

HALACHA V'HALICHA... By Rav Chaim Schabes

Hashem gave us, in His infinite kindness, one day in which we could attain forgiveness for all our *aveiros*; however, we are likewise obligated to awaken our spirit and repent and cleanse ourselves, as the Torah says לפני השם תטהרו. Kli Yakar explains that the purification must be in a fashion that it is “in front” of Hashem, that He will recognize whether the *teshuva* is sincere and internal, and pay no attention to external performances.

There is a *mitzvah* from the Torah to eat on Erev Yom Kippur, and this *mitzvah* applies even to women according to many Poskim, although it is a time-bound *mitzvah*, from which women would typically be exempt. However, since one of the reasons for this *mitzvah* is that we eat so that we should be able to fast properly, this applies to women as well. Accordingly, a sick person that does not fast (and has to eat more than the minimal amounts) would not have this obligation. Minchas Chinuch holds that one can fulfill this *mitzvah* only by eating food the size of a large date within 4 min. (approx.), or drinks one cheek full; however, many hold (based on Ksav Sofer §114) that any amount that one eats is part of the *mitzvah*. In the morning *seuda* there is a special *inyan* (important concept) to eat fish, as it is brought in the Tur based on a Midrash, and the *minhag* is to eat chicken during both *seudos*. The custom is to immerse oneself in a Mikvah on Erev Yom Kippur, and some women have this *minhag* also. When people do *kaparos* with a chicken, a rooster is taken for a male, a hen for a woman, and for a pregnant woman two chickens are taken, one male and one female. If there aren't enough chickens, then a whole family can take two chickens: a male for the men and boys, and a female for the women and girls. The head of the family should first do *kaparos* over himself, and then for the rest of his family. Many have a custom to use money for *kaparos*, to be distributed to the poor. There is an obligation to say *viduy* (confession) during Mincha of Erev Yom Kippur, and the MB writes that women are also included in this obligation. During the saying of all *viduyim*, one must stand without supporting his weight on a table or shtender, and we bow our bodies as a sign of humility in front of Hashem. There is an obligation of *tosefes* Yom Kippur, adding extra *kedusha* from the preceding weekday, which we fulfill by accepting the *kedusha* of Yom Kippur some time before the actual beginning of Yom Kippur. Men fulfill this obligation either by saying Tefillah Zakah, or by verbally stating that one accepts the *kedusha* of Yom Kippur on himself. Women fulfill it by lighting candles, and girls above Bas Mitzvah should also state verbally before sunset that they accept Yom Kippur on themselves. Jewelry is not worn on Yom Kippur; however, chains and rings normally worn by ladies are not included in this restriction. The *minhag* is for men to wear a *kittel*, and women generally wear white clothing. Many Poskim are of the opinion that one should not wear even non-leather shoes that look just like the leather shoes because of *mar'is ayin*. We must be careful not to wash our hands unless it is for a valid reason, such as when we wake up, come out of the bathroom, after touching covered places, or scratching one's hair, or after touching one's shoes - even if they are non-leather. Washing should be only until the knuckles, except for a Kohain who washes the full hand both when he wakes up, and when he goes up to Duchan. After Yom Kippur, it is proper to wash the full hand three times, as when we wake up in the morning. The order of the *berachos* of Havdalah after Yom Kippur is: wine, fire and *hamavdil*. The torch used for Havdalah on *motzai* Yom Kippur must be lit from a fire that rested during Yom Kippur; meaning that the fire had been burning since before Yom Kippur, and no prohibited work was done with it. There are those who will light a special candle to be able to use for Havdalah; one may also use the fire from a pilot from a stove or water boiler to light the Havdalah candle. We say Kiddush Levanah after Yom Kippur, and immediately after Yom Kippur we involve ourselves in *mitzvos* and start building the Sukkah, or add something to it.

THOUGHTS ON THE HAFTARAH ... By Rabbi Yaakov Shapiro (**Hoshea 14:2-10; Yoel 2:11-27; Micha 7:18-20**)

Our haftara begins with the words שובה ישראל עד ה' אלוךך. The Midrash (B'reishis Raba 84) relates that when the brothers sold Yosef to slavery, Reuvain was not present because he was busy doing *teshuva*. Hashem then tells Reuvain that since he is the first person to do *teshuva*, his son (Hoshea HaNavi) will merit being the first to teach the Jewish people about *teshuva*. This Midrash, like many others, is at first glance difficult to understand. First, how is it possible to say that Reuvain was the first to do *teshuva* when clearly there were others who did *teshuva* before, specifically Adam HaRishon and his son Kayin? Furthermore, Hoshea was certainly not the first to speak out about *teshuva*; many of the Neviim preceded him and spoke to the people about the need for *teshuva*! In addition, the concept of *teshuva* is found in the Torah (Devarim 4:30) and in fact, many Poskim derive that *teshuva* is a Mitzva D'oraisa from here! The *mefarshim* answer that while others before him may have done *teshuva* to some extent, they did not reach the level that Reuvain achieved. Adam and Kayin did not think of repenting until after they were confronted by Hashem and punished. Their *teshuva* was commendable, but it was not as great an achievement as what Reuvain did. He did not wait to be prodded. He did not wait for any punishment. Rather, he realized on his own that he 'sinned' and immediately proceeded to take corrective action. This is the message of Hoshea's words עד ה' אלוךך, that when one sins he will find himself 'far from Hashem'; and despite that distance, if he wants to become a *ba'al teshuva* par excellence like Reuvain, he should not wait for Hashem to approach him but rather he should seek out Hashem and be the one to initiate the *teshuva*. While it is true that Hoshea was not the first to discover the concept of *teshuva*, he was a great innovator in that arena. It is this *chiddush* of Hoshea, as well as several others found in the Gemara (Yoma 86a-b), such as turning one's sins into positive forces and penetrating the Heavens so that one's *teshuva* can reach directly to Hashem, that Reuvain's descendant merited to reveal to us.

ON LANGUAGE ... By R' Moshe Orlian

חמאת בקר והלב צאן עם הלב כרים (D'varim 32:14) – the words והלב and הלב are similar, but quite different in meaning. והלב is the *smichus* form of the word הלב, milk, while הלב is both the *nifrad* (standalone) and *smichus* of הלב, fat. הלב, since it has two *kematzim*, or long vowels, in its standalone form, adopts the *shva-patach* (short vowels) pattern in the *smichus*. A similar example is the word בקר, cattle, which in *smichus* becomes בקר (as in B'midbar 7:88). The one slight difference is that in והלב, the *ches* gets a *chataf-patach* since it cannot take a regular *shva na*. הלב, however, has a *segol* (short vowel) under the *lamed*, and thus stays the same even in *smichus*.

