to G-d throughout her struggles. At times she felt full of questions, anger, depression and sadness, but nevertheless, her relationship with G-d became far more intense than it had ever been.

With tremendous conviction, she elaborated on her newly achieved awareness and sensitivity as G-d became a real constant in her life.

VOICES

Does G-d Care When I'm Sad?

And then she spoke about her awareness eventually developing and expanding into consideration for others in similar plights. She recalled how her own mother had said to her, "My dear daughter, despite the pain you are feeling, you must realize that you do not have a copyright on pain. Others are also in pain and suffering. Realizing this in no way diminishes your own pain, but rather provides you with the tools for greater sensitivity."

Esther found those tools and that inner strength to address us that evening.

All the lectures in this multi-part summer series were interesting, relevant and informative, but Esther's talk reached a deep place within each of us — precisely because she had spoken straight from her heart, so personally and so honestly.

We grew strong with her courage; we developed newfound faith with her faith; and we cried, silently or openly, along with the tears that streamed down her cheeks.

As I reflected on her talk afterwards, I realized that her presentation was the most powerful answer to the ever-present question that plagues us all — Does G-d care when I'm sad?

How can a human being find the strength and courage to emerge from such tragic personal suffering and still function? Moreover, what provides her with the fortitude to share her most intimate, personal experiences so that others, too, can learn and grow?

And what pulls people to shed their own indifference and apathy to deeply embrace a stranger's experiences, relieve them with her, and become transformed in the process? What opens us up to feeling such enormous sorrow when another human being is sad, and such care for another's pain?

Such depths of empathy, caring and sharing can only be evoked through the power of the G-dly core and connection within each of us.

As that G-dly part in each of us surfaced that

evening, what was so explicitly revealed — more convincing than any argument could be — was that we care, simply and only, because You, G-d, care.

Chana Weisberg is the author of two books -- on the lives of Biblical women and on the feminine soul -- and is currently working on two more. She is the dean of the JRCC Institute of Torah Study in Toronto and lectures worldwide on issues relating to women, relationships and mysticism. She welcomes your comments or inquiries about her speaking tours and books, and can be contacted at cweisberg@chabad.org

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STORY

The Paper Chicken

by Rabbi Y. S. Zevin

Once, on the evening before Yom Kippur, one of the chassidim of Rabbi Elimelech of Lizhensk asked his Rebbe to allow him to see how he, Rabbi Elimelech, observes the custom of *kapparot*.

“How I do *kapparot*?” repeated Rabbi Elimelech. “How do *you* do *kapparot*?”

“I am an ordinary Jew — I do what everyone else does. I hold the rooster in one hand, the prayer book in the other, and recite the text, ‘This is my exchange, this is in my stead, this is my atonement...’”

“That’s exactly what I do,” said Rabbi Elimelech. “I take the rooster in one hand, the prayer book in the other, and recite the text. Actually, there might be a certain difference between your *kapparot* and mine: you probably make sure to use a white rooster, while to me it makes no difference: white, black, brown — a rooster’s a rooster...”

But the chassid persisted that his Rebbe’s *kapparot* was certainly no ordinary event. He had been coming to Lizhensk to pray with the Rebbe every Yom Kippur for more than twenty years now, and had always wanted to observe his Rebbe at this most solemn moment.

“You want to see an extraordinary *kapparot*?” said Rabbi Elimelech. “Go observe how Moshe the tavern-keeper does *kapparot*. Now, there you’ll see something far more inspiring than my own, ordinary *kapparot*.”

The chassid located Moshe’s tavern at a crossroads several miles outside of Lizhensk and asked to stay the night. “I’m sorry,” said the tavern-keeper. “As you see, this is a small establishment, and we don’t have any rooms to let. There’s an inn a small distance further down the road.”

“Please,” begged the chassid, “I’ve been traveling all day, and I want to rest awhile. I don’t need a room — I’ll just curl up in a corner for a few hours

and be on my way.”

“O.K.,” said Moshe. “We’ll be closing up shortly, and then you can get some sleep.”

After much shouting, cajoling and threatening, Moshe succeeded in herding his clientele of drunken peasants out the door. The chairs and tables were stacked in a corner, and the room, which also served as the tavern-keeper’s living quarters, readied for the night. Midnight had long passed, and the hour of *kapparot* was approaching. The chassid, wrapped in his blanket under a table, feigned sleep, but kept watch in the darkened room, determined not to miss anything.

Before dawn, Moshe rose from his bed, washed his hands and recited the morning blessings. “Time for *kapparot*!” he called quietly to his wife, taking care not to wake his guest. “Yentel, please bring me the notebook — it’s on the shelf above the cupboard.”

Moshe sat himself on a small stool, lit a candle, and began reading from the notebook, unaware that his “sleeping” guest was wide awake and straining to hear every word. The notebook was a diary of all the misdeeds and transgressions the tavern-keeper had committed in the course of the year, the date, time and circumstance of each scrupulously noted. His “sins” were quite benign — a word of gossip one day, oversleeping the time for prayer on another, neglecting to give his daily coin to charity on a third — but by the time Moshe had read through the first few pages, his face was bathed in tears. For more than an hour Moshe read and wept, until the last page had been turned.

“Yentel,” he now called to his wife, “bring me the second notebook.”

This, too, was a diary — of all the troubles and misfortunes that had befallen him in the course of the year. On this day Moshe was beaten by a gang of peasants, on that day his child fell ill; once, in the dead of winter, the family had frozen for several nights for lack of firewood; another time their cow had died, and there was no milk until enough rubles had been saved to buy another.

When he had finished reading the second notebook, the tavern-keeper lifted his eyes heavenward and said: “So you see, dear Father in Heaven, I have

STORY

The Paper Chicken

sinned against You. Last year I repented and promised to fulfill Your commandments, but I repeatedly succumbed to my evil inclination. But last year I also prayed and begged You for a year of health and prosperity, and I trusted in You that it would indeed be this way.

“Dear Father, today is the eve of Yom Kippur, when everyone forgives and is forgiven. Let us put the past behind us. I’ll accept my troubles as atonement for my sins, and You, in Your great mercy, shall do the same.”

Moshe took the two notebooks in his hands, raised them aloft, circled them three times above his head, and said: “This is my exchange, this is in my stead, this is my atonement.” He then threw them into the fireplace, where the smoldering coals soon turned the tear-stained pages to ashes.

From Rabbi S.Y. Zevin’s Sippurei Chassidim; translation/adaptation by Yanki Tauber; editor@chabadonline.com

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INNER DIMENSIONS

Reverse Biology

Based on the teachings of the
Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem

M. Schneerson

And this shall be an everlasting statute for you: in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you shall afflict your souls...

Leviticus 16:29

In the World to Come, there is neither eating nor drinking...

Talmud, Berachot 17a

The human being consists of a body and a soul — a physical envelope of flesh, blood, sinew and bone, inhabited and vitalized by a spiritual force described by the Chassidic masters as “literally a part of G-d above.”

Common wisdom has it that spirit is loftier than matter, and the soul holier (i.e., closer to the Divine) than the body. This conception seems to be borne out by the fact that Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the year — the day on which we achieve the height of intimacy with G-d — is ordained by the Torah as a fast day, a day on which we seemingly abandon the body and its needs to devote ourselves exclusively to the spiritual activities of repentance and prayer.

In truth, however, a fast day brings about a deeper, rather than more distant, relationship with the body. When a person eats, he is nourished by the food and drink he ingests. On a fast day, vitality comes from the body itself — from energy stored in its cells. In other words, on less holy days, it is an outside force (the energy in one’s food and drink) that keeps body and soul together; on Yom Kippur, the union of body and soul derives from the body itself.

Yom Kippur thus offers a taste of the culminating state of creation known as the “World to Come.” The Talmud tells us that “in the World to Come, there is neither eating nor drinking” — a statement that is sometimes understood to imply that in its ultimate and most perfect state, creation is wholly spiritual, devoid of bodies and all things physical. Kabbalistic and Chassidic teaching, however, describe the World to Come as a world in which the physical dimension

of existence is not abolished, but is preserved and elevated. The fact that there is “neither eating or drinking” in the World to Come is not due to an absence of bodies and physical life, but to the fact that in this future world, “the soul will be nourished by the body” itself, and the symbiosis of matter and spirit that is man will not require any outside sources of nutrition to sustain it.

Two Vehicles

The physical and the spiritual are both creations of G-d. Both were brought into being by Him out of utter nothingness, and each bears the imprint of its Creator in the particular qualities that define it.

The spiritual, with its intangibility and its transcendence of time and space, reflects the sublimity and infinity of G-d. The spiritual is also naturally submissive, readily acknowledging its subservience to a higher truth. It is these qualities that make the spiritual “holy” and a vehicle of relationship with G-d.

The physical, on the other hand, is tactual, egocentric and immanent — qualities that brand it “mundane” rather than holy, that mark it as an obfuscation, rather than a manifestation, of the divine truth. For the unequivocal “I am” of the physical belies the truth that “there is none else besides Him” — that G-d is the sole source and end of all existence.

Ultimately, however, everything comes from G-d; every feature of His every creation has its source in Him and serves to reveal His truth. So on a deeper level, the very qualities that make the physical “unholy” are the qualities that make it the most sacred and G-dly of G-d’s creations. For what is the “I am” of the physical if not an echo of the unequivocal being of G-d? What is the tactility of the physical if not an intimation of the absoluteness of His reality? What is the “selfishness” of the physical if not an offshoot, however remote, of the exclusivity of G-d expressed in the axiom “There is none else besides Him”?

Today, the physical world shows us only its most superficial face, in which the divine characteristics stamped in it are corrupted as a concealment, rather than a revelation, of G-dliness. Today, when the physical object conveys to us “I am,” it bespeaks not the reality of G-d but an independent, self-sufficient existence that challenges the divine truth. But in the World to Come, the product of the labor of a hundred generations to sanctify the material world, the true face of the physical will come to light.

In the World to Come, the physical will be no less

INNER DIMENSIONS

Reverse Biology

a vehicle of divinity than the spiritual. In fact, in many respects, it will surpass the spiritual as a conveyor of G-dliness. For while the spiritual expresses various divine *characteristics* — G-d's infinity, transcendence, etc. — the physical expresses the *being* of G-d.

Today, the body must look to the soul as its moral guide, as its source of awareness and appreciation of all things divine. But in the World to Come, "the soul will be nourished by the body." The physical body will be a source of divine awareness and identification that is loftier than the soul's own spiritual vision.

Yom Kippur is a taste of this future world of reverse biology. It is thus a day on which we are "sustained by hunger," deriving our sustenance from the body itself. On this holiest of days, the body becomes a source of life and nurture rather than its recipient.

Based on the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, www.therebbe.org; adapted by Yanki Tauber, editor@chabadonline.com

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SEASONS OF THE SOUL

Once A Year: A Yom Kippur Anthology

Compiled by Yanki Tauber

The enigma of Yom Kippur: It is a courtroom decked in white, a fast day and a festival, the holiest day of the year but also a time that is beyond holiness. It is day designated for repentance, but also a place in which the very concept of “sin” is non-existent. It occurs once a year, but it is also the “one of the year” — the singular essence of the year’s every day.

If we cannot explain Yom Kippur, let’s talk about it — in the fifteen stories and essays assembled here.

Insights:

Day One by Yanki Tauber

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How to Change the Past by Yanki Tauber

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Vistas by Jay Litvin

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Stories:

Kano by David Ben-Dor

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Kol Nidrei by Yanki Tauber

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The Shofar and the Wall by Moshe Tzvi Segal

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Essays:

The 120-Day Version of the Human Story from

the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe
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The Four Meanings of Sin from the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

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Reverse Biology from the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

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Uncle Irv by Jay Litvin

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PARSHAH IN A NUTSHELL

Haazinu

Deuteronomy 32:1-52

The greater part of the Torah reading of *Haazinu* (“Listen In”) consists of a 70-line “song” delivered by Moses to the people of Israel on the last day of his earthly life.

Calling **heaven** and **earth** as witnesses, Moses exhorts the people to “**remember** the days of old / **Consider** the years of many generations / **Ask your father**, and he will recount it to you / Your **elders**, and they will tell you” how G-d “found them in a desert land”, made them a people, **chose** them as His own, and bequeathed them a bountiful land. The Song also warns against the pitfalls of plenty: “*Yeshurun grew fat*, and kicked / You have grown fat, thick, and waddled/ He forsook G-d who made him / And spurned the Rock of his salvation” — and the terrible calamities that would result, which Moses describes as G-d “**Hiding His face**”. Yet in the end, he promises, G-d will be avenged the blood of His servants and be reconciled with his people and land.

The Parshah concludes with G-d’s instruction to Moses to ascend the summit of Mount **Nebo**, from which he beheld the Promised Land before dying on the mountain. “For you shall see the land opposite you; but you shall not go there, into the land which I give to the children of Israel.”



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PARSHAH IN A NUTSHELL

Yom Kippur Torah Readings

Torah Readings for Yom Kippur, October 6, 2003

Leviticus 16:1-34; 18:1-30

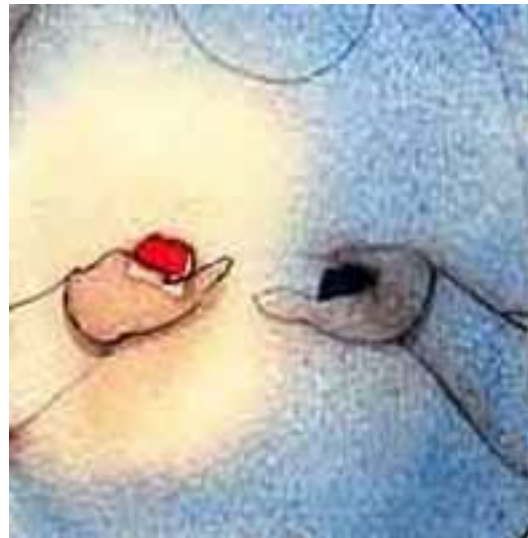
The Torah reading for **Yom Kippur** morning describes the service performed on this day by the **Kohen Gadol** (“high priest”) in the **Holy Temple** in Jerusalem.

A special feature of the Yom Kippur service was the **casting of lots** over two he-goats — equal in age, size and appearance — to determine which shall be **offered to G-d** in the Holy Temple, and which shall be dispatched to carry off the **sins** of Israel to the **wilderness**.

The climax of the service was when the *Kohen Gadol* entered the innermost chamber in the Temple, the “**Holy of Holies**.” Wearing special garments of **pure white linen**, the *Kohen Gadol* would enter the sacred place with a pan of **burning coals** in his right hand, and a ladle containing an exact handful of **ketoret** in his left. Inside the Holy of Holies, he would place the *ketoret* over the coals, wait for the room to fill with its aromatic smoke, and hastily retreat from the holy place.

“This shall be an everlasting statute for you,” the Torah reading concludes. “... For on this day He will forgive you, to purify you, that you be cleansed from all your sins before G-d... **once a year**.”

During the afternoon Minchah service, we read chapter 18 of Leviticus, which details the prohibitions against incest and other deviant sexual behaviors. The Torah reading is followed by a *haftorah* (reading from the Prophets) which tells the **story of Jonah** — the prophet who was sent to prophesy the destruction of the sinful city of Ninveh, ran away from G-d, was **swallowed by a fish**, and learned the power of **prayer** and **repentance** to evoke G-d’s mercy and annul the harshest decrees.



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PARSHAH SUMMARY & COMMENTARY

Yom Kippur Torah Readings

Leviticus 16:1 20:27

Following the deaths of Nadav and Avihu, who "came close to G-d and died", G-d tells Moses to instruct Aaron

...that he should not enter, at all times, into the holy, inside the Parochet (the "veil" that separated the "Holy of Holies" from the rest of the Sanctuary), before the Kaporet (cover) that is upon the Ark — lest he die; for in a cloud I appear above the Kaporet...

Only on the holiest day of the year — Yom Kippur — and after bringing a series of specially ordained offerings, should the Kohen Gadol ("high priest") purify himself, put on n white linen garments, and enter the chamber housing the Ark:

He shall take a pan-full of fiery coals from atop the altar that is before G-d, and the fill of his hands of finely-ground ketoret (incense), and bring them inside the Parochet.

And he shall place the ketoret upon the fire before G-d;

and the cloud of incense shall cover up the Kaporet that is on [the Ark of] the Testament...

The Torah then goes on to detail the service performed by the Kohen Gadol on Yom Kippur to secure atonement for his people. Among the offerings of the day were two male goats:

And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats: one lot for G-d, and one lot for Azazel.

The goat that which the lot determined to be "For G-d" is brought as an offering and its blood is sprinkled in the Holy of Holies. The one deemed for "Azazel" is "dispatched by the hand of an appointed man into the wilderness; and the goat shall bear upon it all their sins to a barren land."

And he shall make atonement for the holy place, over the defilements of the children of Israel, over their transgressions in all their sins. And so shall he do for the Tent of Meeting, which dwells amongst them in the midst of their defilement...

And this shall be an everlasting statute for you: in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all, the home born or the stranger that sojourns among you.

For on this day will He will atone for you, to cleanse you, that you may be clean from all your sins before G-d... once a year.

Commentary

AFTER THE DEATH OF THE TWO SONS OF AARON WHO CAME CLOSE TO G-D AND DIED (LEVITICUS 16:1)

They approached the supernal light out of their great love of the Holy, and thereby died. Thus they died by "divine kiss" such as experienced by the perfectly righteous; it is only that the righteous die when the divine kiss approaches them, while they died by their approaching it... Although they sensed their own demise, this did not prevent them from drawing near to G-d in attachment, delight, delectability, fellowship, love, kiss and sweetness, to the point that their souls ceased from them.

(Ohr HaChaim)

AND HE SHALL BATHE HIS FLESH IN WATER, AND CLOTHE HIMSELF IN THEM (16:4)

On that day, the Kohen Gadol immersed (in a mikveh) five times, and washed his hands and feet from the *kiyor* ("basin") that stood before the Sanctuary ten times: each time he changed his clothes, he was required to immerse once, and wash twice (once before removing the first set of clothes, and again after dressing in the second set).

For there were five sets of services performed by him on that day: 1) The regular morning services, performed in the "golden garments" (worn by the Kohen Gadol throughout the year). 2) The special services of the day (reciting the confession over the Yom Kippur offerings, casting the lots, entering the Holy of Holies to offer the *ketoret* and to sprinkle the blood of the Yom Kippur offerings)—performed in the linen garments. 3) The two rams brought as "ascending offerings" and the day's *musaf* offerings—in the

golden garments. 4) returning to the Holy of Holies to remove the pan of burning incense—in linen garments. 5) the regular afternoon services—in the golden garments.

(Talmud, tractate Yoma)

TWO HE-GOATS (16:5)

They should be identical in appearance, height and price, and should be acquired together.

(Talmud, Yoma 62b)

AND SO SHALL HE DO FOR THE TENT OF MEETING, WHICH DWELLS AMONGST THEM IN THE MIDST OF THEIR DEFILEMENT (16:16)

Also when they are in a state of defilement, the *Shechinah* (Divine Presence) dwells with them.

(Talmud; Rashi)

FOR ON THIS DAY, HE SHALL ATONE FOR YOU (16:30)

On Yom Kippur, the day itself atones... as it is written, "For on this day... shall atone for you."

(Maimonides)

WEEK AT A GLANCE

S u n d a y Tishrei 2 | September 28

ROSH HASHANAH

Torah Readings: Genesis 22 and Numbers 29:1-6

Laws & Customs: **Candles**

The festival candles for the 2nd eve of Rosh Hashanah (Saturday night) must be lit after nightfall from a pre-existing flame. For candle lighting times see:

www.chabad.org/holidays/jewishnewyear/Calendar_Setup.asp

Shehecheyanu

A new garment is worn and/or a new fruit (i.e., one that has not yet been tasted this season) is placed on the table and eaten after kiddush, in order to enable us to make the Shehecheyanu blessing praising G-d for "granting us life, sustaining us, and bringing us to this season" (because the two days of Rosh Hashanah are regarded as "one long day", the Shehecheyanu blessing, recited on the festivals by the women when lighting the candles and by the men in kiddush, requires an additional source of rejoicing).

"Yaknahaz"

The kiddush for the eve of the second day of Rosh Hashanah includes these five elements, in order: blessing on the wine, blessing on the sanctity ("kiddush") of the day, blessing on fire (as we do each week after Shabbat ends), Havdalah ("separation" blessing marking the close of the Shabbat), and the Shehecheyanu blessing (see above). ("Yaknahaz" is an acronym for the Hebrew words for "Wine, Day, Candle, Separation, Season").

Shofar

In the course of the morning and musaf service, the shofar (ram's horn) is sounded one hundred times, in various combinations of tekiah (a long blast), shevarim (a trio of broken sobs) and teruah (a staccato of short notes), in fulfillment of the primary mitzvah of Rosh Hashanah. The shofar serves to trumpet our coronation of G-d as King of the Universe, as a call to repentance, and to evoke the memory of the Binding of Isaac. Because the first day of Rosh Hashanah falls on Shabbat this year, the shofar is sounded on the 2nd day only.

Link: The Cry of the Shofar: Two Parables
www.chabad.org/article.asp?aid=58696

Tashlich

In the afternoon, the Tashlich prayer service, in which we ask G-d to "cast away our sins in the depths of the sea", is recited at a body of water containing fish (Tashlich is postponed this year to the 2nd day of Rosh Hashanah because of Shabbat).

M o n d a y Tishrei 3 | September 29

FAST OF GEDALIAH

On This Date: **Assassination of Gedaliah (423 BCE)**

Tishrei 3rd is a fast day mourning the assassination of the Jewish royal Gedaliah ben Achikam, governor of the Land of Israel for a short period following the destruction of the First Temple. Gedaliah's killing spelled the end of the small remnant of a Jewish community that remained in the Holy Land after the destruction, which fled to Egypt. (The assassination of Gedaliah actually occurred on Tishrei 2, but the commemoration of the event is postponed to the next day, due to the festival of Rosh Hashanah).

Laws & Customs: **Fast**

Mourning the killing of Gedaliah (see above), we abstain from food and drink from dawn to nightfall; selichot prayers are included in the morning prayer.

10 Days of Repentance

The 10-day period beginning on Rosh Hashanah and ending on Yom Kippur is known as the "Ten Days of Repentance"; this is the period, say the sages of the Talmud, of which the prophet speaks when he proclaims (Isaiah 55:6) "Seek G-d when He is to be found; call on Him when He is near." Psalm 130, Avinu Malkeinu and other special inserts and additions are included in our daily prayers during these days.

Links: About the Ten Days of teshuvah;
<http://chabad.org/article.asp?aid=59160>
Voicemail; <http://chabad.org/article.asp?aid=59065>
more on teshuvah
<http://chabad.org/search/keyword.asp?kid=1244>

W e d n e s d a y Tishrei 5 | October 1

On This Date: **R. Akiva martyred (134)**

The great Talmudic sage, Rabbi Akiva, was taken captive by the Romans on Tishrei 5 of the year 3894 from creation (134 CE). His subsequent torture and execution is recalled in the stirring Eleh Ezkarah poem of the Yom Kippur service.

T h u r s d a y Tishrei 6 | October 2

On This Date: **Passing of Rebbetzin Chanah Schneerson (1964)**

Tishrei 6 is the yahrtzeit of Rebbetzin Chanah Schneerson

WEEK AT A GLANCE

(1879-1964), mother of the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

Friday Tishrei 7 | October 3

LIGHT SHABBAT & FESTIVAL CANDLES BEFORE SUNSET

www.chabad.org/calendar/candlelighting.asp

Shabbat Tishrei 8 | October 4

Torah reading: Haazinu (Deuteronomy 32:-52)

Haftarah: Shuvah Yisrael

On This Date: **Temple dedicated (826 BCE)**

The 14-day dedication festivities, celebrating the completion of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem built by King Solomon, commenced on the 8th of Tishrei of the year 2935 from creation (826 BCE). The First Temple served as the epicenter of Jewish national and spiritual life for 410 year, until its destruction by the Babylonians in 423 BCE.

Links: The Holy Temple: an Anthology
<http://chabad.org/article.asp?aid=52754>

Passing of R. Baruch (1791)

Yahrtzeit of Rabbi Baruch, father of the founder of Chabad, Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi.

Laws & Customs: Shabbat Shuvah

The Shabbat between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur is called Shabbat Shuvah, "Shabbat of Return." The name derives from the Haftarah (reading from the prophets) for this Shabbat, which opens with the words (Hosea 14:2), "Return O Israel unto the L-rd your G-d..." Occurring in the "Ten Days of Repentance" (see Tishrei 3 above), it is a most auspicious time to rectify the failings and missed opportunities of the past and positively influence the coming year.

According to master Kabbalist Rabbi Isaac Luria ("Ari"), the seven days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur (which will always include one Sunday, one Monday, etc.) correspond to the seven days of the week. The Sunday between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur includes within itself all Sundays of the year; the Monday embodies all Mondays, and so on. Shabbat Shuvah is thus the archetypal Shabbat -- the juncture in time at which we are empowered to influence every Shabbat of our year.

Sunday Tishrei 9 | October 5

Laws & Customs: **Kaparot**

In the early morning hours of the day preceding Yom Kippur, the Kaparot ("Atonement") ceremony is performed. We take a live chicken (a rooster for a male and a hen for a female) and, circling it three times above our heads, we declare: "This is my replacement, this is my exchange, this is my atonement; this fowl shall go to its death, and I shall go to a long, good and peaceful life." The fowl is then slaughtered in accordance with halachic procedure, at which time we contemplate that this is a fate we ourselves would deserve, G-d forbid, for our failings and iniquities. The value of the fowl is given to the poor, and its meat eaten in the Yom Kippur meal; some give the fowls themselves to the poor. (An alternate custom is to perform the entire rite only with money, reciting the prescribed verses and giving the money to charity. Kaparot can also be preformed in the preceding days, during the "Ten Days of Repentance").

Links: The Custom of Kaparot (from the Yom Kippur "How to" guide); <http://chabad.org/article.asp?aid=4441>
a Chassidic story; <http://chabad.org/article.asp?aid=87880>
What Give us the Right to Kill Animals?
<http://chabad.org/article.asp?aid=77318>

festive meals

The day before Yom Kippur is a Yov Tov, a festive day; for although we stand prepared to be judged in the supernal courtroom for our deeds of the passed year, we are confident that G-d is a merciful judge, and will decree a year of life, health and prosperity for us. Two festive meals are eaten -- one at midday and the other before the fast, which begins at sunset. The Talmud states that "Whoever eats and drinks on the 9th [of Tishrei], it is regarded as if he had fasted on both the 9th and the 10th."

Links: Eating Before Yom Kippur;
<http://chabad.org/article.asp?aid=4440>
Food: an Anthology; <http://chabad.org/article.asp?aid=73825>
Reverse Biology <http://chabad.org/article.asp?aid=88002>

Mikveh

Both men and women immerse in a mikveh (ritual pool) to attain an extra measure of sanctity before the holy day.

Lekach

It is customary to ask for and receive lekach (sweet cake -- signifying a sweet year) from someone (usually one's mentor or parent) on the this day. One of the reasons given for this custom is that if it had been decreed, G-d forbid, that during the year we should need to resort to a handout from others, the decree should be satisfied with this asking for food. The Lubavitcher Rebbe adds a deeper insight: "asking for lekach" on the eve of Yom Kippur instills in us the recognition that all the sustenance we receive throughout the year, including that which we supposedly "earn" by our own powers and endeavors, is in truth a gift from Above, granted in response to our daily requests from "He who nourishes the entire world with in His goodness, with grace, with benevolence and with compassion."

WEEK AT A GLANCE

Link: Our Daily Bread
<http://chabad.org/article.asp?aid=53347>

etc.

Additional eve of Yom Kippur customs include receiving symbolic malkot ("lashings") as atonement for one's transgressions, reciting the al chet confession of sins after minchah and at sunset, and lighting a 26-hour candle that would burn for the duration of Yom Kippur.

Monday Tishrei 10 | October 6

YOM KIPPUR

On This Date: **Rebecca born (1677 BCE)**

Birth of Rebecca (1677-1556 BCE), wife of Isaac, mother of Jacob and Esau, and one of the Four Matriarchs of Israel.

Links: Isaac & Rebecca (the biblical account);

<http://chabad.org/article.asp?aid=61781>

Whom to Marry; <http://chabad.org/article.asp?aid=1086>

Faking It <http://chabad.org/article.asp?aid=1093>

2nd Tablets (1313 BCE)

On the 10th of Tishrei of the year 2449 from creation, 82 days after the people of Israel betrayed their newly entered covenant with G-d by worshipping a Golden Calf and after Moses twice spent 40 days atop Mount Sinai pleading on their behalf, "G-d restored His goodwill with the Jewish people gladly and wholeheartedly, saying to Moses 'I have forgiven, as you ask', and gave him the Second Tablets" -- thereby establishing the day as a time for atonement, forgiveness and teshuvah for all generations.

Link: The 120-Day Version of the Human Story
<http://chabad.org/article.asp?aid=88004>

Laws & Customs:

Yom Kippur is the holiest day of the year -- the day on which we are closest to G-d and to the quintessential core of our own souls. It is the "Day of Atonement" -- "For on this day He will forgive you, to purify you, that you be cleansed from all your sins before G-d" (Leviticus 16:30).

For twenty-six hours, from several minutes before sunset on Tishrei 9 to after nightfall on Tishrei 10, we "afflict our souls": we abstain from food and drink, do not wash or anoint our bodies, do not wear leather shoes, and abstain from marital relations.

When the Holy Temple stood in Jerusalem, the Yom Kippur service included the High Priest's entry into the

"Holy of Holies" to offer the ketoret (the only time that anyone entered the Temple's innermost chamber); and the "casting of lots" over two goats, one to be offered to G-d and the other to carry off the sins of Israel to the wilderness. Today, we spend the day in the synagogue garbed in a white garment called a kittel (to resemble the sin-free angels and to waken thoughts of repentance by reminding us of the day of our death). In the course of the day we hold five lengthy prayer services (Maariv, with its solemn Kol Nidrei service, on the eve of Yom Kippur; Shacharit; Musaf, which includes a detailed account of the Temple service; Minchah, which includes the reading of the Book of Jonah; and Ne'illah, the "closing of the gates" service at sunset), say the Al Chet confession of sins ten times, and recite Psalms every available moment.

The day is the most solemn of the year, yet an undertone of joy suffuses it: a joy that revels in the spirituality of the day and expresses the confidence that G-d will accept our repentance, forgive our sins, and seal our verdict for a year of life, health and happiness. When the closing Ne'illah service climaxes in the resounding cries of "Hear O Israel... G-d is one" and a single blast of the shofar, the joy erupts in song and dance (a Chabad custom is to sing the lively niggun known as "Napoleon's March"), followed by the festive after-fast meal, making the evening following Yom Kippur a Yom Tov (festival) in its own right.

Link: More Yom Kippur laws & customs;
<http://chabad.org/article.asp?aid=5343>

an overview of the Yom Kippur services

<http://chabad.org/article.asp?aid=4452>

Link: about Yom Kippur
<http://chabad.org/article.asp?aid=87941>

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