

LampLighter

9 Tishrei
Yom Kippur
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LIVING WITH THE TIMES

On Yom Kippur, a Jew fasts. He realizes that a lightning bolt will not come down from heaven and strike him if he eats, but he is not concerned with reward or punishment. He refrains from eating because he understands that G-d wants him to. He knows that a Jew does not do that on Yom Kippur.

A day before, he may not have felt this way. He may have been lax in the observance of one Mitzva (commandment) or another. But on Yom Kippur he feels that he has to do what a Jew should do.

Why? Because there is something special about this day. Our Sages explain the idea using gematria, Torah numerology. The Hebrew word for the evil Satan is numerically equivalent to 364. During 364 days of the year, Satan has the power to tempt the Jew. On one day, Yom Kippur, he has no power. A Jew is simply not interested in what he has to offer. Yom Kippur is a day for being Jewish.

What would happen on Yom Kippur? The High Priest would enter the Holy of Holies, at which time he was alone with G-d. No human or spiritual being was permitted to intrude upon his connection with Him.

Each year this sequence is replayed in our own hearts. The essence of the Jewish soul is one with the essence of G-d. This bond is constant; it is not the product of our efforts. Consequently, neither our thoughts, our words, nor our deeds can weaken it. At this level of essential connection, there is no existence outside G-dliness, no possibility of separation from Him.

This connection exists above time. But within time, it is revealed on Yom Kippur. On this day, we each "enter the Holy of Holies," and spend time "alone with G-d."

This is the heart of Neila, the final prayers recited on Yom Kippur. Neila means "locking." This name is generally understood to mean that the gates of heaven are being locked and there are a few moments left when our prayers can enter. According to Chasidic thought, the meaning is that the doors are locked behind us. Each one of us is "locked in," alone and as one with G-d.

At this level of essential connection, there is no existence outside G-dliness, no possibility of separation from G-d, no possibility that the soul could be affected by sin.

The revelation of this level of connection removes the blemishes that sin causes. This kind of cleansing is a natural process, for the revelation of our inner bond with G-d renews our connection with Him at all levels.

This is the meaning of the saying of our Sages that "the essence of the day atones." On Yom Kippur, our essential bond with G-d is revealed, and in the process, every element of our spiritual potential is revitalized.

This also affects our lives in the material sphere, endowing us with blessing, for a good and sweet year in all our concerns.

(Based on the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe)

At-one-ment

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 soul 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.



Ripping off the Kittel

By Rabbi Simon Jacobson

The account below was related to me personally by Reb Leibel Zisman, a living witness to these unforgettable events. Leibel's birthday is on Yom Kippur.

Yom Kippur Eve 1945/5706,
Foehrenwald DP Camp, Germany.

The sun was about to set on Yom Kippur eve, the holiest day of the year.

But for us it felt like Tisha B'av. Just a few months earlier we were living, if you can call that living, it was actually dying, in the unspeakable horror that was called the Gunskirchen Lager (concentration camp) in Northern Austria. It is impossible to describe the hundreds of dead bodies strewn about everywhere you turned throughout the camp. The hunger, the stench, the death, the insanity was everywhere. The Nazis, may their names and memories be forever erased, dehumanized us, turning us into ravenous sub-humans, desperate for a drop of water. Days would go by between a morsel of bread and a paltry sip.

I was 14-years-old when we were finally liberated on May 5, 1945. Orphaned, widowed, homeless - completely alone with no place to go - we wandered in what now appears a complete fog. But it all comes back to me as I tell the story.

We - some 5,000 of us survivors - ended up in the Foehrenwald DP Camp in Germany, where we spent Yom Kippur, together with the Klausenburger Rebbe, Rabbi Yekutiel Yehudah Halberstam, who tragically lost his wife and 11 children to the German beasts.

As night was falling that Yom Kippur eve, all 5,000 of us gathered in a makeshift shul for Kol Nidrei. As is the custom in many communities, the Klausenburger Rebbe stood up on the bima (the central platform) to share a few pre-Kol Nidrei words to awaken our hearts and prepare us for the awesome day ahead of us.

I will never forget what the Klausenburger Rebbe said that Yom Kippur eve over six decades ago. The moment was overwhelming.

With tears in his eyes he began by thanking G-d for saving our lives from the Nazi hell. He then pointed to his kittel - the white linen robe that we traditionally wear on Yom Kippur - and began to speak, slowly, deliberately, tearfully:

"One of the reasons we wear this kittel is because it is the traditional burial garment, in which we wrap a body before laying it to rest in the ground, as we do when we bury our parents and those that came before us. Wearing a kittel on Yom Kippur thus reminds us of our final day of judgment when we will be laid to rest. It therefore humbles and breaks our hearts, stirring us to do complete teshuva (return). The white, linen kittel is a symbol of purity that we achieve through our introspection and efforts to repair all our wrongs.

"Since the kittel reminds us of the burial shrouds of those who passed on before us," continued the Klausenburger, "why are we wearing a kittel today? Our parents and loved ones were just slaughtered without tachrichim (burial shrouds). They were buried, with or without clothes, in mass graves, or in no graves at all..."

Suddenly, the Klausenburger Rebbe began tearing off his own kittel, literally. "No kittel!" he cried out in an anguished voice. "Let us be like our parents. Let us remove our kittels, so that they can recognize us. They won't recognize us in kittels, because they are not wrapped in kittels..."

I have no words to capture the emotions pouring out of the grand Rebbe that first Yom Kippur after the horror.

Everyone gathered in the shul began to weep uncontrollably - men, women, old, young, every person in the large hall. All our anguish, all our unbearable losses, all the humiliation and dehumanization came spilling out of our guts.

It was an unforgettable sight: 5,000 people sobbing. Not sobbing; bawling. The floor was wet with the tears gushing from all our eyes.

What a stirring awakening we experienced that Yom Kippur eve, it was unbelievable.

The Rebbe's words rang in our ears, in every fibre of our broken beings - every one of us had just lost our closest relatives: fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, uncles and aunts. We were indelibly scarred. The words rang out: "What do we need tachrichim for?! Your father, mother, brother, sister, aunt, uncle, zeide, bobbe - they are all lying mangled in mass graves. Or in no graves at all - burned to ashes... What tachrichim? What clothes? What kittel?!..."

Picture the scene: The holiest night of the year. The awesome moment just before Kol Nidrei. All the Torah scrolls lifted out of the ark. 5,000 broken Jews, left shattered, orphaned without families. The saintly Klausenburger Rav standing on the bima, ripping off his kittel - "We don't need it..."

What more can be said? Yet, as another Rebbe once expressed himself: "It's difficult to speak, but it's more difficult to remain silent."

Today, we are blessed to enter Yom Kippur without the misery that haunted Yom Kippur in 1945, immediately after the liberation from the camps. Yom Kippur today comes amidst many blessings and comforts. We live in freedom and have achieved many levels of success. It's almost impossible to imagine that in just six decades the Jewish people have gone through such a renaissance: With the growth of Israel, advancements in Jewish education and overall prosperity. Jewish life today is nothing less than a modern miracle.

In stark contrast to 1945, we now enjoy a sumptuous meal before the holiday together with our intact families. We dress up, don our well-pressed kittels and enter our synagogues in calm and peace.

But we must never forget, we must never get caught in the trap of complacency.

Yom Kippur is upon us. And heaven and earth are our witness that we are linked today to all generations past - both a gift and a responsibility.

As the sun sets this Friday evening and we put on our kittels, we have much to cry and sing about - for ourselves, our families, generations past, future generations, from the beginning of time into eternity itself.

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MOSHIACH MATTERS

Fasting on Yom Kippur is an expression of pure faith in G-d. Yom Kippur is compared to Shabbat, and Shabbat is compared to the Era of Moshiach. In the Era of Moshiach, G-d will obliterate hunger, starvation, need and blight from mankind. On Yom Kippur, a day of Moshiach in microcosm, we divorce ourselves from our needs for physical maintenance and rely on G-d, as we will when Moshiach comes.

INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE



Soul Wash

Greetings and blessings!

As I told you during your visit here, my father-in-law, the Rebbe, would often quote a saying by Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tov: "From everything that a Jew sees or hears, he must derive a lesson in his service of the Almighty." Obviously, one should look for a lesson in his daily occupation.

Clothes and linen, before we put them on, are clean and smoothly pressed—everything in its proper place. But after wearing them for a while they become creased, dusty or stained. Nevertheless, one need not discard these clothes; instead, one gives them in to a laundry or a cleaner's. The laundryman puts them in a tub or machine that has a warm or hot temperature, with hot water, chemicals or soap that serve to remove the dirt and stains. He then presses it by applying a heavy weight or pressure. The garment can now be worn again.

So it is with the Jewish soul. When the Almighty gives the Jew—man or woman alike—his or her soul, it is clean and pressed and fitted individually to him or her. As we say every day in the morning prayers: "The soul that You have placed within me is pure."

In time, however, as it is used for worldly matters, the soul becomes creased—creased through its use for things that are not the will of G-d. The soul may also become soiled and stained when one neglects, G-d forbid, to do an obligatory *mitzvah* or one transgresses, G-d forbid, on a divine prohibition.

Nevertheless, the Torah teaches us not to despair, G-d forbid, of the soul's purity and its fittingness for *mentchlich* and Jewish living. One must immerse it in a warm temperature—that is, warm it with the warmth of Torah and *Mitzvot*, so that it should "stew" in them and be vitalized by them. This warmth must be a moist warmth, so that the soul should have a moist adherence to all things holy; this is achieved by heartfelt prayer, of which it is said "Pour out your heart like water," and with heartfelt Torah study, of which it is said, "Ho, all who thirst come to water"—water being Torah."

One should also mix in other things: the giving of charity, the observance of *kashrut* and other *Mitzvot*, thereby restoring the soul to its spotless purity. And if one adds to this the "weight" and "pressure" of Torah—a weight and pressure that may seem, at first, to be a burden—this not only does not bother the garment, on the contrary, it presses it smooth and sets each thing in its place, restoring it to its proper form and shine. In other words, through Torah and *Mitzvot* the soul becomes what it ought to be.

I conclude with a blessing of long life for you and your wife, may she live. May you have much *nachas* from all your children, may they live.

A WORD from the Director

Our Sages said that Moshiach will come to a particularly lowly generation. As to how a generation with such spiritual limitations will be able to cope with the intense light of the Final Redemption, two explanations are given: one, when Moshiach comes, everyone will be aroused to complete repentance, and two, G-d Himself will wipe away all our sins and spiritual defects, rendering us worthy.

The second explanation is similar to what happens on Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. As our Sages put it, "the essence of the day provides atonement." But if doing sins causes a defect in the soul, how can the fact that it's a certain day on the calendar make everything all right again?

Chasidut explains that a Jew's connection to G-d exists on many levels. The outermost level is achieved through observance of Torah and Mitzvot. But the very deepest level of connection is independent of a Jew's actions. This G-dly spark, known as the level of Yechida, makes it impossible for a Jew to be separated from G-dliness. He can't be separated, he doesn't want to be separated, and he would even give up his life to retain that connection if he had to.

This level, also known as the "essence of the soul," is always pure and holy. A Jew can commit all the sins in the world (G-d forbid) and his essential connection to G-d remains untouched.

On a day-to-day basis, of course, we're unaware of this. And because the outer levels of the soul are affected by our bad behaviour, repentance is indeed necessary.

Nonetheless, on Yom Kippur the "essence of the soul" is revealed. Always perfect and complete, it is so powerful that any defects in the lower levels of the soul are "automatically" corrected.

Similarly, when Moshiach comes, this essential nature of the Jew will be uncovered, revealing that we were always connected to G-d with an eternal bond. May it happen immediately.

J. I. Gutnick

For nearly twenty-six hours – from several minutes before sunset on Tishrei 9 until 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 footwear, and abstain from spousal intimacy. We are likened to the angels, who have no physical needs. Instead of focusing on the physical, we spend much of our day in the synagogue, engaged in repentance and prayer.

Preparations

On the day before Yom Kippur, the primary *mitzvah* is to eat and drink in abundance. Two festive meals are eaten, one earlier in the day, and one just prior to the onset of Yom Kippur. Some of the day's other observances include requesting and receiving honey cake, in acknowledgement that we are all recipients in G-d's world and in prayerful hope for a sweet year; begging forgiveness from anyone whom we may have wronged during the past year; giving extra charity; and the ceremonial blessing of the children.

Before sunset, women and girls light holiday candles, and everyone makes their way to the synagogue for the Kol Nidrei services.

On Yom Kippur

In the course of Yom Kippur we will hold five prayer services: 1) Maariv, with its solemn Kol Nidrei service,

on the eve of Yom Kippur; 2) Shacharit—the morning prayer; 3) Musaf, which includes a detailed account of the Yom Kippur Temple service; 4) Minchah, which includes the reading of the Book of Jonah.

Finally, in the waning hours of the day, we reach the climax of the day: the fifth prayer, the Neilah ("locking") prayer. The gates of Heaven, which were open all day, will now be closed—with us on the inside. During this prayer we have the ability to access the most essential level of our soul. The Holy Ark remains open throughout. The closing Neilah service climaxes in the resounding cries of *Shema Yisrael* (Hear O Israel... G-d is one). Then joy erupts in song and dance (a Chabad custom is to sing the lively "Napoleon's March"), followed by a single blast of the *Shofar*, and the proclamation, "Next year in Jerusalem."

After the fast we partake of a festive after-fast meal, making the evening after Yom Kippur a Yom Tov (festival) in its own right. We immediately begin to look forward to the next holiday and its special *mitzvah*, which is expressed in beginning the construction of the *sukkah*.

It Happened Once...



Reb Mordechai, a follower of the third Rebbe of Chabad, Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Lubavitch (1789-1866) had been dispatched by his Rebbe to wander the countryside of Russia, journeying from town to town and inspiring the Jews scattered there with the teachings of Chassidism.

But one day — it was the day before Yom Kippur — he arrived at some town in the middle of nowhere only to hear that all its Jews, about one hundred altogether, had left the day before to the city of Vitebsk to pray in the large synagogue there on the Day of Atonement. Suddenly, only a few hours away from the holiest day of the year, he found himself without a *minyan* — the quorum of ten Jews required for communal prayer.

"You won't find any Jews here, Rabbi," one of the townspeople told him. "But about two hours away there's a small village of Cantonists. They're a strange bunch, but that's the closest thing to Jews you'll find around here now."

(The Cantonists were Jews who, by decree of Czar Nicholas I, had been snatched from their families when they were young children for a 25-year term of "service" in the Czar's army, where every cruel means had been employed to force them to abandon Judaism. The few that survived were so emotionally and psychologically destroyed, when they left the army decades later, that they were never able to live normal lives. So they lived together in little villages, apart from the rest of the world.)

Immediately, Reb Mordechai started walking, but after over an hour he still saw nothing. No... wait! There seemed to be something on the horizon.

Sure enough, there it was. There were only a few old wooden houses, but this must be the village he was looking for.

The first resident that saw the rabbi enter the village called everyone else, and in no time they were all lined up with shining faces, taking turns shaking the newcomer's hand.

They were overjoyed. Such an honour to have a real rabbi as their guest!

Suddenly they stepped back, formed a sort of huddle, and began whispering to one another. Then they fell silent, looked again at the rabbi, and one of them stepped forward in great humility, cleared his throat, and announced:

"Excuse me, Rabbi, but we would be very honoured if His Excellency the Rabbi would please honour us with leading the prayers of Yom Kippur."

All the others stood staring at the Rabbi with wide pleading eyes, nodding their heads beseechingly.

Reb Mordechai nodded in agreement, and the joyous hand-shaking ritual was repeated once again.

"We only have one stipulation," the man continued. "That one of us leads the closing prayer of the holy day, *Ne'ilah*."

An hour later, in the solemn atmosphere of Yom Kippur, they were all seated in their little *shul* (synagogue), listening to the beautiful heartfelt prayers of the Chassidic rabbi, Reb Mordechai.

A very special feeling overcame Reb Mordechai. He had never quite experienced a Yom Kippur like this. He had never been in such a *Minyan*, comprised of Jews each of whom had been through hell, things that he could never even dream of experiencing, only for the sake of G-d. And although he had studied all the holy books and they knew nothing, he felt dwarfed by these simple folk.

His soul flowed into the prayers, and it seemed to him that he had never sung so beautifully in his life. First *Kol Nidrei*, then the evening prayer. On the following day, he prayed the other three prayers, and read twice from the Torah.

But finally, at the end of the day, came their turn; it was time for *Ne'ilah*.

Reb Mordechai stepped back, took a seat in the small shul with everyone else, and waited to see what was going to happen. Why did they want this prayer for themselves?

One of the Cantonists rose from his chair, took a few steps forward and stood at the podium, his back to the crowd.

Suddenly, before he began to lead the prayers, he started unbuttoning and then removing his shirt.

Reb Mordechai was about to say something, to protest: You can't take your shirt off in the synagogue!

But as the shirt fell from the man's shoulders, it revealed hundreds of scars; years upon years of deep scars... each one because the man refused to forsake the G-d of Israel.

Reb Mordechai gasped and tears ran from his eyes.

The Cantonist then raised his hands to G-d and said in a loud voice.

"G-d... Send us Moshiach! Redeem the Jewish people now!

"I'm not asking for the sake of our families, because we don't have any families.

"I'm not asking for the sake of our futures, because we have no futures.

"I'm not asking for the sake of our livelihoods or our comfort, or our children, or our reputations, because we don't have any of those things either.

"We're just asking: *Assey I'maan shemecha* — Do it for *Your* sake!"

And then he put on his shirt and began the prayer.

THOUGHTS THAT COUNT

The Essence of Every Jew

The atonement procured by Yom Kippur is loftier even than that obtained through repentance, for on this day Jew and G-d are absolutely one. The quintessence of the Jew blazes forth, uniting with his/her G-d to reveal a bond untouchable by sin. (*Likutei Sichot*.)

"You shall afflict your souls [fast] on the ninth day of the month at evening"

A question is asked in the Talmud (Yoma 81b): "Why does the Torah state 'on the ninth day,' when we actually fast on the tenth of the month, on Yom Kippur? To teach that a person who eats and drinks on the ninth [in preparation for the fast] is considered to have fasted on both the ninth and the tenth." And why is eating on the day before Yom Kippur deemed so important? For, eating for the sake of heaven is far more difficult than fasting for the sake of heaven. (*Malbim*)

CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

YOM KIPPUR • 10 TISHREI • 18 SEPTEMBER

FRIDAY 17 SEPTEMBER • EVE OF YOM KIPPUR

MINCHA:	3:00 PM
CANDLE LIGHTING:	5:53 PM
FAST BEGINS:	5:53 PM
KOL NIDREI:	6:10 PM

SHABBOS 18 SEPTEMBER • YOM KIPPUR DAY

SHACHARIS:	9:00 AM
LAST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	9:15 AM
YIZKOR:	11.00 AM (APPROX)
MINCHA:	4:45 PM
NEILAH:	5:45 PM
FAST ENDS:	6:51 PM

WEEKDAYS:

SHACHARIS: SUN- FRI:	9:15 AM
MINCHA:	6:05 PM
MAARIV:	6:45 PM

CANDLE LIGHTING: 17 SEPTEMBER 2010



Begins		Ends
5:53	MELBOURNE	6:51
5:49	ADELAIDE	6:46
5:23	BRISBANE	6:16
6:25	DARWIN	7:14
5:21	GOLD COAST	6:14
5:51	PERTH	6:46
5:29	SYDNEY	6:25
5:37	CANBERRA	6:34
5:44	LAUNCESTON	6:44
5:54	AUCKLAND	6:51
5:53	WELLINGTON	6:53

Dedicated to the beloved, revered leader of World Jewry

The Lubavitcher Rebbe

צוקללה"ה נבג"מ זי"ע

May he succeed in imploring the Almighty to redeem His people speedily in our days.