

ימים נוראים – מי יודע?

Days of Awe – Mi Yodeya?

*Real questions and answers
to enhance your Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur*



mi.yodeya.com

What should I read during my down time on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur?

Jews everywhere consider: Every year, during the Days of Awe, I have windows of time in which some appropriate reading material comes in handy. What should I have on hand?

We recommend: Try *Days of Awe – Mi Yodeya?*, an eclectic collection of questions and answers about the holidays, written by people from all over the Internet.

In this volume, we have collected and edited some of the best material for Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and the Days of Repentance in between, from the nearly 14,000 questions that have been answered at Mi Yodeya, the online community in the Stack Exchange network for crowd-sourced Jewish questions and answers. From quick explanations of interesting practices to long expositions of the meanings of prayers, there is something in here to fit any break.

For the full Mi Yodeya experience, hold onto this book after the holiday, and follow the links printed under the title of each question. You can see how the community came together to write, comment on, and refine the original online Q&A, and also find links to related information and resources, including many full source texts at HebrewBooks.org and Sefaria.org.

Come visit us at mi.yodeya.com to read, and stay to join the conversation! If you

have an answer to add or a question to share, we would love to hear from you.



On the Mi Yodeya website, we try to make our content as accessible as possible by translating non-English terms, linking to identifications of cited authorities, etc. In this volume, we have attempted to provide such translations and identifications in the glossary.

As you read the questions and answers printed here, imagine that you are hearing a crowd of friends, walking home from a very diverse High Holidays service. Don't be surprised when people pronounce Hebrew differently and use quite different speaking styles. And please, don't treat this crowd as your rabbi; consult the real deal before implementing any assertions of Jewish Law you find here.

Finally, if you enjoy what you read here, you probably know others who would, too. As we've shared with you, go share with them! Read Q&As at your family meal, hand your friend a printout, or direct your pen pals to s.tk/miyodeya, so they can download their own copy. There's no more auspicious way to start the year than by sharing good things.

Shana Tova!
The Mi Yodeya Community
Rosh Hashanah 5776

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ראש השנה – Rosh Hashanah

מַעֲרִיב – Evening Service

Why is the *Machzor* called a “*Machzor*”?

mi.yodeya.com/q/10469

Gershon Gold asked: The *Siddur* we use for a holiday is known as a “*Machzor*.” What does it mean, and where did this originate?

Double AA said: The *Shulchan Aruch* in OC 100 rules that prior to a holiday one must go over and prepare the text of the prayers so that he is familiar with them.

I suggest this is why holiday prayer books are called “*Machzor*”: from the root *Ch.Z.R.*, which can mean to review or to go over.

yydl referred the reader to Wikipedia’s entry for this word:

The word *mahzor* means “cycle” (the root H-Z-R means “to return”). It is applied to the festival prayer book because the festivals recur annually.

Fred explained: As mentioned in yydl’s answer, the Hebrew noun “מחזור” (“*machzor*”) means “cycle” in English. This is the usage found in *Pirkei d’Rabbi Eliezer* (ch. 6-8) and other midrashic literature.

According to the Hebrew Wikipedia article [“מחזור תפילה”], citing Daniel Goldschmidt’s preface to Shadal’s *Introduction to the Machzor of the Community of Rome*, this term was used in medieval times to refer to prayer books that contained a comprehensive list of prayers for the entire cycle of the year (for example, the 11th century *Machzor Vitry*, composed by Rabbi Simcha ben Shmuel of Vitry).

Eventually, standard prayer books (often including only the standard weekday and Sabbath prayers) became called “*siddurim*” due to the arrangement of the prayers contained therein. Meanwhile, the term “*machzor*” either became reserved as a reference to compilations of prayers for the High Holy Days and other special holidays (especially in Germany) or retained its original meaning as a comprehensive compilation of yearly prayers (such as in Italy and Livorno).



At the end of “*Ya’aleh v’Yavo*”, do you say “*Melech*”?

mi.yodeya.com/q/1447

Shalom asked: Some *siddurim* have the phrase “*Ki Kel Melech Chanun V’Rachum Ata*” (“because You are God, the gracious and compassionate King”)¹ at the conclusion of *Ya’aleh v’Yavo*. Some have “*Melech*” (“King”) in parentheses; some don’t have it at all.

¹ Translation from *The ArtScroll Machzor*. (Zlotowitz, Meir and Avie Gold, eds. *The Complete ArtScroll Machzor, Rosh Hashanah: Nusach Ashkenaz*. Mesorah Publications, 2006.)

Can anyone tell me something about where these variants come from, and how they arose?

Alex answered: *Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 188:3)* states that in the third blessing of the Grace After Meals, in which we pray for the restoration of the Davidic kingship, no other kingship — including Hashem’s — should be mentioned, “since an earthly kingdom must not be compared to the Heavenly one.”

Based on this, *Rema* there cites *Avudraham*, who states that “*melech*” should be omitted in *Yaaleh Veyavo*, “although I have not seen people customarily doing so.”

Taz (subsec. 2) and *Magen Avraham* (subsec. 2) justify the practice of saying it, on the grounds that the end of *Yaaleh Veyavo* is pretty far removed from the mention of David’s kingdom, so that saying it doesn’t evince a lack of respect for Hashem’s kingship.

So in short, some versions follow *Avudraham* (and *Rema*), while others accept *Taz*’s and *M.A.*’s justification. (Possibly, too, the versions that omit it are influenced by the fact that the phrase “*ki Keil ... ata*” is found in *Nehemiah 9:31*, without “*melech*.”)

All of this should logically apply only to the *Yaaleh Veyavo* recited during Grace After Meals. I don’t know whether there are *siddurim* that also omit “*melech*” in the *Yaaleh Veyavo* recited in the *Amidah* (silent prayers).



Why a formulaic greeting on Rosh Hashanah Eve?

mi.yodeya.com/q/10339

msh210 asked: On Rosh Hashana night, it is customary to greet one another with “(ותחתם) לשנה טובה תכתב ותחתם” (“May you be inscribed [and sealed] for a good year”) (*Rama* on *Shulchan Aruch Orach Chayim 582:9*, and *Mishnah Berurah* there). People (in my experience) and *machzorim* treat this as formulaic, with no variation from the specified text. (Specific customs vary, with, e.g., some adding “לאלתר להיים טובים ולשלום” (“immediately for good life and for peace”), but whatever custom people may have, they stick to it, rather than saying wholly different things like the suggestions below.) It’s so formulaic that some people (purposely) don’t even decline the verbs for number and gender.

- Is it correct to treat the greeting as an immutable formula, the way people and *machzorim* do? (E.g., is that how we should read the *Rama*?) Sources, please.

And if it’s correct (or correct according to some sources), then:

- Why is there such a formulaic greeting? Why not use whatever other wording we may think of, like “לשנה טובה ומתוקה תכתב ותחתם” (“For a good and sweet year, may you be inscribed and sealed.”) or “תכתב בספר החיים” (“May you be inscribed in the Book of Life.”) or “תכתב ותחתם לשנה טובה” (“May you be inscribed and sealed for a good year.”)?

You can answer ... Really, can you? We have some attempted answers to this question online, but none yet that completely and satisfactorily address the two parts of this question. If you know of any good sources that explain this practice, please come to Mi Yodeya and write up an answer.



סעודות – Meals

Why specifically an apple on Rosh HaShanah?

mi.yodeya.com/q/20334

Yehoshua asked: There is a custom of eating an apple dipped in honey on the first night of Rosh Hashanah (among the other foods) as a sign that we should have a sweet year. Why is this done specifically with an apple and not another fruit?

Michoel answered: 1) The Maharil explains that the apple is connected with “הקל” תפוחים קדישין” – “the holy apple orchard”; when Yaakov came to get the blessing from Yitzchok, he had the smell of an apple orchard upon his clothing. According to one opinion, this episode happened on Rosh Hashana. (GR”A O.C. 583:8)

2) There are three types of benefit derived from an apple: taste, sight, and smell. This is symbolic of our appeal for sustenance in the three aspects of children, health, and livelihood for the entire year. (*Ben Ish Chai*, first year, *Parashas Nitzavim*)

3) It is written in the *Zohar* (*Parashas Shmini* 4a) that after one drinks wine, one eats an apple to prevent harm from the wine. Wine represents *gevurah* (severity), and the apple calms the severity. Therefore on Rosh Hashana we eat apples to pacify the harsh judgement. (*Ben Ish Chai, ibid.*)

4) The *Zohar* (above) states that the source of all fruit is the Divine aspect of *malchus* (“royalty,” considered feminine), except for the apple, which is sourced in the aspect of *tiferes* (“splendor,” considered masculine). The Arizal says that the summer months represent *malchus* and the winter months are *tiferes*. Therefore, at the start of the “masculine” months we eat an apple, which comes from a “masculine” source. (*Ben Ish Chai, ibid.*)

5) According to Rabbeynu Yona (quoted by Rosh on *Brachos* 6:35), the nature of honey is to change everything that comes into it — even something impure — into honey. (Therefore, one can consume honey even though the legs of the bees may be mixed in.) The holiness of Rosh Hashana should convert all bad to good. (*Shem Mishmuel, Mo’adim*, Rosh Hashana 5674) (Some add that the sin of Adam and the Tree of

Knowledge was with an apple, and we therefore dip an apple into the honey to rectify the original sin.¹⁾

6) The *gematria* (numerical value) of “תפוח” (apple) is equivalent to that of “פרו ורבו” (“Be fruitful and multiply”), and “דבש” (honey) is equal to “אשה” (woman), symbolizing that Rosh Hashana is an auspicious time for barren women to be remembered. (*Imrei Noam* volume 2, end note 9)

Gershon Gold added: *Taamei HaMinhagim* 706 says it is done for Kabbalistic reasons. In the notes, he mentions in the name of the *Imrei Noam* that the *gematria* of the word “*tapuach*” (the Hebrew word for apple) is the same as the *gematria* of “*Seh Akeida*” – so we eat the apple to recall the *Akeida* (Binding of Isaac).

Yishai noted: It also can't be discounted that apples are harvested around Rosh Hashana time so they are a readily available and relatively inexpensive fruit at that time.

Avrohom Yitzchok suggested: Apple was the most widely known fruit. Think of the other fruits and vegetables that are called after the apple, for example orange in Hebrew, potato in Hebrew, French, and German, pineapple in English. According to the *Online Etymology Dictionary*:²

In Middle English and as late as the 17th century, it was a generic term for all fruit other than berries but including nuts (such as Old English *fingeræppla* “dates,” literally “finger-apples”; Middle English *appel of paradis* “banana,” c. 1400).



Drinking on Rosh Hashanah

mi.yodeya.com/q/20162

Seth J asked: Rosh Hashanah has two opposite aspects, one of judgment, and one of Yom Tov. We spend the day(s) in prayer and literally plead for our lives. Yet we eat festive meals and drink wine for *kiddush*.

Is it acceptable, or even encouraged, to drink festively on Rosh Hashanah?

¹ Midrash Rabba Breishis 15, 7 brings an opinion that the fruit in the garden was a “תפוח.” However, Tosfos on Shabbos 88a writes that “תפוח” in Tanach means an אתרוג (citron).

² Harper, Douglas. www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=apple

Michoel said: The *Shulchan Aruch Harav* writes (597:1), based on *Rishonim* and the *Tur/Shulchan Aruch*:

ומצוה לאכול ולשתות ולשמוח בראש השנה כמ"ש בסי' תקפ"א אמנם לא יאכלו כל שבעם למען
לא יקילו ראשם ותהיה יראת ה' על פניהם.

It is a mitzvah to eat and drink and rejoice on Rosh Hashanah, as is explained in *siman* 581. However they should not eat to full satisfaction so as not to come to lightheadedness, and the fear of Hashem should be on their faces.

Similarly in 583:4 he writes:

ונוהגין לאכול בשר שמן ולשתות דבש וכל מיני מתיקה כדי שתהא השנה הזאת מתוקה ושמיינה
וכן כתוב בעזרא [נחמיה] אכלו משמנים ושתו ממתקים.

We customarily eat fatty meat and drink honey and all types of delicacies in order that the coming year should be sweet and fatty, as is written in *Ezra [Nechemyah]*: “Eat of the fat and drink of the sweet [... for this day is holy to Hashem]”.

Fred added: Although the *Beit Yosef* (OC 597) quotes the *Kol Bo* that some have the custom of fasting on Rosh Hashanah, most *rishonim* hold that fasting is inappropriate and that one should eat, drink, and rejoice on Rosh Hashanah, and the *Shulchan Aruch* rules accordingly (with the caveat that the rejoicing should be tempered by reverence for the day). This accords with the verse quoted in Michoel’s answer (*Nechemyah*, 8:10).

Because of those opinions that fasting is appropriate, the *Shulchan Aruch* writes (based on the *Agur*) that if someone fasts once, it is considered that he has accepted that practice and he must subsequently fast on every Rosh Hashanah. The Rema writes that he should get his custom annulled instead. Notably, R’ Yosef Karo in *Maggid Meisharim* praises the custom of fasting on the first day of Rosh HaShanah (*siman* 40). I have heard (in the name of R’ Yosef Dov Soloveitchik, I believe) that this encouragement to fast was relegated to the *Maggid Meisharim* (as opposed to his more influential *Shulchan Aruch*) because R’ Karo felt that fasting is an appropriate approach only for rare individuals.



שְׁחֵרִית – Morning Service

Shochein Ad, HaKail, HaMelech – why?

mi.yodeya.com/q/10478

Gershon Gold pondered: On *Shabbos*, the leader for *Shacharis* begins at “*Shochein Ad.*” On *Yom Tov*, he begins at “*HaKeil BeSaatzumos.*” On Rosh HaShana and Yom Kippur, he begins at “*HaMelech.*”

Why does he start in different places? What is the connection between the different places and their respective days?

Alex opened: Levush (*Orach Chaim* 488:1) says that we start with “הא-ל בתעצמות” on *Yom Tov*, because all of them are “in remembrance of the Exodus from Egypt,” when

Hashem displayed His mighty power. He also says (ibid. 584:1) that we start with “המלך” on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur (and change the wording to “המלך יושב,” “the King is sitting”), because these are the times when He is sitting on His throne of judgement.

Not sure about “*Shochein Ad*” on *Shabbos*.

Isaac Moses amplified: Rabbi Sir Jonathan Sacks, in his Siddur commentary,¹ addresses this question along similar lines as the Levush quoted by Alex:

The Leader begins at different points on different holy days of the year. On Shabbat he begins with “He inhabits eternity,” emphasizing creation; on Yom Tov, with “God — in Your absolute power,” laying stress on God as He acts in history; on Rosh HaShana and Yom Kippur, with “The King — enthroned,” evoking ideas of justice and judgement.



Why don't we say *Hallel* on Rosh Hashanah?

mi.yodeya.com/q/45794

Mike asked: For most months, on the first day (*Rosh Hodesh*) we say the *Hallel* service between *Shacharit* and *Mussaf*. For the first day of *Tishrei* (Rosh Hashanah), however, we do not say *Hallel*. Why is it not done?

Monica Cellio said: I once wondered about this and found an answer on the Ohr Somayach website.² They say that *Hallel* is said with joy and that our focus on judgement precludes this. They cite *Rosh Hashanah* 32b:

אמר רבי אבהו אמרו מלאכי השרת לפני הקב"ה רבש"ע מפני מה אין ישראל אומרים שירה לפניך ברי"ה וביום הכפורים אמר להם אפשר מלך יושב על כסא דין וספרי חיים וספרי מתים פתוחין לפניו וישראל אומרים שירה

R. Abahu said: Said the angels before G-d, “Lord of the Universe, why does Israel fail to utter song before you during Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur?” He replied, “When the King sits on the throne of judgment and the books of life and death are before him, can Israel utter song?”

I checked there for more on this but that's all the *g'mara* says (there) about *Hallel* on Rosh Hashana. (This explanation does not mean we should be focused only on judgement; it's still a festive day. See the Ohr Somayach article for more on that.)



¹ *The Sacks Siddur*. Koren Publishers, 2009.

² ohr.edu/2334

קריאת התורה – Torah Reading

Why was *Akeidas Yitzchok* a bigger test for Avraham than for Yitzchok?

mi.yodeya.com/q/11101

Gershon Gold asked: The binding of Yitzchok (“*Akeidas Yitzchok*”) was the hardest test that Hashem gave to Avraham. Yet Yitzchok knew and also agreed to go along with it. Then why is it considered a bigger test for Avraham than for Yitzchok?

zaq commented: I would much rather sacrifice myself to Hashem than my son, my only son, the one whom I love and through whom I will become a great nation.

jake answered: This is discussed by Abarbanel (*Bereshis* 22). He explains previous commentators as understanding that Avraham’s pain in killing his own son, although less than Yitzchak’s pain of actually being killed, would last throughout the rest of his life, and thus would have been much worse than Yitzchak’s pain. In his words:

ואם כן יצחק שמסר עצמו לשחיטה עם היות צער המות שלו יותר גדול מצער אביו שישחטו הנה צערו לא היה מתמיד כי מיד שישחט לא ירגיש כלום ולא יצטער עוד. אבל הזקן ההורג את בנו יהיה צערו מתמיד ומרת נפשו קודם השחיטה ובעת השחיטה ואחריה כל ימי חייו יום ולילה לא ישבות. ולכן היה ראוי ליחס פלא המעשה הזה לאברהם ולא ליצחק.

Yitzchak, who gave himself up for slaughter, even though his pain of death would be greater than that of his father who would slaughter him — his pain would not be constant and continuing, since after he is killed he will not feel anything; his pain will be over. But the father who kills his son, his pain will continue, and his bitterness before, during, and after the act of slaughter will never rest. Therefore, it is appropriate to attribute the marvel and wonderment of this event to Avraham rather than to Yitzchak.

(I myself, however, disagree with the assumption that Avraham’s pain would have been less than Yitzchak’s at all. It makes more sense to me that it is harder to kill one’s “only” son than to be killed himself.)

Abarbanel, however, feels that although the above may be true, Yitzchak should have at least been given *some* credit, while we don’t really find that he is given much at all. Therefore, he disagrees with your basic assumption: “Yet Yitzchok knew and also agreed to go along with it.” He believes, rather, that Yitzchak was unaware that he was going to be offered as a sacrifice until his father actually tied him onto the *mizbeach* (altar). Thus, he doesn’t really deserve as much credit, since he did not actually go through with the plan willingly.

HodofHod added: The *Tzemach Tzedek*, in *Derech Mitzvosecha* 186b, brings this same question in the name of R’ Menachem Mendel of Horodok.

ובזה ית' מה דקשיא טובא מדוע יחס הכתוב נסיון דעקידיה לאברהם הלא יותר היה נסיון ליצחק וכדאי' קושיא זו בזהר שהרי יצחק הי' אז בן ל"ז שנה, ואילו לא רצה כו'

He asks it much the same as you did, but he adds that Yitzchak was 37 years old, and if he had not wanted to comply, he presumably could have resisted effectively.

R' Menachem Mendel answers that the main point of this story is not *mesirus nefesh* (self-sacrifice) at all. The Patriarchs were all “chariots” (completely subservient, as a chariot to the rider) to the Divine Will. Any one of them could, and would (and did), lay down his life for G-d. So the fact that Yitzchak did that is not so amazing, and further he may have asked for that test.

Jews of all levels have done that throughout our history, including Jews who, up until that moment, hadn't considered themselves Jewish at all. While self-sacrifice is a tremendous thing for us, for a *Tzaddik* it's practically peanuts. Being willing to sacrifice one's son, their only son, whom they love — that's different. Especially for Avraham, who was the embodiment of the attribute of *Chesed* (kindness), this was in direct conflict with his essence.

R' Menachem Mendel actually adds that, despite the fact that Avraham was willing to sacrifice his son for G-d, the most amazing thing about this story is that Avraham wasn't flustered or confused at all. After all, G-d had previously promised that He would make Yitzchak into a great nation, and now He was asking Avraham to sacrifice him!

וה"ז יכול לחשוב שזהו שינוי רצון וכתיב לא שניתי כו' ואברהם נתחזק ולא הרהר כלל

Avraham might have thought that this was a change in G-d's Will (and G-d has said “I haven't changed”), but nevertheless, his faith was strong, and he had no doubts in G-d at all.

Menachem said: In a note to the Rada”l's commentary on the *Pirkei D'Rebbi Eliezer* (Chapter 31), the Rada”l addresses this issue. He points out the *Midrash* that Rashi (*Bereshit* 22:1) quotes:

And some say, “after the words of Ishmael,” who was boasting to Isaac that he was circumcised at the age of thirteen, and he did not protest. Isaac said to him, “With one organ you intimidate me? If the Holy One, blessed be He, said to me, ‘Sacrifice yourself before Me,’ I would not hold back.” (Cf. *Genesis Rabbah* 55:4.)

G-d heard this and said, “Since Yitzchok had already agreed to sacrifice himself, this would be a good opportunity to test Avraham through Yitzchok.” This wasn't Yitzchok's test, since he had already verbally requested it.



Why Jeremiah 31 on Rosh Hashana?

mi.yodeya.com/q/20195

msh210 asked: On the second day of Rosh Hashana, after reading about the *akeda* (and some other stuff), we read *Yirmiya* 31:1–19 as the *haftara*: why this *haftara*?

Double AA noted that this combination of readings is explicit in the Gemara (*Megillah* 31a).

Ariel K explained: The *Haftorah* is very moving and probably holds the record for the most Jewish songs from one *Haftorah*! It especially relates to the Rosh Hashanah theme of *Zichronos* (“Memories”).

First (verses 1-13), the *Haftorah* discusses God bringing the redemption, which may connect to the theme of *Zichronos*, as it involves God “remembering” the Jews. Next (verses 14-16) is the scene of Rachel weeping and God promising redemption, which is part of the theme of *Zichronos* — recalling the patriarchs or matriarchs as a merit to end the exile.

Then (verses 17-18) it describes Ephraim’s *teshuvah* (repentance), including the different parts of *teshuvah*, an important thing to mention during the *Aseres Yemei Teshuvah* (Ten Days of Repentance):

כִּי אַחֲרַי שׁוּבִי נִחַמְתִּי וְאַחֲרַי הִנֹּדְעִי סָפַקְתִּי עַל יְרֹדִי, בְּשִׁתִּי וְגַם נִכְלַמְתִּי כִּי נִשְׁאַתִּי חֶרְפַּת נְעוּרָי.

Surely after that I was turned, I repented, and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh; I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth.

Finally, as Rashi on *Megilla* 31a (s.v. “הבן יקיר לי אפרים”) points out, verse 19 cites God’s remembering Ephraim and having mercy on him, which, appropriately enough, is one of the verses of *Zichronos* included in the Rosh Hashanah *mussaf*.



תְּקִיעַת שׁוֹפָר – *Shofar-Sounding*

What is the origin of the *shofar* sounds?

mi.yodeya.com/q/9876

Tal Fishman asked: There are 4 major *shofar* notes sounded on *Rosh Hashana*:

- ***Tekiah*:** A long, continuous blast.
- ***Shevarim*:** Three short “broken” blasts.
- ***Teruah*:** A rapid series of nine or more very short blasts.
- ***Tekiah Gedolah*:** A *tekiah* blast held as long as possible.

What is the Torah source for these specific sounds?

Alex answered: The Torah itself uses only the terms “*tekiah*” and “*teruah*” (Numbers 10:3ff.). Elsewhere (Leviticus 25:9) the Torah puts the verb *ha’avir* (“to make pass”) before and after references to a *teruah*, implying that it should be preceded and followed by a long drawn-out sound — which tells us that the basic order is *tekiah-teruah-tekiah*.

So, there’s no doubt what a *tekiah* is. However, the word “*teruah*” is translated into Aramaic as “*yevava*,” which means a crying sound, and this has three possible meanings:

moaning (medium-length sounds, what we call “*shevarim*”); sobbing (short sounds, what we call “*teruah*”); or both, first moaning and then sobbing. In the era of the *Mishnah*, it was already uncertain which of these three was the true “*teruah*”; accordingly, it was instituted that we do all three. (Talmud, *Rosh Hashanah* 33b-34a; *Shulchan Aruch Harav, Orach Chaim* 590:1-2.)

(How this uncertainty came about is itself the subject of dispute. R. Hai Gaon explains that in reality, any of these three would satisfy the Torah obligation of hearing a crying sound, so various communities did it in various ways; the enactment to do all three was in order to unify the various practices. By contrast, Rambam writes (*Shofar* 3:2) that the true original meaning of “*teruah*” was actually forgotten, and so we do all three to be on the safe side.)

Returning to *tekiah*, it can be drawn out as long as you want (*Shulchan Aruch Harav, Orach Chaim* 590:4). So the custom developed to make the last one (of the first set of 30 sounds) extra-long (“*tekiah gedolah*”), also symbolizing the idea (from Psalms 47:6) that G-d’s presence “ascends with the sound of the *shofar*.” But it’s not a halachic requirement.



What should a person think when hearing the *shofar*?

mi.yodeya.com/q/45125

albert asked: What should a person think about when hearing the *shofar* in the month of Elul and on Rosh Hashana? Is there some basic intent we should have in mind?

yEz answered: As for Rosh Hashana, Rav Saadiah lists ten reasons for blowing the *shofar*. They are:

1. Coronations of kings are announced by trumpet blasts. The *shofar* is the coronation blast of Hashem’s rulership.
☞ So think about accepting Hashem as king.
2. The *shofar* is a wake-up call to examine our actions.
☞ So think about whether your behavior has been appropriate.
3. The *shofar* was blown at Har Sinai, and it is a reminder to study the Torah.
☞ So think about applying yourself to studying the Torah.
4. The *shofar* reminds us of the declarations of the *nevi'im* (prophets), who enjoined us to follow Hashem’s ways.
☞ So think about committing to follow Hashem’s ways according to the instructions of the *nevi'im*.
5. The *shofar* sounds like crying, which reminds us that we are in exile.
☞ So think about desiring the Redemption.

6. The *shofar* reminds us of the ram of the binding of Isaac, to inspire us to be willing to sacrifice.
 - ☞ So think about submitting to Hashem's will even when it involves sacrifices.
7. The *shofar* reminds us of Hashem's might.
 - ☞ So think about how Hashem is mighty, and we should be humbled.
8. The Great Shofar will herald the Day of Judgement.
 - ☞ So think about the fact that you will be judged.
9. The Great Shofar will herald the Redemption.
 - ☞ So think of the hope that we have that we will be redeemed.
10. The Great Shofar will herald the time when the entire world will accept that Hashem is One.
 - ☞ So think about accepting that Hashem is One.

Avrohom Yitzchok added: The Rambam, in *Hilchos Teshuvah* 3:4, says about blowing *shofar* on Rosh Hashono:

אע"פ שתקיעת שופר בראש השנה גזירת הכתוב רמז יש בו כלומר עורו ישינים משנתכם ונרדמים הקיצו מתרדמתכם וחפשו במעשיכם וחזרו בתשובה וזכרו בוראכם.

Even though sounding the *shofar* on Rosh Hashono is a biblical command, there is a hint to it. It says, so to speak, "Wake up you sleepers from your sleep and you slumberers from your deep slumber and examine your deeds and return in repentance and remember your Creator."¹

So it seems that we should be thinking of our deeds, how good they are and what needs *teshuvah* and before Whom we are repenting.

I think the blowing in Elul is a preparation for Rosh Hashono and the intention should be the same.



What is the reason behind blowing the *shofar* from the side of one's mouth?

mi.yodeya.com/q/45683

Bruce James asked: I've been told that the custom is to blow the *shofar* from the sides of one's mouth, rather than like blowing a trumpet. What is the source for this custom and the reasoning behind it?

Yishai explained: The Ramo (O.C. 585:2) says to blow specifically on the right side of the mouth. The *Magain Avraham* says this is based on the verse (*Zecharia* 3:1) "והשטן" "והשטן" "והשטן" — "the Satan stands on his right side."

Bruce James followed up: What if the *shofar* blower is left-handed? Any difference?

¹ My free translation.

Yishai confirmed: Yes, the Magain Avraham there says that it should be done on the side opposite where the *Teffilin* of the hand are worn, so a left-handed person would reverse sides if he reverses his *Teffilin*.



Yemenite *shofar* not from sheep

mi.yodeya.com/q/9878

msh210 asked: I've heard that Yemenite Jews follow the Rambam for *halacha* generally, and Wikipedia concurs.¹

The Rambam writes that one must use a sheep's horn as the *shofar* on Rosh Hashana. Shulchan Aruch is less strict, but emphasizes that a sheep's horn is best.

Why do Yemenites (famously²) use an antelope horn as a shofar?

HodoffHod responded: It seems to me from the quote from the last Chief Rabbi of Yemen, Rabbi Amram Korach, that they didn't follow the Rambam in this regard because they found the kudu horn more beautiful for the *mitzvah*:

The *shofar* of Rosh HaShanah, that they were accustomed to blowing, was long and twisted, two or three twists, and its sound was pure and eerie. Some said that it was from an animal that was similar to sheep. Therefore, they did not concern themselves with [Rambam's] stringency that only sheep horns are kosher, since they saw that this shofar beautifies the *mitzvah* in its stature, and its sound was greater than that of a sheep's horn, and until this very day they blow the *mitzvah* blasts with this *shofar*, according to the rulings of the Geonim that all twisted *shofars* are kosher from the outset.³

See "Exotic Shofars – Halachic Considerations," by R' Natan Slifkin, for an interesting article on this topic, in general, and section C/II, "The Yemenite Kudu Shofar" (pages 11-13) in particular.⁴



מַלְכִּיּוֹת – Of Kingship

How a couple of lines in *Alenu* fit the pattern

mi.yodeya.com/q/7977

WAF asked: It has been pointed out to me that the two halves of the "*Alenu*" prayer follow a pretty strict pattern. Each contains eight parallel couplets, followed by a Biblical quote. For example, the first two lines could be broken down like this:⁵

¹ See the Hebrew Wikipedia entry for "יהדות תימן."

² See the English Wikipedia entry for "Shofar."

³ *Sa'arat Teiman*, Jerusalem 1954, p. 99.

⁴ www.zootorah.com/assets/media/essays/ExoticShofars.pdf

⁵ Translations by R' Jonathan Sacks, in *The Sacks Siddur*, Koren Publishers, 2009.

עֲלֵינוּ לְשַׁבַּח לְאֵדוֹן הַכֹּל / לְתַת גְּדֻלָּה לְיוֹצֵר בְּרֵאשִׁית

It is our duty to praise the Master of all, / to ascribe greatness to the Author of creation,

שְׁלֹא עָשָׂנוּ כְּגוֹיֵי הָאָרְצוֹת / וְלֹא שָׂמְנוּ כְּמִשְׁפָּחוֹת הָאֲדָמָה

Who has not made us like the nations of the lands / nor placed us like the families of the earth;

I was able to break most of the lines down easily in this manner. However, it is not clear to me exactly how lines 5 and 6 work:

וְאֵנְחָנוּ כּוֹרְעִים וּמִשְׁתַּחֲוִים וּמוֹדִים לְפָנֵי מֶלֶךְ מְלְכֵי הַמְּלָכִים הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא

But we bow in worship and thank the Supreme King of kings, the Holy One, Blessed be He,

שֶׁהוּא נוֹטֵה שָׁמַיִם / וְיֹסֵד אֶרֶץ

Who extends the heavens / and establishes the earth,

Is the pattern maintained? What is the correct breakdown?

There are some slight variations in version (aside from the major one¹), but I don't think the more minor ones affect this concern.

Alex pointed out: In R' Saadiah Gaon's *siddur*, the word "שהוא" ("For He" — beginning of the sixth line) is missing, so you have five stichs of four words each from there until "ככתוב." This pattern raises the possibility that this part isn't meant to be in couplets; in fact, I'd analyze it as a triplet (each part of which describes Hashem's greatness in some way) followed by a couplet (each half of which focuses on a different way in which we relate to Him, as "אלקינו" — "our God," and "מלכנו" — "our King").

Isaac Moses suggested: I recall from English Literature in high school that sometimes a poet deliberately breaks in one point from the poem's overall rhyme/rhythm scheme to emphasize that point. Perhaps that's what's going on here. We emphasize this line in other ways, such as by bowing and possibly with melodic emphasis (although that may just be a consequence of the bowing).

jake elucidated: I would consider just the line "וְאֵנְחָנוּ כּוֹרְעִים וּמִשְׁתַּחֲוִים וּמוֹדִים לְפָנֵי מֶלֶךְ" as the main emphasis in breaking the pattern, to then continue with a praising description of God.

Just as on Rosh Hashana in the poem *Melech Elyon* [The King on High...], we break with "אבל מלך אביון" [but the human king...] to give a disparaging description following the poetic form, then break again with "אבל מלך עליון" [but the King on High...] to continue our praise, again following the poetic form.

Here too, I would count four couplets beginning *Alenu*:

¹ The censoring-out of the fourth line ("שֶׁהוּא מִשְׁתַּחֲוִים לְהַבִּיל וְרִיק").

עלינו לשבח לאדון הכל / לתת גדלה ליוצר בראשית
 שלא עשנו כגויי הארצות / ולא שמנו כמשפחות האדמה
 שלא שם חלקנו כהם / וגורלנו ככל המון
 שהם משתחוים להכל וריק / ומתפללים אל אל לא יושיע

Then break with the next line to emphasize our beginning the praise of God:

ואנחנו כורעים ומשתחוים ומודים לפני מלך מלכי המלכים הקדוש ברוך הוא

Then four more couplets describing God's praises:

שהוא נוטה שמים / ויסד ארץ
 ומושב יקרו בשמים ממעל / ושכינת עזו בגבהי מרומים
 הוא אלקינו / אין עוד
 אמת מלכנו / אפס זולתו

Then the Biblical quote:

בכתוב בתורתו: וידעת היום והשבת אל לבבך כי ה' הוא האלקים בשמים ממעל ועל הארץ מתחת אין עוד.



Significance of the words “*Shema Yisrael*”

mi.yodeya.com/q/50409

Ypnypn asked: The verse *Shema Yisrael* (*Devarim* 6:4) is highly significant. It is Biblically required to be recited twice daily, it is to be said at the end of one's life, and appears in the liturgy at the end of Yom Kippur and in *Kedusha* of *Mussaf*.

It is clear why the verse is so considered: It states that Hashem is the one God, obviously critical to Jewish belief.

However, what about the first two words, “*Shema Yisrael*” – “Hear, O Israel”? Are these words significant just because they appear in the same verse as the fundamental belief, or is there something special about these words themselves?

Isaac Moses said: The *Sefer Hachinuch* interprets this verb as the source that the commandment stated here is to *believe* in God, and not merely to *profess belief* in God. His piece on Commandment 417 begins:

מצות אחדות השם – שנצטוינו להאמין כי השם יתברך הוא הפועל כל המציאות, אדון הכל, אחד בלי שום שתוף, שנאמר (דברים ו ד) שמע ישראל יי אלקינו יי אחד, וזה מצות עשה הוא, אינה הגדה, אבל פרוש שמע כלומר, קבל ממני דבר זה ודעהו והאמן בו, כי השם שהוא אלקינו אחד הוא.

The commandment of unification of [God's] Name: That we are commanded to believe that Blessed God is the one who enacts all of existence; the Master of all; One, without any partnership. As it says (*Deuteronomy* 6:4): “Hear, Israel: *God* is our God; *God* is One.” And this proactive commandment is not [in the] speaking;

rather, “Hear” is meant to say, “Accept this point from me, know it, and believe in it: That God, our God, is One.”¹

yEz explained: The words *Shema Yisrael* are usually translated as “Hear, Israel” or “Listen, Israel.” However, the word appears with a different meaning elsewhere in Tanach:

Shmuel 1 15:4:

And Shaul gathered the nation

וַיִּשְׁמַע שְׂאוּל אֶת הָעָם

Metzudas Tzion there:

"וישמע" – ענין אסיפה הבאה בשמיעת קול המאסף

Vayishama – gathering that happens through calling out

So שמע ישראל could mean “Gather, Israel.”

In the context of *Shema*, the significance of this could be understood as follows — we, the Jewish people, represent Hashem in this world. *Shema* is the declaration of Hashem’s One-ness, and it can only be declared and espoused in its entirety with the unity of the Jewish people. Therefore, we must gather together before we can properly declare Hashem’s One-ness. On a similar note, the Vilna Gaon in his commentary to the 3rd blessing of *Shemoneh Esrei* comments that the entire Torah is a name of Hashem. The Sages tell us (*Zohar Chadash, Shir HaShirim*) that there are 600,000 letters of the Sefer Torah which correspond to the 600,000 souls of the Jewish people, and if even one letter is missing it is invalid. However you resolve the discrepancy in the numbers, the idea seems clear that the entire body of Israel is necessary to complete this *sefer Torah*, which is the name of Hashem. In order to properly represent Hashem in this world, we must all be included.

Dan F offered: Often in Tana”ch, the word “Shema” doesn’t mean “hear” — using ears. It means “understand.” Example: *Na’aseh V’nishma* — the response B’nai Yisra’el gave upon accepting the giving of the Torah — means, “We will do, and we will understand.”

Talmud *Brachot* mentions that the recital of the *Shema* is comparable to reciting the 10 Commandments. It seems fair, then, to make a parallel interpretation of the word “Shema” in “Shema Yisrael” as meaning “Understand, Israel. Hashem our G-d, Hashem is one.” That is: understand what you are saying, understand what this basic principle means, understand that you are performing a mitzvah — there are multiple layers of understanding required while reciting *Shema*.

Related: the Gemarah *Brachot* also debates if the recital of *Shema* is acceptable if one recited it without *kavanah*, the proper intent. Part of the reason for that debate, from my recollection, emanates from the translation of the word “*Shema*” as “understand.”



¹ Translation and emphasis mine.

עֲשָׂרַת יְמֵי תְּשׁוּבָה – Ten Days of Repentance

סְלִיחוֹת – *Selichot*

How can I find meaning in saying *selichot*?

mi.yodeya.com/q/30901

‘please remove my account’ asked: I have always had a problem connecting with the *selichot*. In my *shul* they are said in a very rushed, dispassionate fashion, mainly due to the need for people to get to work. I don’t understand most of what I’m saying, and I don’t have the time or, frankly, the inclination to read through the English translation of each day.

I am looking for practical advice on how to make saying *selichot* more meaningful.

Fred noted: “It is better to recite few supplications attentively than to recite many without concentrating” (*Shulchan Aruch*, OC 1:4).

Danny Schoemann suggested: Assuming that finding a slower minyan is not an option, and that you are using the Ashkenazi/Chasidic version, I recommend you take a two-pronged approach:

1. Prepare.
2. Don’t plan on saying all of it.

Prepare the shortest chapter for that day, which is very often the *Pizmon* — the one towards the end recited responsively by the congregation and the leader.

Spend a few minutes before *Selichot* (or while the congregation is saying the first pieces) to use a translation to understand what it says.

Then say it at your own pace, regardless of where the congregation is up to.

The parts you should say with the congregation are the 13 *Middot* (“Hashem-Hashem” etc.) and the 4-5 verses right after, which are the essential part of *Selichot*. (The “long” poetic *Selichot* were introduced later.)

If you pencil in the translation/meaning while you are preparing or just after the service, then over the course of a few years you will have most of the *Selichot* under *your control*.

By the way, once you get the hang of the *language* used, you will find that you understand most *Selichot* even without preparing, as many of the themes are recurring.

What parts of *selichot* can be said without a *minyan*?

mi.yodeya.com/q/18972

Daniel asked: Suppose attending a *minyan* for *selichot* is impossible during the time it is said (in the week before Rosh Hashanah for Ashkenazim; from the beginning of Elul

for Sefardim). Which parts of *selichot* can be said without a *minyan*, and which parts must be omitted?

Gershon Gold answered: If someone is unable to attend a *minyan* for *selichos* he would not say the *Shelosh Esrei Midos* (13 Attributes of Mercy). In addition, Ashkenazim would not say the words that are in Aramaic; however, for Sefardim there are those that permit it. There are also those that permit saying the *Shelosh Esrei Midos* if it is done to the tune we read the Torah.

Sources: *Mishna Berura* 581:4, *Hilchos Chagim* (Rabbi Mordechai Eliyahu, page 206), *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch Yalkot Yosef* 581:15.

Aryeh answered: For Sephardim, R. Eliezer Toledano, in the *Orot Sephardic Selihot*, writes the following:

One who is reciting the *Selihot* without a *minyan* must say the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy with the cantillation melody used when reading from the Torah (*Shulchan Aruch* 665:5). He may not recite those portions of the *Selihot* that are written in Aramaic (e.g., “*Marana D’vishmaya...*”); cf. *Kaf Hahayyim* 581:26.

For more detail, see *Yalkut Yosef, siman* 581:14:

הסליחות שנתקנו בלשון ארמית [תרגום], כגון "רחמנא", "מחי ומסי", "דעני לעני ענינן", "מרנא דבשמיא", אין ליחיד לאומרם, מפני שאין מלאכי השרת מכירין בלשון ארמי, ורק אם יש מנין בבית הכנסת אומרם אותם, שהצבור אינו זקוק לעזרת מלאכי השרת, שהשכינה עמהם. [ראה בקול תורה אלול תשס"ג עמוד ז]. ולכן כשעדיין לא באו עשרה להשלים מנין, ידלג השליח צבור רחמנא ושאר קטעי סליחות הנ"ל, וכשיבואו עשרה יאמרם. ונכון לנהוג כשטרם באו עשרה לבית הכנסת לסליחות, לומר אחר שבט יהודה בדוחק ובצער [קודם קל מלך] "רבוננו של עולם אתוודה על עבירות", וכו', והיודי ושאר תחנונות שבלשון הקודש, וכשיופיע העשירי לסליחות יחזרו ל"קל מלך", ויעבור, רחמנא, אנשי אמונה, ושאר הסליחות שדילגו. ואם הזמן מצומצם בכל זאת יאמרו קל מלך, ויעבור, אנשי אמונה וכו', וידלגו "אם אפס" ויתחילו "זכרון לפניך בשחק". וכן ידלגו "בזכרי על משכבי" וכן "אליך ה' נשאתי עיני" כפי הצורך, כי מעלת אמירת י"ג מדות עולה על חשיבות הסליחות הללו. ואם אין תקוה שיגיע מנין במשך זמן אמירת הסליחות, אז יאמרו כל הי"ג מדות במקומם, עם טעמי המקרא, כמי שקורא בתורה. [וראה בשו"ת יביע אומר ח"י בהערות לרב פעלים חאו"ח ח"ג סי' מא בענין סדר ז' כורתי ברית בתפלת רחמנא שאומרם בסליחות].

The *selichot* set in the Aramaic language (*Targum*), such as “*Rachamana*,” “*Machai U’Masai*,” “*Deanei Laaniyei*,” and “*Marana D’vishmaya*,” are not said by an individual, because the ministering angels do not understand the Aramaic language. Only if there is a *minyan* in the synagogue are they said, as the community doesn’t need the help of ministering angels since God’s Presence is with them (see *B’Kol Torah Ehul* 5763, page 7). Therefore, when ten have yet to come to make a *minyan*, the *chazzan* skips “*Rachamana*” and the other *selichot* mentioned above, and once ten arrive they say it.

When ten have yet to arrive to the synagogue for *selichot* by the end of “*Shevet Yehudah B’Dochak Uvtzaar*,” it is proper conduct to say [before *El Melech*] “רבונו של עולם אתוודה על עבירות” (Master of the Universe, I will confess my transgressions), etc., as well as the *Viddui* (Confession) and the rest of the sections that are in the Holy Tongue, and when the tenth man arrives to *selichot* they return to “*El Melech*,” “*Vayavor*,” “*Rachamana*,” “*Anshei Emunah*,” and the rest of the *selichot* that were skipped. And if time is limited anyway, they say “*El Melech*,” “*Vayavor*,” “*Anshei Emunah*,” etc., and they skip “*Im Afes*,” and start on “*Zikaron Lefanecha Basachak*.” And they skip “*Bezochri Al Mishcavi*” and “*Elecha HaShem Nafshi Esa*,” as necessary, since the virtue of the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy take precedence over these *selichot*. And if there is no hope that a minyan will appear during the recitation of *selichot*, they then say all of the Thirteen Attributes in their usual place, with cantillation melody, as if reading from the Torah. (See *Responsa Yabia Omer Helek 10*, in the notes to *Rav Poalim Orach Chaim Helek 3*, *Siman 41* on the order of the 7 covenants in the prayer “*Rachamana*” that are said in *selichot*.)

תשובה – Repentance

What can I do to change myself permanently through the repentance process?

mi.yodeya.com/q/18650

Avrohom Yitzchok asked: I find myself in much the same state each year before Rosh HaShono. I don’t know what was wrong with my attempt at *teshuvah* but the outcome was that despite my best intentions I have not accomplished all the change that I hoped for last year. What can allow me to make a more permanent change this year as a result of the repentance process?

Epicentre said: What do you mean by permanent? I learnt once from Habad that life is like going up a down escalator — if you stand still you go down. There is a constant struggle to improve the spiritual level and conquer the evil inclination (*yetzer hara*).

pzkd offered: In order for change to be permanent, it has to go through a process. Anything that changes overnight can revert overnight. The process of changing ourselves has two parts:

1. Understanding the problem

When we understand why some *midah* (trait) is bad, it allows us to start the process of changing ourselves (knowing the illness is half the cure). It’s not good enough to understand the problem; rather we need to emotionally “understand” why the *midah* is not appropriate.

2. Turning the problem into a solution

Fixing the problem is an intense process, but if done right will be successful. First, we need to know about ourselves. After we know what makes us tick and what motivates us, we then need to create a plan of action.

First we need to address the “action” (*ma’aseh*) of the *midah*. By controlling the action we start to see results. This needs to be done with wisdom by figuring out how to channel the bad *midah*, if possible.

Then, we work on the speech and thought part of the *midah* — we need to understand why we feel this way etc.

As an example, let’s assume I have an anger problem. The path to fixing this begins with understanding why it’s a problem. For example: it affects my social life; it is not healthy; it doesn’t allow me to be productive.

Now that I know why it’s bad, I need to figure out a way to control its “action.” For example: I may do exercise, or scream inside an empty room to let out the anger in a healthy/appropriate way.

Next I work on the “speech” part of it. For example: I may sing a song loudly to let out the anger. Notice how at this point the singing helps me (and most of the time I don’t need to scream).

Finally I work on the “thought” aspect; I start appreciating how there is no need to get angry in the first place. For example: I realize that Hashem is in control of my life, so if something goes wrong it’s for the best.

Michael Sandler answered: Your question is understandably short on detail, so it’s possible my particular answer will not be wholly relevant to you. I am all too familiar with the phenomenon you describe.

Derech Eretz precedes the Torah

דרך ארץ קדמה לתורה

The source of this well-known saying is not as obvious as the frequency it is quoted would suggest.¹ It is variously applied to manners, livelihood, and even marital intimacy, but the sense in which I take it is the one which I was taught — that living life according to the way of the world is a **prerequisite** to living life according to the Torah.

This does *not* mean that when normal social practice clashes with a Torah lifestyle you favour “the done thing”. It goes without saying that *mitzvot* must be upheld in opposition to the entire world if it comes to that. Rather, the wisdom of the world is a **foundation** to the sublime and infinite wisdom of the Torah. You’ve got to master day-to-day normal living before you can master living according to the Torah.

This idea can be applied to behaviour which we just can’t seem to eradicate from our life no matter how much *teshuvah* we do, *mussar* (ethics) we learn, or prayers we pour out. I’m talking about stuff which we know that the Torah forbids, and which we intellectually don’t want to do, but are somehow driven to do anyway. The Torah approach just doesn’t

¹ See kabbalahmadda.blogspot.com/2009/02/fake-rabbinic-aphorism.html.

seem to get any traction, like a car stuck in mud. You're giving a huge amount of effort and attention to the problem, pedal to the metal, you can *feel* energy and sincerity pouring out of you, and yet you're getting nowhere, always slipping back to where you were. It can lead to despair.

The wisdom of the world is intimately familiar with this problem. It's not a Torah issue at all. It applies to people across the world and throughout the ages. They call it addiction.

Yes, I just called you an addict. I hope you will not take offense because I mean none. I am well aware, as I said at the start, that I know nothing about you or your circumstances. All I have to work with is your complaint about not being able to change your life. That certainly doesn't classify you as an addict, but it is a defining characteristic of people who admitted they were "powerless." The insult offered if it doesn't apply to you is outweighed by the benefit if it does.

In my opinion (and the opinion of observant Jews who have been forced to acknowledge and address their problems in this light), the Torah approach simply will not work for an addict. They have a problem fundamental to *being human* which requires correction through mundane means. Only then will the Torah "work" for them. This is a radical and controversial idea which most Jews do not feel the need to entertain except in desperation.

At the risk of being flippant, addiction is (to a degree) a "solved problem." The 12 Steps,¹ when applied properly and fully, allow an addict to change his behaviour where nothing else has worked. Anyone interested in self-improvement and growth, whether they have an addiction or not, will find food for thought in the writings of Rabbi Abraham Twerski. If you determine that you are or might be an addict, explore the *numerous* Jewish addiction resources around the world. Relief is out there.

In closing, I acknowledge again how presumptuous of me it is to extrapolate from such slim data. Please take my words in the spirit that they are meant.



How can someone, *halachically*, do *teshuvah* when s/he has offended an anonymous person on the internet?

mi.yodeya.com/q/45424

DanF asked: Rambam (*Hilchot Teshuva* 2:9) among others, states that Yom Kippur does not atone for sins committed between a person and his neighbor until a person personally asks the other for forgiveness.

If someone offended someone else on a web forum or a blog post or comment, where he/she doesn't know who read his/her posts, what would be the proper or best *halachic* way to repent? Can posting a generic "I'm sorry to whomever I offended" be used, or is there some other preferred method?

¹ en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Twelve-Step_Program

ray quoted *Chovos Halevavos #7, Shaar Teshuva* (emphasis added):

(ch. 9) But for the sins towards G-d and man, it will be difficult to repent for several reasons: He may not be able to find the person he oppressed, or the person died or moved far away....

Perhaps the oppressed will not forgive him for what he oppressed him or hurt him physically, or spoke badly of him.

The oppressor may not know whom he oppressed, or he does not know the amount of money involved. For example, if he oppressed the people of a city or a province, and he does not know them, and he does not know the amount of money he took from them wrongfully....

(ch. 10) ...Whatever category it belongs to, if the repentance is difficult due to one of the factors we previously mentioned which cause repentance to be difficult, then **if the person takes on himself to fulfill the requirements of repentance with all its conditions to the utmost extent that is in his power and ability to do**, then the Creator will make his repentance easier, **and will pardon what is hidden from him and not in his ability to do**, and will give him an opportunity approximately close to his sin and allow him to absolve himself in this way (as will be explained)....

...If the oppressed is far away, the Creator will arrange their meeting, and the oppressor will submit before the oppressed and will be forgiven by him.

If he doesn't know the number of people he oppressed and the amount of money he took, the Creator will give him the opportunity to spend his money in some kind of public project, such as building a bridge, digging a well to benefit the public, or digging water pits in roads where water is scarce, or other similar things to benefit the masses, until the benefit will serve the one he oppressed and also the one he did not oppress...

...Repentance is not withheld from a sinner; rather, the obstruction comes from his own wickedness and deceitful heart. But if he sincerely wants to draw near to G-d, the gate of repentance will not be closed before him, and no obstacle will prevent him from reaching it. Rather, G-d will open for him the gate of the just, and teach him the good path in His mercy and in His goodness, as written "Good and upright is the L-rd: therefore will he teach sinners in the way." (Tehilim 25:8)

Danny Schoemann also suggested: If you know that you (might have) offended a specific user-ID, then it would make sense to apologize to that user-ID.

You would also be expected to remove the offensive writing, if at all possible.

Once you know they saw the apology, you can delete it, if the offensive writing has been deleted. (If you cannot remove the offensive writing, then you probably should keep the apology visible, for future reference. People may get insulted again, forgetting they forgave you previously.)



Do I have to forgive a repeat offender?

mi.yodeya.com/q/10360

Monica Cellio asked: If somebody has repeatedly wronged me (in the same way) in the past, am I obligated to keep forgiving him if he asks? On the one hand, maybe this time he finally is really doing *teshuva*; on the other hand, there's a track record. What happens if I decline?

user1095 answered: The *gemara* in *Yoma* 87 explains how to properly ask for forgiveness. The offender must go with three friends to the offended, and publicly ask for forgiveness.

If the offended does not want to grant forgiveness, this process is repeated a second, and, if needed, a third time.

After the third time, the offender need not ask for forgiveness again — and the offended has transgressed the prohibition of holding a grudge!

So, if the person who is repeatedly transgressing against you isn't admitting his sin in front of friends and asking you for forgiveness, you don't have to forgive him. If this person is not well-versed in *gemara*, explain that this public admission and sincere request for forgiveness is what you need in order to forgive, and nothing less.

(If the person is willing to shame himself publicly by admitting the transgression and publicly asking in a contrite way for forgiveness, that's a fairly decent indication that the person really regrets his actions.)

Shalom pointed out: Check the prayers found in most *machzors* before *Kol Nidrei* (emphasis added):¹

רבנו של עולם, אני מוחל במחילה גמורה לכל מי שחטא כנגדי ... חוץ מי שחוטא כנגדי ואומר
אחטא לו והוא ימחול לי ...

Master of the Universe, I hereby absolutely forgive anyone who has harmed me ...
other than one who harms me figuring that I'll forgive him ...

Eytan Yammer added: There is no reason to treat people unkindly, but we don't have to open ourselves up to being hurt. For people who repeatedly cause us pain or transgress against us, I try to remind myself of this. Suspect them, protect yourself, but never embarrass, humiliate, or refuse to show respect to them.

¹ Quoted here from "המחזור ההמבואר השלם" by Menachem Avraham Brown.

This piece from *Derekh Eretz Rabbah* is one of my favorites. The story is awesome!

לעולם יהיו כל בני אדם חשובין לפניך כלסטים והוי מכבדן כרבן גמליאל, ומעשה ברבי יהושע שהשכים אצלו אדם ונתן לו אכילה ושתיה והעלהו לגג לשכב, ונטל סולם מתחתיו, מה עשה אותו האיש, עמד בחצי הלילה ונטל את הכלים וכרכן בטליתו – וכיון שביקש לירד נפל מן הגג ונשברה מפרקתו, לשחרית השכים רבי יהושע ובא מצאו כשהוא נופל, אמר לו ריקה כך עושין בני אדם שכמותך, אמר לו רבי, לא הייתי יודע שנטלת את הסולם מתחת, אמר לו ריקה אי אתה יודע שמאמש היינו זהירין בך. מכאן א"ר יהושע לעולם יהיו כל בני אדם בעיניך כלסטים והוי מכבדן כר"ג.

Always consider all people like thieves (marauders), and show them respect (honor) like we do to Raban Gamliel. It once happened to Rabbi Yehoshuah that he fed and gave drink to a visitor to his home and helped the visitor up to the loft to sleep, and Rabbi Yehoshua removed the ladder from beneath him (the visitor). What did that man do? He stood in the middle of the night and collected all of Rabbi Yehoshuah's things and hid them in his cloak, and when the man started to come down from the loft he fell and broke his back. In the morning Rabbi Yehoshua awoke and found the man laying on the floor. He said to the man: "Fool! This is what people like you do!?" He responded: "Rebbi! I didn't know that you had removed the ladder!" Rabbi Yehoshuah responded: "Fool! Didn't you realize that we had suspected you since last night?!"

From here we learn that all people should always be in your eyes like thieves (marauders), and you should show them respect (honor) like to Raban Gamliel.

Beyond the message, the absurdity of the thief's answer amuses me.



יום כפור – Yom Kippur

כל נדרי – All Vows

What's so moving about Kol Nidrei?

mi.yodeya.com/q/20356

Michoel asked: Wikipedia's entry on Kol Nidrei says:

Though not a prayer, this dry legal formula and its ceremonial accompaniment have been charged with emotional undertones since the medieval period, creating a dramatic introduction to Yom Kippur on what is often dubbed "Kol Nidrei night".

Why is this so? What meaning behind annulling oaths evokes such emotions? Why is this one of the highlights of the High Holiday prayer, one of the times almost all Jews, regardless of background, come to synagogue?

Ted Hopp answered: One explanation I heard — most likely, it was from the rabbi of the Sephardic congregation my family belonged to in Colombia in the late 1950s — was that *Kol Nidre* took on additional layers of emotional meaning for European Jews because of the forced conversion of Jews to Christianity during the Middle Ages. It's mentioned in the Wikipedia article on *Kol Nidre*.

b a pointed out: It's the start of the atonement (you can see it as an atonement of vows).

Fred said, based on the ArtScroll *Machzor's* introduction to *Kol Nidrei*:

When Rabbah bar Chanah arrived at the site of Mount Sinai, he heard a Divine voice proclaim: "Woe is me that I have sworn! But now that I have sworn, who will annul my oath?" (Talmud, *Bava Basra* 74a) The *Rashbam* comments (ad loc.) that G-d looks for grounds to annul His oath not to end the exile.

The *Tikkunei Zohar* (תיקוני ה' ליום ל"ז) contains a mystical passage describing G-d's oath that the Divine Presence will remain in exile. In it, Rabbi Shimon provides kabbalistic grounds for annulling the oath and ending the exile of His Presence and the Jewish people. Many prayer books include this passage as a prologue to *Kol Nidrei*.

By reciting *Kol Nidrei* we as a community annul all vows and oaths. We demonstrate that G-d, too, may be free of His burdensome oath, and He may finally redeem His Presence with His people, that they may, as the *Yom Kippur* services say, all join together to serve Him wholeheartedly.

Double AA suggested: The haunting tune. And, **Charles Koppelman added,** more than anything else, it's the liturgical statement that indicates *Yom Kippur* is here.

Monica Cellio noted: Other answers have addressed the meaning in the text and historical associations, but I think Double AA's comment is critical: it's the music. I've

been told this by many members of my congregation, including both scholars and “regular Jews”. For them, just reading the text would be empty, but hearing it sung connects them with the day, its themes, and its history.

A professor lecturing on music in worship (at Hebrew Union College) told me that *Kol Nidrei* is one of the so-called “*miSinai*” melodies, one that is strongly associated with *Yom Kippur* for the listener. Even listeners who don’t know what the words mean seem to be moved by this melody in its context. (They might not be, and might even find it odd, if they heard this melody in a concert hall in April.)



מַעֲרִיב – Evening Service

***Avinu Malkeinu* – middle verses said out loud by the Chazan**

mi.yodeya.com/q/10427

Gershon Gold asked: Why do we repeat the verses of *Avinu Malkeinu* out loud after the *chazzan* (cantor) from “*Hachzireinu B’Teshuva*” (“Return us with repentance ...”) until “*Kosveinu B’Sefer Slicha U’Mechila*” (“Inscribe us in the book of forgiveness and pardon”)? Why only these verses? Why not others?

Michoel answered: The custom of reciting *Avinu Malkeinu* responsively by the *chazzan* and congregation is brought in *Mateh Efrayim* (602:13), without any explanation. The *Mateh Efrayim* himself writes to begin from “קרע” (“tear up ...”); however, the *Ktzey Hamateh* commentary (often printed with the *Mateh Efrayim*) brings the custom to start from “החזירנו בתשובה” (“Return us with repentance ...”).

The only reason I could find is mentioned in *Sha’ar Yissachar, Moznayim Lamishpat* #91: During the Ten Days of Repentance, we say “א”מ כתבנו” (“Our Father, our King, inscribe us ...”), whereas on a fast day we say “א”מ זכרנו” (“Our Father, our King, remember us ...”), and during *Ne’ilah*, we say “א”מ התמינו” (“Our Father, our King, seal us ...”). This could lead to confusion, and therefore the *chazzan* says these verses loudly. (The *Sha’ar Yissachar* himself writes that this is an unsatisfactory explanation, and in fact is of the opinion not to recite any verses responsively.)

However, this does not explain why to begin from “א”מ החזירנו בתשובה” (“Our Father, our King, return us with repentance ...”), a bit earlier than the verses with the differing verbs. The *Mo’adim Uzmanim* (6:2) explains that if we began from “א”מ כתבנו לחיים” (“Our Father, our King, inscribe us for life ...”), it would appear as if all we are interested in is our own needs (as the Zohar says: “These dogs that say ‘Give us life’, ‘Give us food’”), and so we instead begin aloud by requesting that *Hashem* help us do *Teshuva* (repent).



סֵדֵר הַעֲבוּדָה – The Temple Service

Why does the Yom Kippur service seem to reenact Abraham's treatment of his sons?

mi.yodeya.com/q/16486

Charles Koppelman asked: In the Yom Kippur service during Temple times, the *Kohen* would follow this procedure (Leviticus 16:7-10):¹

And he shall take the two goats, and set them before the LORD at the door of the tent of meeting. And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats: one lot for the LORD, and the other lot for Azazel. And Aaron shall present the goat upon which the lot fell for the LORD, and offer him for a sin-offering. But the goat, on which the lot fell for Azazel, shall be set alive before the LORD, to make atonement over him, to send him away for Azazel into the wilderness.

These two goats are treated much the same way that Abraham treated his sons — one (Isaac) was sacrificed, and one (Ishmael) was sent into the desert.

I know that Rashi (and maybe Talmud?) says that “Goat for Azazel” is thrown off a cliff, but the plain meaning is that it's sent to the desert. I'm less concerned with the technicalities than the similarities between these two. (Also note that these are, respectively, the Torah Readings from both days of Rosh Hashannah and Yom Kippur.)

Why do we mimic Abraham's fathering? Alternatively, why did Abraham perform the Yom Kippur service? What do we learn from this? Are there any sources that make this parallel (aside from my own thoughts and later a painting² I saw at the American Visionary Arts Museum in Baltimore)?

Avrohom Yitzchok suggested: You ask “But surely we can get some meaning from this. That's my hope here — a source or someone's original interpretation.” Here is an original interpretation without claims to authenticity.

We have two modes of dealing with the *yetzer hora* (evil inclination):

1. In this existence, we are given the *yetzer hora*, and we are to use it to serve HaShem. As Rashi comments on “with all your heart” in *Devorim* 5:6, “Love Him with your two inclinations (the good and the evil).”
2. In a future time, HaShem will kill and hence separate us from the *yetzer hora*. (*Gemoro Sukah* 52a)

The first mode represents the way we are to serve HaShem the whole year. The second, I suggest, is the meaning of sending the scapegoat to Azazel in the wilderness on Yom Kippur.

¹ Jewish Publication Society 1917 English translation from mechon-mamre.org.

² Halevi, Nahum. *The Family Abramovich: The Offered, The Parched And the Disinherited*. 2005.

Avrohom's aspiration for Yishmoel was that he should serve HaShem, as is our aspiration for the *yetzer hora* in the first mode. The Torah has him saying "Would that Yishmoel would live before you" (*Bereishis* 17:18), and Rashi there adds "in Your fear." Soroh's prophetic vision was that the continuation of the Jewish people should be through Yitzchok separated from Yishmoel, reminiscent of the second mode.

Binding Yitzchok to the altar was, I suggest, symbolic of bringing Yitzchok near to the service of HaShem in the same way as an offering brings the giver close to HaShem.



הִלְכוֹת וּמִנְהָגִים – Laws and Practices

Why are we forbidden to wear leather shoes on Yom Kippur?

mi.yodeya.com/q/30895

user1928764 asked: Why are we forbidden to wear leather shoes on Yom Kippur? Is it because leather shoes are a sign of wealth or comfort, or does it have something to do with cruelty to animals?

LazerA responded: The Talmud (*Yoma* 73b) lists the five obligatory "afflictions" (i.e. forbidden pleasures) of Yom Kippur:

1. Eating and drinking
2. Bathing
3. Anointing
4. Wearing shoes
5. Marital relations

Maimonides, in his commentary on the *Mishna*, summarizes the Talmudic discussion, saying:

The Torah does not explicitly state the requirement to abstain from these things on the fast of Yom Kippur, but it uses the language of affliction (עינוי) five times... and tradition tells us that this is to prohibit these five forms of physical pleasure... for in Scripture we find that [refraining from] each of these five things is described as affliction....

With regard to the specific prohibition against wearing shoes, while there is some debate on the topic (see *Minchas Chinuch* 313:14), the dominant opinion is that "shoes" means specifically leather shoes (כל מנעל שאינו של עור לא מיקרי מנעל), see *Beis Yosef* OC 614), and therefore the prohibition applies only to leather shoes.

For the most part, in virtually all older sources, the discussion ends here, as there was apparently no perceived need to provide a special explanation for the inclusion of wearing shoes (leather or not) among the required afflictions of Yom Kippur.

Among later sources, however, we do find some additional insights on this topic. Perhaps the most basic explanation is that given by Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch in *Horeb* (in his discussion of the laws of mourning (314:2), which he refers us to in his discussion of the laws of Yom Kippur (158)):

In the view of our Sages, the wearing of shoes on our feet betokens equipment for self-supporting activity. Thus, taking off one's shoes on holy ground is ordered several times in the *Tenach* as a sign of surrendering all one's self and of a complete submission to what is holy.

Unfortunately, R' Hirsch does not provide a source for this insight. However, the basic idea, that shoes symbolize the human capacity for self-sufficient action, can be found in several earlier sources (such as the Abudarham's commentary on the blessing, "שעשה לי כל צרכי").

Like R' Hirsch, a number of other commentaries associate the prohibition against wearing shoes on Yom Kippur with the prohibition against wearing shoes in the Temple, arguing that on Yom Kippur the entire earth is sanctified akin to the Temple and we are therefore required to walk barefoot. (R' Moshe Chagiz, cited in, among other places, R' A. Y. Sperling's *Ta'amei Haminhagim*, and R' Menachem Mendel of Rimanov, cited in Agnon's *Yomim Noraim* and in Artscroll's *Yom Kippur*.)

The Arizal (in *Shulchan Aruch HaAri*, cited in *Taamei Haminhagim*) gives an esoteric kabbalistic explanation for why specifically leather shoes are forbidden. The basic point he makes is that leather shoes are associated with the "garments of skin" that God gave Adam and Eve after they sinned (Genesis 3:21) (which, according to medrash, were made from the shed skin of the serpent). Leather shoes therefore symbolize sin and impurity, which have no power on Yom Kippur. Thus, we are required to remove these shoes.

Finally, R' Shlomo Tzvi Shik, in his late 1800s work *Shiddur HaMinhagim*, gives two original explanations for the prohibition of leather shoes.

The first, based upon a concept found in the commentary of the Shelah Hakadosh on the blessing "שעשה לי כל צרכי", is that leather shoes symbolize man's dominion over all of creation. However, R' Shik argues, a sinner has no such claim of dominion. Thus, on Yom Kippur, when we engage in repentance and confess our sins, we remove our leather shoes to demonstrate our recognition of our sinfulness.

R' Shik's second explanation is based on a custom that when a person would wear a new garment, people would bless him that "You should wear it out and get a new one." However, some write that one should not say this with regard to a leather garment, as this would require killing an animal and Scripture (Psalms 145:9) states, "His mercy is upon all His creations." Similarly, when slaughtering an animal for the first time, while one does recite the blessings of *Shehecheyanu* on the *mitzva* of *kisui hadam* (covering the blood, assuming it is required, as with a bird), one does not recite *Shehecheyanu* over the actual slaughtering because, according to some, it involves harming a living creature.

Similarly, R' Shik argues, being that Yom Kippur is a day of Divine mercy, it is improper to wear leather shoes.

This latter explanation (which, despite its rather obscure origin, has gained remarkable popularity, mainly because of its inclusion in Agnon's *Yomim Noraim* (and in the very popular, and heavily abridged, translation, *Days of Awe*), and, in turn, in many other such collections (including ArtScroll's *Yom Kippur*)) is actually rather difficult in that it would imply that *all* leather garments should be avoided on Yom Kippur, and there is no such practice — although Agnon does cite the *Leket Yosher* as indicating that the *Terumas HaDeshen*, R' Yisrael Isserlein, preferred to avoid wearing any leather garments on Yom Kippur.



What is the *shiur* for anointing on Yom Kippur?

mi.yodeya.com/q/20348

'not-allowed to change my name' wondered: One of the 5 forbidden pleasures on Yom Kippur is anointing. Is there a minimum *shiur* (measure) to be *chayav* (liable) for anointing on Yom Kippur, and, if so, what is it? The *gemarah* (*Yoma* 76b) seems derive it via a comparison to food consumption: would that mean it has the same *shiurim*?

Fred explained: The *Mazal Sha'ah* on the Rambam (*Hilchos T'rumos* 10:2) infers that the *shi'ur l'chayev* for anointing with *t'rumah* oil is a *k'zayis* (an olive's bulk), based on R' Yehudah's opinion in the *gemara* (*K'risus* 6b) who holds that a person is liable for a *k'zayis* of prohibited anointing with the *shemen hamishchah* (Temple anointing oil). (One should note that it is still Biblically forbidden to anoint with even less than a *k'zayis*, at least in the case of the *shemen hamishchah*.)

Although in those cases the oil itself is a prohibited substance, one might consider further extrapolating the above standard to the prohibition against anointing on Yom Kippur. However, disagreement among the Rishonim about the Biblical or rabbinic status of the anointing prohibition on Yom Kippur suggests that there must at least be no Biblical penalty for anointing. Rashi and the Rambam both maintain that the punishment for violation is *makas mardus* (rabbinic lashes) (*Rashi* on the *Rif*, *Shabbos*, Chapter 9; Rambam's *Peirush HaMishnayos*, *Shabbos* 9:4, and *Tosafos Yom Tov*, *ibid.*, who clarifies the Rambam's position). The lack of a Biblical penalty is confirmed by the *Yerushalmi* (*Yoma* 8:1; see also *Korban HaEidah* *ibid.*, s.v. *Aval lo l'onesh*). Therefore, the issue of a liable quantity seems moot.

Furthermore, a lengthy *halachic* discussion by Dayan Y.Y. Fisher (*Even Yisrael*, *Hil. Ma'achalos Asuros* 17:27) yields the conclusion that, according to those Rishonim who view anointing as Biblically forbidden, the Biblical prohibition against consuming less than a *shiur* of nourishment on Yom Kippur may be derived from the prohibition against anointing (which is itself derived from *Daniel* 10:3,12). This seems to be premised on the lack of a minimum *shi'ur* for anointing on Yom Kippur.

Notably, the *Semag* distinguishes between Biblically and rabbinically prohibited anointing, though not in terms of the quantity of ointment used. He maintains that a criterion for the Biblical prohibition against anointing on Yom Kippur is anointing the entire body, while anointing even part of the body is forbidden rabbinically (*Tosafos Y'shanim, Yoma 77b*). This view is echoed by the *Mabit* (*Kiryas Sefer, Hil. Sh'visas Asor, 3*).



Wedding Rings on Yom Kippur?

mi.yodeya.com/q/31098

JLR asked: Before getting married I would remove all of my jewelry on Yom Kippur, but I'm not sure about my platinum wedding band (which conforms to *halakha*). Should I wear the wedding band but remove the ring my husband gave me as a gift, and which has stones in it? Or should I remove both?

sam said: The *Mishna Brurah* 610:16 writes that women also have the custom to wear clean white clothes but not to wear jewelry that they wear for Shabbas and Yom Tov for the greatness (fear) of the Day of Judgment.

The *Piskei Tshuvos* cites *Hagahos Rabbi Akiva Eiger*, who writes that while the custom in some communities is to not wear gold because of the golden calf, women did not participate in the sin of the calf. In *Teivas Guma* (a work by the *Pri Megadim*) we see that since women receive support from their husbands we have the custom that no one wears gold. Also, the *Matteh Ephraim* holds that the congregation is one as a whole.

However that was in reference to a special type of clothing (white with gold around) but nowadays we don't have such clothing. Jewelry would be OK as long as it is not worn specially for Shabbas and Yom Tov. See the footnotes in *Piskei Tshuvos* for many sources.

Fred added: In addition to the *Mishna B'rura* (cited in sam's answer and based on the *Matei Efrayim* 610:9) that says "they should not adorn themselves with the jewelry that they wear on Shabbos and Yom Tov, due to the dread of the Day of Judgment," Rabbi Betzael Stern (שו"ת בצל החכמה חלק ו סימן ג) explicitly says that a person may wear jewelry (such as a nice watch) on Yom Kippur if the person wears that jewelry throughout the week, as well.

As far as simple platinum rings, the metal usually does not contain any gold, so that should certainly not present the problem of wearing gold on Yom Kippur.

Remember to please consult your local rabbi for a practical ruling, and/or ask other local women regarding the practice in your community.



Kiddush on Yom Kippur

mi.yodeya.com/q/5784

SimchasTorah asked: If I must eat on Yom Kippur is there an obligation to make *kiddush*, either for the evening or for the daytime? If there is not, is there a situation where you do?

Matt responded: The question of *kiddush* on Yom Kippur is discussed first in the Gemara, in *Eiruvin*.

The *Shibolei Haleket* (312) writes that because one does not normally eat on Yom Kippur, the Sages never required mention of the holiday in *kiddush* or even *bentching* after a meal. In fact, making *kiddush* would be improper because one might see *kiddush* being made and think that it should be done every year. The *Shulchan Aruch* (618:10), however, writes that mention of Yom Kippur should be made in *bentching* (by saying *Yaaleh Veyavo*) because one would be *bentching* anyway and the same paragraph is said in the prayer. The *Magen Avraham*, *Chayei Adam*, and *Mishnah Berurah* (618:29) all agree that one should not make *kiddush* on Yom Kippur if one is fasting.

There is a famous story about Rav Yisrael Salanter who, on a Yom Kippur during a cholera epidemic, made sure to eat in the synagogue in public in order so that everyone should know that eating that day was the right thing to do. Rav Baruch Epstein, in *Mekor Baruch II* chapter 11, records that Rav Salanter even made *kiddush* in *shul*. However, the article¹ I found the story in casts doubt on the story, and I've personally heard from Rav Asher Weiss that even if R. Yisrael Salanter did eat in public, he doesn't believe that he would have made *kiddush* on Yom Kippur against the ruling of the *Magen Avraham*.

The more interesting instance is when Yom Kippur falls out on Shabbos: even if there's no institution of *kiddush* for Yom Kippur, there is for Shabbos, and perhaps one would be obligated to do so, especially considering that many hold that *kiddush* on Shabbos is Biblically mandated. Thus, Rabbi Akivah Eiger (in his comments to the *Magen Avraham*, O.C. 618:10) seems to suggest (it's unclear to me whether he would say so in practice) that if one must eat on a Yom Kippur that falls out on Shabbos, he should indeed make *kiddush*.

Gershon Gold added: I recall hearing that children (who are permitted to eat) should not make *kiddush* on Yom Kippur as there is no *mitzva* of education to teach them to make *kiddush* for Yom Kippur.



¹ Taub, Ira. "The Rabbi Who Ate on Yom Kippur: Israel Salanter and the Cholera Epidemic of 1848" (download.yutorah.org/2011/1053/756192.pdf).

Additions to bentching on Yom Kippur

mi.yodeya.com/q/909

aaron asked: If one must eat on Yom Kippur (such as for medical reasons), does he make any day-specific additions (such as *Ya'aleh V'yavoh*) during the grace after meals?

Alex said: The *Taz* (Orach Chaim 618:10) and the *Magen Avraham* (618:10) cite variant opinions as to whether *Yaaleh Veyavo* needs to be recited (and also *Retzeh*, if Yom Kippur falls on Shabbos). According to the *Taz* neither one should be said, while according to the *Magen Avraham* it is better to add them.

Pri Megadim (*Eshel Avraham* 618:10) adds that in any case, if one did omit them, he should not recite the makeup *berachah* “*Asher nasan...*,” since it might be a blessing in vain.

Chanoch provided the text: Rav David Yosef (the son of Rav Ovadia Yosef) rules (*Otzerot Yossef* 14:19) that one should add *Ya'aleh v'Yavo*, and identify the holiday as “ביום הכיפורים הזה, ביום סליחת העון הזה”.



מנחה – Afternoon Service

Why do we read *Yona* on Yom Kippur?

mi.yodeya.com/q/18691

user1668 asked: Why do we read *Yona*, the book of Jonah, of all things, on Yom Kippur? There are better tales of *teshuvah* that are more relevant to the Jews; why was this book, which deals exclusively with non-Jews doing *teshuvah*, chosen instead?

Charles Koppelman responded: As it says in the *Unetanneh Tokef* prayer, Yom Kippur is Judgment Day for all, not just for Jews:

וְכָל בָּאֵי עוֹלָם יַעֲבְרוּן לְפָנֶיךָ לְפָנֶיךָ כְּבָנֵי מְרוֹן. כְּבִקְרַת רוּעָה עֲדָרוּ. מֵעֲבִיר צֹאנוּ תַחַת שְׁבִטוֹ. כֵּן תַעֲבִיר
וְתִסְפֹּר וְתִמְנֶה וְתִפְקֹד נַפְשׁ כָּל חַי. וְתַחֲתֶיךָ קִצְבָה לְכָל בְּרִיּוֹתֶיךָ. וְתִכְתֹּב אֶת גְּזֵר דִּינָם:
בְּרֵאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה יִכְתְּבוּן וּבְיוֹם צוֹם כְּפוּר יִחְתְּמוּן:

All mankind will pass before You like a flock of sheep. Like a shepherd pasturing his flock, making sheep pass under his staff, so shall You cause to pass, count, calculate, and consider **the soul of all the living**; and You shall apportion the destinies of **all Your creatures** and inscribe their verdict.

On Rosh Hashanah will be inscribed and on Yom Kippur will be sealed

The book of Yonah reminds us that this is bigger deal than just the Jews. On the other hand, it raises the bar for us: If Nineveh does true *teshuvah* with such little impetus, we who have a covenant with G-d should wake up and do *teshuvah*.

It also is a nice counterpoint to the *haftarah* for *Shacharit* — fasts aren't about sackcloth and ashes, says Isaiah (58:5), but about justice (ibid. verses 6-7). You Jews are faking it. Look at the Ninevites instead, we hear in the afternoon. They can do real *teshuvah*. Don't assume that you are better at this just because you're Jews — you still need to work at it.

Also, what is another good book where all of a society does such a true *teshuvah*?

b a said: The *Shlah* says that their doing *teshuvah* inspires us to do it as well; and the *Sefer HaTodaah (The Book of Our Heritage)* says that it's to show that you can't run away from G-d.



Why did Yonah run away?

mi.yodeya.com/q/11510

Monica Cellio asked: If Yonah (Jonah) understood that he was being commanded by God, then how could he have possibly thought that he could run away? Did he believe that God was tied to a particular land, the way pagan gods were thought to be tied to theirs, and that if he just got out of Israel he would be okay? But Nineveh is not in Israel either. At the time he ran, did Yonah perhaps not yet understand Who was commanding him?

jake answered: Yonah was a *navi* (prophet) who was living in the kingdom of Israel before its exile by Sancheriv (Sennacherib). God told him to go to Ninveh, which was the capital of Ashur (Assyria).

In general, God is not concerned enough with the affairs of non-Jewish nations to send them messages through a *navi* to repent, which is why they don't have their own prophets to begin with. Yonah concluded that their repentance must be relevant to Israel in some way, particularly to exile them from their land. (Yonah knew that the Jews weren't on the highest spiritual level at that point.)

Therefore, Yonah refused to go, not wanting to play any part in Israel's destruction. He hoped that God would choose another *navi* in his place, as clearly, if God wanted this done, it must be done by somebody, just not him. To try and ensure this, Yonah tried to flee to outside of Israel, as he believed that prophecy does not exist outside of the land (which is true, with few exceptions). Thus, he thought, God would be forced to send someone else.

See Abarbanel (*Yonah* 1).

Menachem added: Rashi says that Yonah figured that if the people of Nineveh would listen to G-d's word and repent, it would make the Jewish people look that much worse for not repenting. He therefore tried to get out of delivering the message to them.

JXG offered: I heard an innovative explanation from Rav Meir Spiegelman. Yonah doesn't run away to get to a different place; Yonah sets sail in order to be at sea, and there is no prophecy at sea.

This is related to the idea that the sea is too different from the earth to be involved in earth-based things (e.g. fish are created from the water, but animals from the earth; fish were not punished during the flood; fish are never brought as sacrifices).

Specifically regarding Yonah, this issue is explained by the Malbim:

לכן עלה אל האניה, שחשב שבעת יהיה באניה לא תחול עליו רוח ה', אם מפני שיורדי הים דעתם בלתי מתישבת מצער הים עד בואם ליבשה כמ"ש חז"ל, אם מפני שאז לא יתבודד באשר היו על האניה עובדי אלילים שכ"ז תעכב בל תשרה השכינה עליו.

Therefore he went to the ship, since he thought that when he would be in the ship the Divine Presence would not rest on him, either because those who set sail have unfocused thoughts from the difficulty of the sea until they come to dry land, as our sages have said, or because then he could not be alone, as there were idol worshipers on the ship; that all this would prevent the Divine presence from resting on him.



נְעִילָה – Closing Service

Is there *tashlumin* for *N'ila*?

mi.yodeya.com/q/4001

WAF asked: Being that *n'ila* is a unique prayer, in that it only occurs once a year, can one make up (do *tashlumin* for) *n'ila* at the next prayer, or the previous one at *n'ila*?

Isaac Moses said: R' Joseph B. Soloveitchik's understanding of *Ne'ila*, which I saw in the *Machzor Mesoras Harav*, is that it's a uniquely dependent prayer whose purpose is to ask God to accept all the other prayers we've engaged in over Yom Kippur. He was confident enough in this understanding that he proposed a practical *Halachic* outcome: If someone happened to miss all four of the preceding Yom Kippur prayers, that person would not be allowed to pray *Ne'ila*.

While in the days of the Temple, the *Avodah* service was considered synonymous with the Yom Kippur experience, today our own cognitive association with Yom Kippur is that of a day devoted entirely to prayer. According to the Rav, prayer on Yom Kippur takes on a complexion fundamentally different from prayer during the rest of the year. The day of Yom Kippur must be transformed into a *yom tefila*, a day of prayer. To accomplish this transformation, Chazal instituted the *Ne'ilah* service. The purpose of *Ne'ilah* is to request that all the previous prayers of the day be accepted before God. (See Rambam, *Hilchos Tefillah* 1:7.)

This conception of the role of the *Ne'ilah* service was so compelling to the Rav that he actually posited a *halachah* on this basis. If, during the year, one would forget to recite any of the three daily prayers (*Shacharis*, *Minchah*, or *Maariv*) in its proper time, his *halachic* right to participate in subsequent prayers would be unaffected. If, however, for some reason one did not pray at all on Yom Kippur until the time for *Ne'ilah* had arrived, the Rav maintained that he could not participate in the *Ne'ilah*

service. The function of *Ne'ilah* is to transform all previous prayers into one unified prayer activity. Without the earlier prayers there can be no *Ne'ilah* (*Before Hashem*, pp. 159-160). Elsewhere, the Rav suggested that one who missed even a single one of the previous Yom Kippur prayers may not recite *Ne'ilah* (*Mesorah Journal* 5772, Volume 6, p. 23).

Based on that, *my guess* would be that *Ne'ila* is different enough from other prayers that indeed, it can't make up for them or be made up for.

If I'm right, the additional question would be whether the preceding Yom Kippur prayer, *Mincha*, could be made up for during the first *Ma'ariv* after Yom Kippur.

Double AA answered: Rav Ovadia Yosef has a *teshuva* (*Yabia Omer OC* 7:54) on making up for a missed *N'ila* dated 11 Tishrei 5748.

He quotes *Tosfot* (*Brachot* 26a s.v. איבעיא) who gives two reasons that there is no *tashlumin* for a missed *Musaf*: because you can't say the verses related to the *korbanot* (offerings) on the wrong day, and because *Musaf* was only established to take the place of the *Korban Musaf* whose time has already passed. Since neither of these reasons applies to *N'ila*, it would seem there would be *tashlumin* for a missed *N'ila*. The *Peri Megadim* in fact rules this way (OC 108 MZ 5) although he doesn't quote earlier sources for his ruling. (This leads to the strange case of praying thrice: *Maariv*, *Tashlumin* for *N'ila*, and *Tashlumin* for *Mincha*.)

However, the *Rashba* (*Shu"t* 1:447) explains that there isn't *tashlumin* for *Musaf* because:

כל תפלה שהיא נוספת מחמת מאורע היום אין ראוי להשלימה ביום אחר שכבר עבר המאורע.

Any prayer which is added because of a special day is not *tashlumin*-able because the special day has passed.

According to this reasoning, *N'ila* would not have *tashlumin*. Rav Ovadia quotes a slew of Rishonim who also give this reason, among them Ritva, Me'iri, Tashbetz, Ra'ah, and Rif, and he seems to conclude in this direction as well.



What does “*Baruch shem k'vod malchuso l'olam vaed*” mean?

mi.yodeya.com/q/35663

msh210 asked: A sentence commonly said during prayer is “בְּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְבוֹד מַלְכוּתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד”. How do we interpret it? What does it mean?

It sounds like it means:

Blessed is/be the name of the glory/honor of His kingdom forever and ever.

(Note: “מַלְכוּת” can mean “the area under the control of a king,” in this case the universe etc., or “the status or quality of being king.” I’m translating it ambiguously as “kingdom,” but ideally an answer explaining what the sentence means will clarify which meaning “מַלְכוּת” has.)

However, that doesn't make much sense to me. That would mean God's kingdom has glory. And the glory has a name. And we're blessing the name of the glory, or saying it's blessed. That seems very... odd.

So what does the sentence really mean?

He went on to reflect on a few translations that came to hand:

A slightly more palatable (to me) translation makes “כְּבוֹד מְלִכּוּתוֹ” into “His glorious kingdom”, as follows:

Rabbi N. Scherman (ArtScroll):¹

Blessed is the Name of His glorious kingdom for all eternity.

Rabbi J. Sacks (Koren):²

Blessed be the name of His glorious kingdom for ever and ever.

It's more palatable, I say, because at least we're not claiming His kingdom's glory has a name – just that the kingdom itself does. It's still odd to me (that God's kingdom has a name), though, and that we're saying the name is blessed, or blessing it. Plus, we have the grammatical objection that “כְּבוֹד מְלִכּוּתוֹ” shouldn't mean “His glorious kingdom”: that'd be “מְלִכּוּת כְּבוֹדוֹ”.

There is an even more palatable translation:

Rabbi J. Hertz:³

Blessed be His Name, Whose Glorious Kingdom is for ever and ever.

Rabbi A. Davis (Metsudah):⁴

Blessed [is His] Name, Whose glorious kingdom is forever and ever.

That makes the entire end of the sentence, “כְּבוֹד מְלִכּוּתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד”, into a description of God; “Him whose glorious kingdom is forever” (or, one could even say, “Him whose kingdom's glory is forever,” to avoid the “מְלִכּוּת כְּבוֹדוֹ” issue). This, as I say, is the most palatable of the bunch: we're not saying a name is or should be blessed, nor glory, nor a kingdom, but God. But if this is the correct interpretation of the sentence, I seek a source for it (besides Rabbis Hertz and Davis).

yEz expounded: שם — a name refers to reputation, or how something is known.

“טוב שם משמן טוב” (*Koheles* 7:1) means a good *reputation* is better than oil. One who is “מוציא שם רע,” a slanderer, as described in *Devarim* 22:14 —

¹ Sherman, Nosson and Meir Zlotowitz, eds. *The Complete ArtScroll Siddur: Weekday, Sabbath, Festival: a New Translation and Anthologized Commentary*. Mesorah Publications, 1985.

² Sacks, Jonathan, ed. *The Koren Siddur, American Edition*. Koren Publishers Jerusalem Ltd., 2009.

³ Hertz, Joseph H. *The Authorised Daily Prayer Book: Hebrew text, English translation with commentary and notes*. Bloch, 1971.

⁴ Davis, Avrohom. *The Complete Metsudah Siddur*. Metsudah Publications, 1990.

“וַיִּשֶׂם לָהּ עֲלֵילֹת דְּבָרִים, וְהוֹצֵא עָלֶיהָ שֵׁם רָע” — “and lay wanton charges against her, and bring up an evil name upon her” — has created a bad reputation.

The idea of a name is that which you use for others to relate to you. One does not identify oneself by one’s name; it is there for others to use.

כבוד – Honor refers to a presence, the extent to which something is recognized. The *Gemara* in *Bava Basra* 3a records a dispute about the verse (*Chagai* 2:9) “גדול יהיה כבוד הבית הזה האחרון מן הראשון” — “The honor of the later Temple will be greater than the former”:

רב ושמואל ואמרי לה ר' יוחנן חד אמר בבנין וחד אמר בשנים

Rav and Shmuel (though some say R' Yochanan): one said it means it was larger, and one said it means it stood longer.

Both of them agree the greater “honor” refers to its physical presence; at issue is whether it was in space or in time. (As the *Gemara* points out, they were both correct.) This is also why “seeing” Hashem is often referred to as “seeing” His “honor” (for example, in *Shemos* 29:43 or *Vayikra* 9:23).

The idea of getting honor means you are acknowledged. You get honor when you are recognized in some way.

מלכות – Royalty refers to making something manifest. Bringing something from the potential to the actual is the attribute of *malchus*. Rav Pincus in *Shabbos Malkisa*¹ explains that this is why *malchus* is always at the end of a list (e.g., in *Nishmas*, in “*Lecha H' Hagedulah*”, or in the list of *middos* (attributes) in *Yishtabach*), because *malchus* only comes after everything else, and brings it out to actualization.

The role of a king is to actualize the potential of the individuals that make up the nation. This is one explanation why “מלך שמחל על כבודו אין כבודו מחול” — a king does not have the right to forgo his own honor — because the honor is not really his: it is the projection of the nation as a whole.

R' Tzaddok writes (*Resisei Layla* 25) that the world was created with the Trait of *Malchus*: bringing out the infinite potential of creation into a finite actual was accomplished through *Malchus*.

The concept of שם כבוד מלכותו is that the perception of Hashem’s Presence should be increasingly brought out from infinite potential into a perceptible reality. This is because ברוך means רבוי, increase, according to *Rashba* and *Nefesh HaChaim*. Thus, roughly:

ברוך — Increased [should be]
 שם — the relationship to
 כבוד — the physically-apparent aspect of
 מלכותו — [the manifestation of Hashem].

¹ Pincus, Shimshon Dovid. שבת מלכתא. 2001.

In *Nefesh HaChaim Sha'ar 3* Chapter 14, in a gloss, he explains that Yaakov Avinu said *ברוך שם כבוד מלכותו* and Moshe Rabbeinu did not (when each respectively said *Shema*), because Yaakov was still on the level of acknowledging the realness of a finite reality, and therefore his perception of *ה' אהד* relied on bringing it down to this world. Moshe, however, was on the level of, to some degree, perceiving Hashem's essence, that there is no authenticity to finite reality (see the beginning of *Sha'ar 3*) and therefore did not *need* to relate to Hashem through translating His infinitude into finite manifestation. *Nefesh HaChaim* also says this line is about relating to Hashem (שם) through the bringing out (מלכות) of His Presence (כבוד) into this world.

We (and everyone except Moshe Rabbeinu, see *Nefesh Hachaim* immediately after above-quoted gloss) live in a reality in which we experience Hashem on the level of how He appears in this world, and that is the level on which our relationship with Him must function (see *Maharal Nesiv HaAvoda* ch. 12). We therefore pray that His manifestation in this world should increase, in order that we have a greater experience of that relationship. *Baruch Shem Kevod* is the prayer that asks for that increase. (It is placed where it is, immediately following *Shema*, because *Shema* is the declaration of Hashem's oneness which supersedes finite existence and declares that His existence is the only real existence. We have to "mitigate" that for ourselves into our realm of experience, which is the reality of this world.)



Is the Book of Life ever really sealed?

mi.yodeya.com/q/10392

HodofHod asked: In prayers and in greetings, we always refer to the "sealing" of the Book of Life. We say to others *כתיבה וחתימה טובה* (may you be written and sealed for a good year) and in the service we say *צום כיפורים יחתמון* (on Rosh Hashana it is written and on Yom Kippur it is sealed).

Wikipedia says:¹

The High Holidays are times that are especially conducive to teshuva. Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement) is a day of fasting during which judgment for the year is sealed. Therefore, Jews strive their hardest to make certain that they have performed teshuva before the end of the day.

But at the same time, our tradition says that:

- Even if a sharp sword is placed across a person's throat, he should not despair of Mercy (*Berachot* 18a). (To explain this as meaning that one just doesn't know what the sentence will be, and therefore should not despair, as opposed to that the mercy is granted while the sword is on one's throat, seems forced to me.)
- The gates of petition are sometimes closed, but the gates of repentance are always open (*Bereshith Rabba* 21:6).

¹ en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Repentance_in_Judaism

- Repentance is compared to a sea. Just as the sea is eternally open, so too the gates of repentance are eternally open (*Pesikta de-Rabbi Kahana* 24).
- Nothing can stand in the way of repentance (*Rambam, Hilchos Teshuvah* 3:14).

Therefore my question is: Assuming that repentance is always accepted, what is the meaning of the sealing of the Book of Life?

Ariel K said: The Gemara in *Rosh Hashanah* (p. 16–18) has an extended discussion of these and related issues, with a few different opinions. There are different levels of sentences and there's a possibility of changing them after the fact. The main view there says that the sentence for the congregation is never sealed, but things do become sealed for the individual on Yom Kippur. This fits with the general emphasis in the Torah on a higher level of oversight for the community than for the individual (e.g., the second paragraph of *Sh'ma*, with its focus on communal reward and punishment).

Sincere *teshuva* is always accepted so that one can always change one's ways and be spiritually cleansed, but that doesn't necessarily mean that the course of events in this world can always change for a person at any time. However, one never knows what has been "decreed", so I don't think this view would hold that one should give up just because there's a sword at one's throat.

josh waxman said: I like to answer questions by undermining the assumptions, and I am going to try to do that here as well.

חתומה (*chatimah*) can mean either 'sealed' or 'signed', though they are almost certainly etymologically related. For an example of sealed, see *D'varim* 32:34:

חַתּוּמֵי, בְּאוֹצְרוֹתַי; הֲלֵא-הוּא, כְּמִסַּע עִמָּדִי

Is not this laid up in store with Me, sealed up in My treasuries?

But a חתומה is a signature at the bottom of a document. One could argue of a divorce document that עדי חתומה כרתתי, that the witnesses to the signature are what is important. Sometimes, it is unclear which sense is being used. The חתומה of a long blessing is the end, either because it is the sealing up of it, or because it is the sign-off. See the Jastrow entry on חתומה.

Ultimately, it **is** a similar idea. Hashem is writing the judgement, but it is not completed and signed until Yom Kippur. At that point, the judgement goes into effect.

What about *teshuva*? It seems to me — though I am not citing any sources for this — that there is a period of judgement, where all sorts of factors about the person are evaluated, and his situation for the coming year is determined. This can shift so long as the judgement has not been signed. After that, there is a *gzar din*, a decree of judgement. Maybe it is harder to overcome, and one needs significantly more *teshuva* for that sin to overcome a decree, while in the process of judgement, other factors (and balances) might have come into play such that the negative judgement might not have even come to be.



Glossary

- Abarbanel:** Isaac ben Judah Abravanel, 15th-century Portuguese philosopher and Bible commentator.
- Arizal:** Isaac (ben Solomon) Luria. 16th-century Galilean leading rabbi and Halachic authority.
- Avinu Malkeinu:** A prayer said during the Ten Days of Repentance where each line begins with “Our Father, Our King.”
- Ben Ish Chai:** Yosef Chaim. 19th-century Iraqi Halachic authority and Kabbalist.
- Birkat Hamazon / Bentching:** Grace After Meals (in Hebrew / Americanized Yiddish).
- Chayei Adam:** A work of Jewish law for the layman, based on the Orach Chaim section of *Shulchan Aruch*, by the 18th-century Rabbi Avraham Danzig.
- Elul:** Month on the Jewish calendar preceding Rosh Hashanah, traditionally time to begin repentance.
- Gemara:** The Talmud. An analytic and practical analysis of Jewish Oral Tradition, compiled between the 4th and 6th centuries in two different collections from Jerusalem and Babylonia.
- Gra:** Rabbi Elijah son of Solomon Zalman Kremer, the Vilna Gaon, a leader of European Jewry who lived in the 18th century.
- Haftarah:** Any of various sections from the books of the prophets read publicly in the synagogue on various red-letter days.
- Halacha:** Jewish law.
- Hashem:** Literally “the Name,” a respectful stand-in for referring to God by name.
- Hallel:** Recitation of joyous Psalms on certain holidays.
- Imrei Noam:** 19th-century Hasidic Torah commentary by R’ Meir Horowitz of Dzikov, Poland.
- Kedusha:** Section of the cantor’s repetition of central prayers that meditates on God’s holiness.
- Kiddush:** Literally “sanctification.” Scriptural verses and blessings said before drinking wine on Shabbat and Yom Yov.
- Kohen:** Member of the priestly caste, descended from Aaron.
- Kol Nidrei:** Aramaic, literally “all vows.” The opening words of a declaration made before Yom Kippur, annulling vows.
- Levush:** Mordecai ben Avraham Yoffe. 16th-century Ashkenazic rabbinic authority and codifier.
- Machzor:** A High Holidays prayer book.
- Magen Avraham:** A commentary on the Orach Chaim section of *Shulchan Aruch*, by R’ Avraham Gombiner, written in the late 17th century.
- Maharil:** Yaakov ben Moshe Levi Moelin. Late 14th-century German Talmudist and Halachic authority.
- Mateh Efrayim:** A 19th-century work on the laws of the High Holidays season by the Galician Rabbi Ephraim Zalman Margolis.
- Metzudas Tzion:** 18th-century Galician commentary-style glossary of difficult words in the Bible, by R’ David Altshuler.
- Midrash:** A vast body of Rabbinic teachings that expound upon the Jewish Bible.
- Minyan:** Ten men who make up a prayer quorum.
- Mishnah:** Redaction of Oral Tradition laws, compiled in the first two centuries, CE.
- Mishnah Berurah:** “Clarified Teaching,” a late-19th-century halachic commentary on the *Shulchan Aruch*, Orach Chaim by Rabbi Yisrael Meir Kagan.
- Mitzvah:** Commandment.
- Mussaf:** Additional offerings brought in the Temple, or prayers said, on Sabbath and holidays.

Orach Chaim / OC: The section of codes of Jewish law that deals with general laws of Jewish life throughout the calendar year, such as prayers, sabbath, and holidays.

Pirkei D'Rebbi Eliezer: 1st-century, CE collection of midrashic exegesis and retelling of Biblical stories.

Rada"l: R' Dovid Luria, 19th-century Lithuanian rabbi and commentator.

Rabbeynu Yona: Yonah ben Abraham Gerondi. 13th-century Catalan rabbi and moralist. Author of *The Gates of Repentance*.

Rama: R' Moses Isserles. 16th-century Polish codifier of Jewish law. Wrote the Ashkenazic gloss on Shulchan Aruch that appears within the original text.

Rambam: Moses Maimonides. 12th-century Sephardic rabbi, philosopher, and codifier of Jewish law.

Rashi: Rabbi Solomon Isaacides, a beloved and prolific commentator on the Jewish Bible and the Babylonian Talmud. Lived in the 11th and 12th centuries in Troyes, France.

Rav Hai Gaon: Hai ben Sherira. Early 11th-century theologian and head of Pumpedita Academy in Bablyon.

Rav Saadia Gaon: Saadia ben Joseph. Early 10th-century Arabian-Jewish rabbi, linguist, and philosopher.

Rav Tzadok: Zadok ha-Kohen Rabinowitz of Lublin. Hasidic leader in 19th Century Poland.

Rosh: Asher ben Jehiel. 13th-century German rabbi. Also, the influential abstract the he wrote of the Talmud.

Sefer Hachinuch: "Book of Education." 13th-century anonymous Spanish codification of the 613 commandments.

Selichot/Slichos: Penitential poems and prayers said during the Ten Days of Repentance and the season leading up to it, with different customs on when to start.

Shem Mishmuel: Early 20th-century collection of Hasidic lessons about the Torah and Jewish holidays, by Rabbi Shmuel Bornsztain, the second Sochatchover Rebbe.

Shibolei Haleket: A compilation of laws by Zedekiah ben Abraham Anav, who lived in Rome in the 13th century.

Shabbos: The Sabbath.

Shacharis: Morning prayers.

Shulchan Aruch: "Code of Jewish Law," written by R' Yosef Karo in the 16th century. It, plus its commentaries, remain one of the most authoritative and accepted halachic books ever written.

Shulchan Aruch Harav: "Code of Jewish Law by the Rabbi," codified by R' Shneur Zalman of Liadi, the founding Rebbe of the Chabad Chassidic sect, around the turn of the 19th century.

Taamei Haminhagim: Collection of questions and answers about the meaning of Jewish practices, by Rabbi Abraham Isaac Sperling, Jerusalem, early 20th century.

Talmud: See Gemara.

Tanach: The Jewish Bible.

Tishrei: Month of the Jewish calendar that includes Rosh Hashana, Yom Kippur, and Sukkot.

Teshuvah: Repentance; return to God, to the correct way of life.

Tosfos: Medieval, Franco-German gloss on the Talmud.

Tzemach Tzedek: Menachem Mendel Schneersohn, the third Rebbe of the Chabad Chassidic sect. Died 1866.

Yaaleh Veyavo: A paragraph added to both central prayers and *bentching* on Rosh Chodesh and holidays.

Yom Tov: Festival day on which creative work is prohibited, similar to on the Sabbath.

Zohar: The central text in *Kabala* (mysticism) literature.

Credits

Who made this?

If you will ask: Who wrote and put together this Days of Awe book? All of the questions and answers have names associated with them, but most of them aren't full names, and some of them don't look like normal names at all. Also, someone must have tied it all together into this beautiful volume. Who?

One could answer: This project would not have been possible without the efforts of many people, starting with the people of the Mi Yodeya online Jewish Q&A community who wrote the questions and answers. The names on the questions and answers are the usernames the authors chose to use on Mi Yodeya. Some of them are real names, while others are pseudonyms. Community members choose how much information to share about themselves in their profiles on the site. The authors' profiles can be found at:

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