



**ALEPH
INSTITUTE**
No One Alone,
No One Forgotten.

TORAH WEEKLY

T"01

16 - 22 September, 2018
7 - 13 Tishrei, 5779

Torah:
Deuteronomy 32:1-52
Haftarah:
Samuel II 22:1-51

Yom Kippur

Wednesday 10 Tishrie -
9/19/2018):

Shachrit (morning):

Torah: Leviticus 16:1-34
Haftarah:
Isaiah 57:14 - 58:14

Minchah (afternoon):

Numbers 29:7-11

Haftarah:

Jonah 1:1 - 4:11;
Micah 7:18-20

CALENDARS

We have Jewish Calendars, if you would like one, please send us a letter and we will send you one, or ask the Rabbi / Chaplain to contact us.

TORAH STUDIES

We have many Judaic topics for you to study. We will provide the material and courses. Please write to us for more information.

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SPIRIT AND MATTER

Our lives tend to be divided between spirit and matter, the sacred and the everyday.

The dichotomy between spirit and matter, or Heaven and Earth, is also expressed at the beginning of this week's Torah reading (Deuteronomy ch. 32), Ha'azinu, which takes the form of a long poem. Moses is the leader of the Jewish people, filled with love for them, yet also seeing with pain the long and tortuous history they would experience. He warns them about the mistakes they might make in their relationship with G-d. Speaking dramatically to the Jewish people, Moses begins by addressing Heaven and Earth. Rashi tells us that he was calling them as witnesses to his words of warning which follow.

Moses says, "Give ear, Heavens, and I will speak; listen, Earth, to the words of my mouth."

Hebrew is a deeply poetic language which makes it difficult to translate into English. It has nuances which the English sometimes cannot convey at all. The Sages comment that the word haazinu, translated as "give ear" (ozen means ear) suggests a close proximity. If someone is standing next to you, you can speak right into their ear. By contrast, the word translated as "listen" suggests a greater distance, as if calling to someone who is far away.

Moses uses the closer term when he addresses the Heavens, and the more distant

term when speaking to the earth. The Sages point out that Moses was a very spiritual person, and, therefore, in his case the Heavens were very close. By contrast, as far as he was concerned, the earth and all material concerns were further away (Sifrei).

Now, what about us? Does the Torah reveal this aspect of Moses just to impress us with how holy he was, or is there a teaching which is also relevant for our lives?

There is a Chassidic idea that within each individual in the Jewish people there is a spark of Moses (See Tanya ch. 42). This is our deepest aspect. In relation to this inner Moses, in our case too, the Heaven is closer than the Earth.

One moment. Isn't our task as human beings and as Jews to reveal G-dliness in the world? Surely we have to be immersed in the material concerns of daily life? The Chassidic answer is: "yes, but they do not have to get you down!" Indeed we are active in the world. But at the same time we have a close affinity with Heaven. Hence Moses' words are directly relevant for us too. We are active in the world but, in a deep sense, we are not limited by it (Based freely on the Lubavitcher Rebbe's talk on Shabbat Haazinu in Torat Menachem 5750 vol. 1, p. 82 ff).

This very idea is expressed in the approaching Sukkot festival. The sukkah represents our everyday home and everyday life. At the same time, it is a spiritual realm. One of the teachings of Sukkot is that yes, we are in a material world. But at every

step we have the power to make it holy.

By Dr. Tali Loewenthal

YOM KIPPUR

Forty days after they received the Torah at Mount Sinai and committed to be G-d's chosen people, the Children of Israel worshipped a Golden Calf. Moses pleaded with G-d not to destroy His errant nation, and on the tenth of Tishrei G-d said, "I have forgiven." Ever since, we observe this date as the "Day of Atonement"—a celebration of our indestructible relationship with G-d. It is the holiest day of the year, when we reconnect with our very essence, which remains faithful to G-d regardless of our behavior.

Angelic Behavior

We wear white clothes in emulation of the spiritual angels. Yom Kippur is a fast day: from sundown on the eve of Yom Kippur until the following nightfall, we do not eat or drink. (If you're ill, consult a rabbi.) We also abstain from certain physical pleasures: wearing leather footwear, bathing or washing, applying lotions or creams, and marital relations. It is also a "day of rest," on which all work is forbidden (as on Shabbat).

Five Prayers

We wear white clothes in emulation of the spiritual angels, and spend the greater part of the day in the synagogue engaged in repentance and prayer. There are five prayer services: 1) The evening prayers, which begin with the solemn Kol Nidrei. 2) Morning prayer. 3) Musaf, which includes a description of the Yom Kippur Holy Temple service. 4) Afternoon

prayer, during which the Book of Jonah is read. 5) Ne'ilah, recited as the day wanes and the verdict for the new year is sealed. The first four prayers include a (private) confession of sins to G-d.

Many laws and customs are associated with the prayer services; your institution rabbi will direct you.

End of the Fast

Ne'ilah concludes with the congregation calling out the Shema in unison, and then a blast of the shofar signals the end of the day.

Yom Kippur is followed by a festive meal. We rejoice, confident that G-d has forgiven our sins.

LAWS AND CUSTOMS

Yom Kippur Observances

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

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

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

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

Yizkor, the remembrance prayer for departed parents, is recited today after the morning reading of the Torah.

Sanctification of the Moon

Once a month, as the moon waxes in the sky, we recite a special blessing called Kiddush Levanah, "the sanctification of the moon," praising the Creator for His

wondrous work we call astronomy.

Kiddush Levanah is recited after nightfall, usually on Saturday night. The blessing is concluded with songs and dancing, because our nation is likened to the moon—as it waxes and wanes, so have we throughout history. When we bless the moon, we renew our trust that very soon, the light of G-d's presence will fill all the earth and our people will be redeemed from exile.

Once 15 days have passed, the moon begins to wane once more and the season for saying the blessing has passed.

In Jewish History

Wednesday, 10 Tishrei, 5779 - September 19, 2018

Rebecca Born (1677 BCE)

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

2nd Tablets (1313 BCE)

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

Shabbat, 13 Tishrei, 5779 - September 22, 2018

Passing of R. Akiva Eiger (1837)

Passing of Rabbi Akiva Eiger (1761-1837), outstanding Talmudist and Halachic authority.

Passing of Rebbe Maharash (1882)

Tishrei 13 is the yahrtzeit of the fourth Rebbe of Chabad-Lubavitch, Rabbi Shmuel Schneersohn, known as "Maharash" (a Hebrew acronym for "our master Rabbi Shmuel").

Rabbi Shmuel was born in the town of Lubavitch on the 2nd of Iyar of the year 5594 from creation (1834). His father was the third Chabad Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Lubavitch (1789-1866). Though the youngest of Rabbi Menachem Mendel's seven sons, Rabbi Shmuel was chosen to succeed his father as the leader of Chabad Chassidism in the movement's capitol, Lubavitch, at the latter's passing in 1866 (four of his brothers established branches of Chabad in other towns in White Russia and Ukraine).

In addition to authoring and delivering more than 1,000 maamarim (discourses) of Chassidic teaching, Rabbi Shmuel was extensively involved in Jewish communal affairs and traveled throughout Europe in order to generate pressure on the Czarist regime to halt its instigation of pogroms against the Jews of Russia. Rabbi Shmuel passed away at the age of 48 on Tishrei 13, 5643 (1882).