Laws and Customs of Yom Kippur 5787

Sponsored by Rabbi Binyomin and Carrie Lisbon in memory of Binyomin's mother, Chaya Sorah Rochel Bas R' Chaim Yosef Shlomo, on the occasion of her Yohrtzeit, 7 Tishrei, and on the occasion of his Yom Holedes on Shabbos Shuva, 8 Tishrei

Co-sponsored by the Mendal Family in memory of their parents, Shmerel Moshe ben Haim, yahrtzeit 14 Elul, and Devorah Sheva bas Avrohom HaKohen, yahrtzeit 15 MarCheshvan. May their neshamos have an aliyah

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Please note: Times are for the Miami area. Please check at the end of the article for the times in other locations.[1]

Shabbat Shabbaton

The Torah refers to Yom Kippur as Shabbat Shabbaton.[2] a Considered the holiest day of the year on the Jewish calendar, it's commonly called Yom HaKadosh (the holy day). This article will discuss the laws and customs relevant to this holy day.

Erev Yom Kippur, Sunday, 9 Tishrei/ Sep. 20

Kaparot[3]

It is customary to perform the *Kaparot* ceremony on the morning[4] of Erev Yom Kippur (Pg. 362 in the Chabad siddur). If it is not possible to do it then, one may perform *Kaparot* on the

[1] I've added several points to this article based on the excellent pamphlet, Day-to-Day Halachic Guide by the Badatz of Crown Heights.

[2] Numbers 23:32

[3] Shulchan Aruch HaRav, Mateh Efraim and Kaf HaChaim, 604 and 605, Pit'chai Teshuvah 14 on Y.D. 36

[4] See Siddur HaRav "And we slaughter it during the early morning watch, after Selichot, because at that time a thread of kindness prevails in the world. We slaughter it in order to subdue the forces of severity, and we draw out its blood in order to sweeten them. It is called a kaparah (atonement), like the scapegoat (azazel) that was sent away on Yom Kippur.

previous night or earlier in the Ten Days of Repentance. In this ceremony, a person takes a (preferably)[5] white chicken, waves it around his or her head, and brings it to be ritually slaughtered. One should ask G-d that the chicken's death be an atonement for oneself. Chickens are used because in days past, they were easily found nearby (and are still readily available in most places). In addition, a rooster is called *gever* which also means man, so it is appropriate to atone for man.

- One should bear in mind that everything being done to the chicken is what should be done to him or her. Only through doing *teshuvah* does G-d remove the decree and "transfer" it to the bird.[6]
- A man should use a rooster and a woman a hen.
- A woman should use the feminine (*Zot Chalifati, zot temurati, zot kaparati, zot hatarnegolet*…)
- It is best to use a separate chicken for each person.
- A pregnant woman should use two hens and one rooster; one hen for herself, and the other hen and rooster because of the possibility of the child being either a boy or a girl.[7] If this is too expensive, she may use one rooster and one hen as the hen will count both for her and for the possibility of the baby being a girl.[8] She should use the plural (*Eilu Chalifoteinu, Eilu Temurateinu, Eilu Kaparateinu, Eilu hatarnegolim yeilchu lemitah va'ani*…) when saying the prayers at this time.
- Some say that one may use one chicken for many people. In practice, if one cannot afford one chicken per family member, one may use one rooster for all the males and one hen for all the females.
- One who has no chickens may use other kosher animals or even fish.
- One who is helping others do the *kaparot* should first do it for himself so that "those who are cleansed can cleanse others."

[5] One should only buy white chickens for this purpose if they are readily available as seeking them out is a pagan practice (ibid).

[6] Mishnah Berurah 605:2 See Sha'ar HaTziyun 2 that, to a certain degree, the chicken experiences the four methods of executions that were administered by the Jewish court.

[7] See Sha'arei Halacha UMinhag, vol. 2 page 217 that there is reason to say that a woman who is pregnant with twins should only have to use three chickens.

[8] It would seem that if one knows the gender of their baby, one need only do either a hen or a rooster, depending on the baby.

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- One who cannot use an animal may use money instead. The money should be at least the value of a chicken. The money should be given to charity. One should not use *ma'aser* funds for this. One should say the text of *Benei Adam* etc. *zeh chalifati* etc. The words *zeh hatarnegol yelech lemitah* should be substituted with the phrase *Zeh Hakesef Yelech L'tzedoka* (this money will go to *tzedaka*).

- It is better to use a chicken rather than money even if that means one needs to do the kaparot prior to Erev Yom Kippur.

- Before bringing the chicken to be slaughtered, some have a custom to gently lean on the chicken. This is similar to the sacrifices in the Holy Temple upon which the owners would lean.

- The chicken should be slaughtered as soon as possible after it is used for *Kaparot*.

- As much as possible, one should not allow the live chickens to "witness" the slaughtering of the chickens that precede them. This is an unnecessary pain and may even affect their kosher status.

- There is a mitzvah to cover the blood of slaughtered (kosher) fowl and wild (kosher) animals. One who wishes to perform this mitzvah should ask the *shochet* (ritual slaughterer) permission to do so as the mitzvah technically "belongs" to the *shochet*. (One should tip the shochet for allowing them the honor to do this mitzvah.) One should say the blessing *Asher Kidishanu ... al kisuy Dam Be'afar,* and then cover the blood with sawdust, sand or earth.

    - This mitzvah represents sweetening the judgment (blood) with kindness as represented by the earth which symbolizes *bittul* (self-effacement).[9]

    - A woman may perform this mitzvah but it shouldn't be delegated to a child.

- It is customary to tip the *shochet* (ritual slaughterer) in consideration of his allowing others to do his mitzvah of covering the blood.

- If the *shechitah* is invalid, one should buy another chicken and repeat the process.

- Either the chickens or their value should be donated to the poor. Nevertheless, as mentioned above, one should not use *Ma'aser* funds (the tithe for charity) for this.

- Certainly, it is forbidden to discard the slaughtered chickens. This would be a transgression of the Biblical commandment of *bal tash'chit* (one may not waste). If the

[9] Igrot Kodesh, vol. 2, page 248 in the name of the Rebbe Rashab

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chickens are going to be discarded, some authorities say it is better to perform *Kaparot* with money.[10] In practice, one should consult one's Rav.

- The chickens should be treated kindly and not waved in a manner that is painful to them.
- Some men have a custom of immersing in the *Mikvah* before *Kaparot*.
- Although normally one should not recite the blessing of *hanotien lasechvi vinah lehavchin bein uom uvein laylah* before dawn, if one hears a rooster crowing (such as at kaporos), one may recite it as long as it's after midnight.
- Some say that one who missed *Kaparot* before Yom Kippur may do it on Hoshana Rabbah.
- The Chabad Rabbe'im would don Shabbat clothes on Erev Yom Kippur after *Kaparot*.

Shacharit[11]

- On Erev Yom Kippur in shacharit, we do *not* recite:
    - ***Mizmor LeToda*** (Siddur pg. 30 right after Baruch She'amar) This prayer corresponds to the thanksgiving offering which was brought daily in the Holy Temple but not on Erev Yom Kippur. The reason for this is that there would not be enough time to consume the sacrifice before the fast began.
        - Sefardim do recite *Mizmor LeTodah.*
    - ***Tachnun*** (Siddur pg. 54) As this day is a mini-holiday, it is not fitting to recite confessionary prayers.
        - From Erev Yom Kippur until after the end of the month, ***Tachnun*** is not said.
    - We do not recite ***Avinu Malkeinu***.
    - The Shacharit prayers on Erev Yom Kippur should not be prolonged.
    - Those who have the custom to say Selichot during the Ten Days of Repentance recite an abridged version on this day.

[10] Based on conversations the author had with Rabbi Yosef Heller of Crown Heights. Other Rabanim I consulted with felt that it may be worth doing *Kaparot* anyway..

[11] O.C. and Shulchan Aruch HaRav, 604 and Otzar Minhagei Chabad

Lekach

- It is customary in many communities to ask the *gabbai* (attendant) of the shul for *Lekach* (honey cake) and to eat some of it.[12] The Lubavitcher Rebbe would give out *Lekach* (honey cake) to the Chassidim on this day. If, G-d forbid, it was decreed that one will have to ask for help from his fellow-man this year, it is fulfilled at this time by asking for *Lekach*.

Asking for Forgiveness[13]

Yom Kippur atones only for sins between man and G-d. It does not atone for a sin in which one wronged another person and did not seek forgiveness, as the verse (Levit. 16:30) says, "For on this day, He shall atone for you and cleanse you; before the L-rd, you shall be cleansed from all your sins." "This day" refers to Yom Kippur which atones only for sins "before the L-rd," whereas for sins that involve one's fellow-man, one does not receive atonement until one asks that person for forgiveness.

Every sin towards a fellow-man is also a sin against G-d. G-d does not forgive the aspect of the sin towards Him until one seeks forgiveness from his fellow man.

- For this reason, anyone who may have insulted or hurt his fellow-man should apologize and ask for forgiveness on this day.
- On this day, the peace that is brought about through these actions causes the Satan to have no claims against the Jewish people.
- By asking for forgiveness, we become similar to angels amongst whom there is no jealousy or competition.
- In addition, when we forgive each other, G-d acts reciprocally and forgives us.
- When asking for forgiveness, one should specify how he injured the other party. If this will cause embarrassment to the other party, one should not do so.
- One who sinned towards an individual must ask him specifically for forgiveness and should not address him as part of a group.
- If one owes money to another person for having damaged him, one should pay it before Yom Kippur, or, at the very least, assure the other party that he will do so.

[12] Sefer HaMinhagim Chabad

[13] O.C. Shulchan Aruch HaRav and Kaf HaChaim, 606, Iggrot Kodesh, vol. 4, page 17, Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 131, Elef HaMagen, 606:9

- One should always discuss a (possible) financial obligation with a Rav and not rely on one's own decision in this regard.[14]

- If the aggrieved party refuses to forgive, one should attempt to seek forgiveness at least two more times. Each time he or she should bring a different group of (three) friends with him to show that he is sincere.[15]

- If one insulted one's teacher, there is no limit to the number of times he must seek forgiveness.

- One who is asked to forgive should not harden his heart but should quickly forgive unless doing so will lead to his detriment (if he feels the person will repeat the offense as a result).

- One who forgives others will be forgiven by G-d, whereas one who does not forgive will not be forgiven by Him.

- If one does not remove hatred (from his heart) on Yom Kippur, his prayers will not be heard (G-d forbid). But one who rises above his (negative) traits will have all his sins forgiven.

- There was once a great Torah scholar who had been shamed by a certain wealthy and powerful man. When someone approached the scholar afterwards asking him to forgive the wealthy man, the Torah scholar explained that he had forgiven him immediately. He cited the Zohar that says that the sins of the Jewish people weigh down the wings of the Shechinah. So, in order not to cause G-d pain, he had immediately forgiven the man and erased the sin.

Eating on Erev Yom Kippur[16]

It is a mitzvah to eat and drink on Erev Yom Kippur in order to be able to fast on Yom Kippur. An additional reason for eating is that because we cannot honor the Yom Tov of Yom Kippur by eating, we eat instead on the previous day. One who does so receives reward as if he had fasted two days in a row.

- For this reason, many have the custom to eat two meals (including washing for Challah at each of the meals) on Erev Yom Kippur. The first meal takes place in the morning while the second follows Mincha. (The first meal is a custom[17] whereas the second meal

[14] Elef HaMagen 606:7
[15] See Ben Yehoyadah on Yoma, 87a and Mishnah Berurah 606:4
[16] O.C. Shulchan Aruch HaRav, 604, Kaf HaChaim, 604
[17] Kaf HaChaim in the name of the Pri Etz Chaim

is mandatory and is referred to as the *Se'udah hamafseket* - the meal that interrupts between the weekday and Yom Kippur.)

  - The reason for the two meals is that, for Kabbalistic reasons, one should eat on this day for two days – for Erev Yom Kippur and Yom Kippur.

- It is customary to dip the Challah in honey when eating the meals of this day.
- It is not necessary to have *lechem mishnah* (two loaves of challah) at these meals.[18]
- It is customary for Ashkenazim to eat *Kreplach* (pockets of dough with meat or chicken[19] in them) on this day. The meat represents judgment while the dough represents mercy which covers the judgment (Ta'amei HaMinhagim). Chicken is preferred over red meat as it is best to not consume red meat before the fast (see below). Some say that the small amount of meat in the kreplach is not a problem.
- If possible, one should host poor people at one's table on this day. In this way, his "table" effects atonement.
- If one wishes to eat after completing the second meal, it is best to make a condition before reciting the Grace after Meals that he plans to continue eating and drinking after the meal.

Food[20]

On Erev Yom Kippur, it is proper **not** to eat the following foods:

- **Red meat -** so one shouldn't be overly full when praying on Yom Kippur.
- **Sesame seeds**. These tend to increase one's saliva which would cause one to be distracted from the Yom Kippur prayers.
- Men should not eat **garlic** or scrambled or warm boiled **eggs** throughout the entire day, nor **dairy** (including butter) or **spicy foods** in the afternoon. This is to ensure bodily purity. (One may have milk with his coffee.)
- It is customary to eat fish during the first meal. The Tur (Siman 604) recounts how a certain Jew outbid the servant of the ruler of the city to buy a fish for Erev Yom Kippur.

[18] But see Kaf HaChaim 2 in the name of the Shelah that some say one should use *Lechem Mishnah.*

[19] Hitkashrut, number 1053, note 76.

[20] Shulchan Aruch HaRav 608, Mateh Efrayim and Elef Hamagen 606:49, Kaf HaChaim, Igrot Kodesh vol 3, p 210 .

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In the second meal, however, some say one should not eat (warm) fish. Others permit it.

- In addition, one should refrain from eating salty foods so as not to be thirsty on Yom Kippur.
- One should be careful not to drink alcohol to the point of inebriation on Erev Yom Kippur.
- One should not eat in a gluttonous manner.

Cemetery Visits

Some communities have a custom to visit the graves of tzaddikim on this day. This is not the Chabad custom.[21]

***Malkot* - Lashes[22]**

It is customary for men to receive *Malkot* (symbolic lashes) on this day. This is in order to cause a person to take his sins to heart and regret them. It also humbles a person and prepares him to serve the Almighty with awe and fear.

- The Chabad custom is to administer the lashes before immersion in the Mikvah and Mincha.
- Some administer these lashes after Mincha.
- A leather strap (belt) is used.
- The one receiving the *Malkot* should kneel facing north. This is to symbolize that many sins are caused by greed for money. (North represents money as the verse says,[23] "Gold is brought from the North.")
- The one administering the lashes should tap the other lightly on his back 39 times while reciting the verse "*Vehu Rachum*" (top of pg. 118 in the Siddur) three times. The lashes begin on the right shoulder, then the left shoulder and then the center of the lower back. They continue in this circular pattern, repeating the verse of *Vehu Rachum* (which contains 13 words) three times, for a total of 39 times. The one receiving the lashes

[21] Otzar Minhagei Chabad, page 184 See Elef HaMagen 604:39 who recommends that one go to the cemetery during the days before Erev Yom Kippur since Erev Yom Kippur is considered a Yom Tov and is not an appropriate time for cemetery visits.

[22] Shulchan Aruch HaRav, 607, 11 – 15, Siddur HaRav, Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 131

[23] Job 37:22.

should also recite this verse together with the one giving them. Some recite confessionary prayers while receiving the lashes.

- The three repetitions of the verse represent the sins of thought, speech and action. The 13 words in the verse correspond to the fact that the court punishes from the age of 13. See here for more information as to the significance of the number 39.

- Some say that, if possible, a son should not administer these lashes to his father nor a student to his teacher.[24]

***Mikvah*[25]**

It is customary that men immerse themselves in the *Mikvah* on this day. This is in order to pray in purity on Yom Kippur. The immersion is also symbolic of *Teshuvah* (repentance). Just as a convert immerses in a *mikvah* and becomes a "new man" or a "new woman" so, too, we are becoming new people as a result of our *Teshuvah*. For this reason, one should confess (in his mind) while in the *Mikvah*.

- Some immerse before *Mincha* in order to say the confession at Mincha in purity while others immerse after the *Se'udah HaMafseket* in order that the immersion be close to the beginning of Yom Kippur. Some do both.

- One should immerse after midday (*chatzot*) or, at the very earliest, up to one hour before that.

- Even one who immersed in the mikvah in the morning should immerse again before Mincha.

- Each time, one should immerse oneself in the *Mikvah* at least three times.[26]

    - Some immerse 13 times (see note).[27]

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[24] Piskei Teshuvot, 607:5.

[25] O.C. 606, Shulchan Aruch HaRav and Kaf HaChaim, and Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 131:6.

[26] This follows the view that the purpose of this immersion is for Teshuvah. See Maharil (Minhagei Erev Yom Kippur) who writes that one should immerse three times on Erev Yom Kippur to allude to the three times the expression "Mikveh Yisrael Hashem" is used in Tanach. See Magen Avraham (606:8). According to the opinion (cited in Maharil, ibid.) that if it is for ritual purity, one immersion is sufficient.

[27] See Kaf HaChaim, 581:83 that one should have the following kavanot (intentions) while immersing eight times.

1. To cleanse oneself from impurity
2. To cleanse oneself from anger
3. To fix that which one blemished in the 72-letter name of G-d
4. To fix that which one blemished in the 63-letter name of G-d
5. To fix that which one blemished in the 45-letter name of G-d

- Some immerse 39 times corresponding to the number of lashes that were administered.

- If one cannot get to a mikvah, a swimming pool is also sufficient for this purpose.
    - It is better (but not necessary) to turn off the filter for this immersion.
- No blessing is recited on this immersion.
- One who cannot immerse in a *Mikvah* (or swimming pool) should instead shower thoroughly for three or four minutes.[28]
- In some communities, married women[29] who are not in a state of *Niddah* also immerse in the women's *Mikvah* on this day.
- Neither men nor women need to do extensive preparation for this immersion as women do for regular *Mikvah* immersions. Nevertheless, it is proper to shower before immersing and to make sure one doesn't have anything intervening between his (or her) body and the water.
- One who is in mourning and is sitting Shiva (G-d forbid) may shower and immerse in the Mikvah within an hour or two of sunset. At this time, they no longer sit for Shiva although the other laws of Shiva apply until nightfall.
- According to the Talmud,[30] one may not bathe with one's father, father-in-law, stepfather, or sister's husband. Generally, Ashkanazim are not strict about this.[31]

Mincha[32]

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6. To fix that which one blemished in the 52-letter name of G-d.
7. To remove one's "weekday clothes" from his soul.
8. To accept on oneself the holiness of the holiday of Yom Kippur.

When immersing for Shabbat he recommends immersing five additional times corresponding to the five levels of the (Shabbat) soul;
9. Nefesh, 10. Ru'ach, 11. Neshamah, 12. Chayah and 13. Yechidah

[28] Piskei Teshuvot, 88, note 42. See there that this is the consensus of most of the Poskim although some disagree. It would seem that the shower only works according to the opinion that the purpose of the immersion is to remove impurity. Whereas, according to the opinion that it is for the purpose of Teshuvah, one should actually immerse in a Mikvah.

[29] Regarding single women immersing in a Mikvah on Erev Yom Kippur, see Mateh Efrayim 606, 8 and Elef HaMagen 16 that this was customary in some communities but that he does not recommend it.

[30] Pesachim 51a

[31] See Rama, Even Ha'Ezer, 23:6 and Otzar HaPoskim there.

[32] O.C. 607, Shulchan Aruch HaRav and Mateh Efraim, Elef HaMagen, 604:35.

- One should pray Mincha early on this afternoon in order to allow for time to eat the *Se'udah HaMafseket.*

- One should don one's Shabbat clothes before Mincha.

- Before Mincha, it is customary to give a lot of Tzedaka (charity). The Baal Shem Tov taught that the unholy forces are disturbed by the sound of the rattling coins being given to Tzedakah at this time.[33]

- The Holy *sefarim* (books) write that one should give plentiful amounts to Tzedakah, even beyond one's means on this day, especially to upright poor people. This is a tremendous *segulah* (propitious act) for atoning for one's sins. The Alter Rebbe writes[34] that although generally one should not give more than one-fifth of his income to tzedakah, one may do so in order to atone for one's sins.

- One should pray with great feeling while doing teshuvah from the depths of one's heart.[35]

- During the silent *Amida*, the *Al Chet* (the confessionary prayer) is added before the final paragraph (Chabad siddur pg. 363). The purpose of confessing at this time is in case we will be unable to confess on Yom Kippur night (due to overeating or drinking [alcohol]).

- One should bend one's head down while reciting the *Al Chet* as a sign of humility. One should bang (the left side of[36]) his chest with his fist (softly) to indicate that the sins we did were a result of the desires of the heart. We do the same every time we recite the *Al Chet* during Yom Kippur.

- One should beat one's chest when saying "*Ve'al chet*…" when saying "*Ve'al Chata'im*" (the paragraph after *ve'al hachet*) as well as when saying "*Slach lanu, mechal lanu kaper lanu*" (the refrain).

- One should not interrupt in the middle of the *viduy* (confessionary prayers) except to respond to Kedusha or Modim, as one would respond in the middle of *Elokai Netzor*.

- One who forgot to say *viduy* until after completing the Amidah may say it at that point.

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[33] Ba'al Shem Tov al HaTorah, Mador Rosh HaShana VeYom Kippur, 48.

[34] Iggeret HaTeshuvah, end of chapter 3.

[35] Iggrot Kodesh Rayatz vol. 6 pg. 429.

[36] The striking of the chest is for Kabbalistic reasons while striking the area of the heart is for the reason explained above (Shulchan Aruch HaRav, 607:7). It would seem that striking the left side of the chest fulfills both of these concepts.

- One who did not annul his vows before Rosh HaShana should make sure to do so before Yom Kippur. See here for more information

Seudah HaMafseket

One should eat the final meal after Mincha. See above for various laws regarding this meal.

Some go out of their way to invite needy people to this meal as this brings a person a *kaparah* (atonement) before Yom Kippur.[37]

One should not use a mouthwash or breath-freshener before Yom Kippur that will leave a taste in one's mouth on Yom Kippur.[38]

Yom Kippur Candles[39]

- It is customary among Ashkenazim for the head of every household to light a 24-hour candle before Yom Kippur. This is called the *Lebedikeh licht* (the living light). Many reasons are given for this:[40]
    - Yom Kippur is the final judgment day.[41]
    - To have light with which to read Tehillim and the prayers of the day. (This reason applied before electricity.)
    - In order to be able to recite Havdalah using the candle (see below).
    - The candle is to atone for the soul which is also called a candle.
    - The candle (נר) has the *gematriyah* (numerical value) of 250. This corresponds to the limbs in a male body (248) plus one for the *nefesh* (lower-level soul) and one for the *neshamah* (higher-level soul). By lighting the candle, we ask G-d to atone for all of these.
    - The number 250 also corresponds to the 248 positive mitzvot as well as the negative commands that are rectified by positive commands (*lav hanitak la'asei*) and the negative command that involves no action (*lav she'ein bo maaseh*). On this day we are asking G-d to forgive all our deficiencies in these areas.

[37] Mateh Efrayim 605:18.
[38] Ibid., 612:8.
[39] O.C. 610:4, Kaf HaChaim and Hitkashrut number 1053.
[40] See Kaf HaChaim, 610:22 and 23.
[41] I'm not sure how judgment relates to candles. Perhaps it is that in Jewish law, judgments must take place during the day.

- The second set of Luchot (tablets) were delivered to the Jewish people by Moshe Rabeinu on Yom Kippur. Thus, Yom Kippur is the day of the completion of the giving of the Torah. We commemorate this by lighting a candle since the Torah is compared to light.

- One who says Yizkor should light an additional candle. This is called the *Neshama licht,* the Neshama candle. One candle is sufficient even if both one's parents have passed away.

- Chabad custom is that the *Lebedikeh licht* is lit in Shul while the *Neshama Licht* is lit at home. Some do the opposite.

- I read in the Artscroll machzor that it is customary for the *Lebedike licht* to be bigger than the *Neshama licht*.

- It's considered a bad sign if one's candle goes out on Yom Kippur. Some therefore have the custom to place it in shul among the other candles in such a way that one will not know if his was extinguished.

- One should make sure to have at least one 24-hour candle in the home, so he can make the *bracha* on it during Havdalah (see below).

- The Shulchan Aruch states that a married couple should light a candle in their bedroom as a reminder that marital relations are forbidden on this night (see below). An electric lamp accomplishes this goal as well.

- Although the fast begins at sundown, women and girls who are lighting candles (at 7:01 p.m.) begin the fast at this time. Men must also add to the holy day by refraining from eating, working, etc. for at least several minutes before sundown. Many say that this is a Torah obligation.[42]

- Two Brachot are recited: *Lehadlik Ner Shel Yom HaKippurim* and *Shehechiyanu.*

- Candle-lighting is at 7:01 p.m. (Miami time)

Blessing the Children

It is customary to bless one's children before going to *Shul* for *Kol Nidrei*.

[42] O.C. 608:1

The traditional blessing for boys includes*: Yesimcha Elo-h-im K'Ephraim V'chi'Menashe* – May G-d make you (grow up to) be like Ephraim and Menashe.[43]

- The traditional blessing for girls includes: *Yiseemaich Elo-h-im K'Sora, Rivka, Rochel, V'leah* – May G-d make you (grow up to) be like Sarah, Rivkah, Rochel, and Leah

- The blessing for both boys and girls continues:

Yivorechacha Ado-n-oi V'yishmorecha. Ya-ayr Ado-n-oi Panav Aylecha Veechuneka. Yissa Ado-n-oi Panav Aylecha Veyasem L'cha Shalom. Ve'samu Es Shemi Al B'nai Yisrael Va'ani Averachem" – May the L-rd bless you and watch over you. May the L-rd cause His countenance to shine upon you and favor you. May the L-rd raise His countenance toward you and grant you peace. They shall bestow My Name upon the children of Israel, so that I will bless them."[44] The father then adds whatever blessing of his own that he wishes to bestow upon each child.

- One should pray tearfully at this time that one's children be sealed in the Book of Life and that they should be firm in their *Yirat Shamayim* (fear of heaven). The children too should be inspired at this time to go in the path of the righteous.[45]

Yom Kippur

Sunday Night and Monday, 10 Tishrei/Sept. 20 and 21

Laws of Yom Kippur

Fasting[46]

- All men and women, including women who are pregnant or nursing, as well as boys over the age of 13 and girls over the age of 12 (see below regarding younger children) are obligated to fast on Yom Kippur.

- As the fast proceeds and one feels weaker, one should be filled with joy over the great mitzvah he is performing. One should savor this mitzvah and wish it could extend for longer. One who constantly checks his watch, waiting impatiently to be able to break his fast is showing that he is not happy to fulfill this mitzvah. His reward will not be even one thousandth of the reward of one who fasted with joy. In addition, waiting for the

[43] Gen. 48:20.
[44] Numbers 6: 24 – 27.
[45] Mateh Ephraim 619:2
[46] O.C. 612, 616 – 618, Elef HaMagen, introduction to Siman 611, Piskei Teshuvot, 616:2, Sefer HaMinhagim: The Book of Chabad-Lubavitch Customs, p. 93.

fast to end makes it feel like a longer fast whereas fasting with joy makes it seem like the fast is over sooner.

- A woman who has given birth within the last three days is exempt from fasting.
- A woman who gave birth between three and seven days[47] before Yom Kippur is also exempt from fasting unless both she and her doctor ascertain that she can safely fast.
- A pregnant woman or a woman who gave birth more than seven days before Yom Kippur who feels that she is unable to fast should discuss this with her doctor and Rabbi.
- Anyone who has a life-threatening condition that requires them to eat must do so. One should consult one's doctor and Rabbi *before* Yom Kippur.
- Those requiring medication for a serious but not life-threatening illness should consult their Rabbi *before* Yom Kippur.
- Even when permission is given to eat, one should eat and drink in small doses, if possible. One should eat food that is less than the size of a large date (which is slightly smaller than a chicken egg, the volume equivalent to 1 fluid ounce), drink a tablespoon amount of water (less than a cheek-full[48]), wait nine minutes and repeat. Consult with a Rabbi for more details.
- One who is not well and eats the size of an olive of bread (the size of half an egg) or more should recite the Grace after Meals and add *Ya'aleh Veyavoh* for Yom Kippur.[49] One should not, however, recite Kiddush, nor is it necessary to do *Lechem Mishnah* (a blessing on two loaves of bread).
- Children under the age of 9 need not fast. Children nine years old and above should be trained to fast for part of the day. Health permitting, boys and girls from eleven years old until bar or bat mitzvah, should fast the entire day. The custom today is not to be strict in this matter and to permit children under Bar or Bat Mitzvah to not complete the fast. Nevertheless, it is proper to train children aged 11 years and above to fast at least until midday.

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[47] These three or seven days are calendar days, i.e., if she had the baby at the end of the 7th of Tishrei, Yom Kippur is the fourth day although it is within 72 hours of the birth (Shulchan Aruch HaRav 617:5). Some are lenient and consider three days to mean 72 hours. If a woman is weak, one can rely on this opinion and allow such a woman to eat using the amounts described above (Tzemach Tzedek, Siman 63).

[48] This is measured by each individual's cheek. For the average person, it is 1.4 ozs. (Piskei Teshuvo t, 618:9).

[49] The Alter Rebbe didn't include the Ya'aleh VeYavo prayer for Yom Kippur in his Siddur. Some say that this means he held that Ya'aleh VaYavo should not be said if bentching on Yom Kippur. See Piskei HaSiddur, ot 185.

Leather Shoes[50]

- One should not wear shoes containing any leather or suede.[51] This is true whether the upper part or the sole is made of leather.
- The Ta'amei HaMinhagim explains that normally we wear shoes to separate between our feet and the ground as the earth was cursed when Adam and Chava sinned. Whereas on Yom Kippur the ground is considered sanctified, and this separation is not necessary.
- Shoes made of other materials may be worn, even if they are comfortable. This is the main Halacha and the widespread custom. Some are strict and say that it is best not to wear shoes of other materials either, but rather slippers or just socks.
- The rules regarding wearing leather shoes apply also to children of all ages.
- One may wear other garments that contain leather.

Washing[52]

- One may not wash oneself on Yom Kippur.
- Upon waking up in the morning, one should wash one's hands up to the knuckles that join the fingers to the hand.
- After drying one's hands, one may use the remaining moisture to "wipe the sleep off" of one's eyes.
- One may wash one's eyes in the morning if they are encrusted.
- Children (or adults who must eat because they have a life-threatening illness) should wash their hands until the wrist (as usual) before eating bread.
- It is forbidden to immerse in the Mikvah on Yom Kippur even if one experiences a *keri* (which renders a man impure).

[50] O.C. 614, Shulchan Aruch HaRav. See Igrot Kodesh, vol. 3, pages 147 and 148.

[51] See footnote 7 to Shulchan Aruch HaRav 614 (from Ma'amarei Admur HaZakein HaKetzarim) that "the Alter Rebbe explains the mystical basis for this not wearing leather shoes. These shoes serve as an intermediary through which man comes in contact with the earth. Thus, on ordinary days, they enable him to perform his life work of elevating materiality and transforming it into a medium for holiness. On Yom Kippur, the material world is elevated by the spiritual influence of the day itself. Leather shoes are then no longer necessary. Indeed, they interfere, and dull one's appreciation of this day's unique power."

[52] Shulchan Aruch HaRav, 613

- A woman whose Mikvah night falls out on Yom Kippur must postpone her immersion to the next night.

- A woman may wash herself as necessary (in conformance with the laws of Yom Tov) in order to make a *hefsek taharah.* One may wash only part of one's body with warm water in this case, but not most of it.

- One who went to the bathroom (and touched a part of his body that is normally covered) should wash his fingers afterwards until the end of his knuckles. It is best for one not to touch a part of the body that is normally covered when using the bathroom as otherwise there is a question as to whether or not one may wash one's hands. This is especially important on the night of Yom Kippur, after Maariv when one does not plan to pray another prayer.

Oils and Lotions[53]

- It is forbidden to anoint the body with any kind of oil or lotion on Yom Kippur. For this reason, one should not apply deodorant.

Marital Relations[54]

- Marital relations are forbidden on Yom Kippur.

- Throughout Yom Kippur, couples should conduct themselves as they do during the Niddah state.

- As mentioned above, according to the Shulchan Aruch, one should light a candle (or leave a lamp on) in the bedroom where a husband and wife sleep as a reminder of this prohibition.

Kol Nidrei[55]

It is customary for Ashkenazi men to wear a *kittel* (white over-garment) on Yom Kippur. This is an aid to help a person achieve humility. (Since a *kittel* resembles a shroud, it reminds us of our mortality). The color white is reminiscent of the angels, whose level we aspire to reach on this day. In addition, the white color represents purity as the verse says,[56] "if your sins will be like

[53] O.C. Shulchan Aruch HaRav and Piskei Teshuvot, 614.
[54] Ibid., 615.
[55] Ibid., 619, Siddur Harav, Mateh Efrayim and Elef LaMeteh, Ta'amei HaMinhagim, Iggrot Kodesh, 5:87.
[56] Isaiah 1:18.

scarlet, I will whiten them like snow." Chabad custom is that a groom who got married during the past year and wore a *kittel* at the wedding does not wear a *kittel* on Yom Kippur.

- It is not customary for women to wear a *kittel*, but in some communities, women wear white clothing in honor of the holy day.[57]
- In addition, in some communities it is customary for women not to wear gold on this day as gold might allude to the sin of the golden calf.
- One should not take one's *kittel* into the bathroom as it is a garment specifically used for prayer.[58]
- Married men should wear a tallit for *Kol Nidrei*. One should recite the *bracha* (blessing) on the Tallit before sunset.
- If one did not put on one's tallit until after sunset, he should do so without a *bracha* (blessing).
- One should recite *Al Chet* (confessionary prayers) privately as well as Tehillim before Kol Nidrei. This is to conform with the opinion that the main time to say *viduy* (confession) is as Yom Kippur begins.
    - The Chabad custom is to recite psalms 115 to 123 at this time.
- It is customary to remove (at least) three[59] Torah scrolls from the ark and stand holding them at the Bimah for Kol Nidrei.
- It is considered a great mitzvah to purchase the right to hold the first Torah Scroll during Kol Nidrei.
- The Chazzan should recite "*Al Da'at Hamakom* etc." in an undertone.
- The Chazzan should recite Kol Nidrei three times while raising his voice slightly each time.
- Kol Nidrei should begin while it is still day and last until it gets dark.

[57] But see Shulchan Aruch HaRav 610:9 that angels are considered to be "male."

[58] The Mishnah Berurah writes (610:18) that one may urinate while wearing the kittel. The Kaf HaChaim (37) adds that one may enter a bathroom for this purpose. But see the Dirshu Mishnah Berurah quoting Rav Elyashiv who forbids entering a bathroom with a kittel.

[59] The Kaf HaChaim (619:16) writes that some remove three, some seven, and some remove all of the Sifrei Torah from the Ark.

- Afterwards the Chazzan and the congregation should recite the blessing of *she'hechiyanu.* This blessing is recited on (almost) every Yom Tov night during Kiddush, but since there is no kiddush on Yom Kippur we say it now.

- Women who lit candles and said *she'hechiyanu,* should **not** say it again during the prayers.

- It is customary to recite the verse *Baruch Shem* (the second line of the Shema) aloud throughout Yom Kippur. This also applies to the Shema one recites privately such as before going to bed. This verse was heard by Moses from the angels, and thus on this day when we all resemble angels, we say it aloud.[60]

- Some people have the custom to recite the entire *Tehillim* (Psalms) on the night of Yom Kippur after Maariv. The Lubavitcher Rebbe would do this.
- Before going to sleep on this night, men should recite the first 4 chapters of *Tehillim*. This is a protection against unintentional impurity.

- According to Chabad custom, one should recite nine chapters of Tehillim before going to sleep as printed in the *machzor*.

- When reciting the *Kriat Shema* before going to sleep, one should not say *Tachanun*, just like any Yom Tov.

Morning of Yom Kippur, Monday, 10 Tishrei/Sept. 21

- One should wash *Negel Vasser* (morning hand-washing) up to one's knuckles.

- One may not rinse out one's mouth.[61]

- One should omit the blessing of *She-asa Li Kol Tzorki* (new Chabad Siddur pg. 7). In this blessing, we thank G-d for our shoes. Since we cannot wear regular shoes on this day, we omit this blessing. According to Chabad custom, it is not recited at night after Yom Kippur.

- According to the Mishnah Berurah one should say this *bracha* on Yom Kippur as well.[62]

Prayers

[60] See Derech Hashem (Part Four, On the Shem and its Blessings) by the Ramchal as to how this fits in to the fact that Yaakov Avinu said Baruch Shem before he passed away.
[61] Although on other fast days, there is room to be lenient and allow one who is uncomfortable to rinse his mouth with a liquid that is not normally ingested (such as mouthwash), one should not be lenient on Yom Kippur in this regard. Piskei Teshuvot, 613:5. (See there that one who has a sore in his mouth, may rinse it out.)
[62] See Mishnah Berurah 554:31.

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- **Speed**

It is better to say less *selichot* (petitionary prayers) slowly and with concentration than to say many in a rushed manner.[63]

- **Adon Olam**

Rav Yehudah HaChasid, Rav Hai, and Rav Sherirah Gaon said, "Whoever concentrates during the beginning of the Adon Olam prayer (in the Chabad machzor this comes before the Korbanot and is recited privately), I guarantee that his prayers will be heard. The Satan will not disturb his prayers. Neither the Satan nor any bad occurrence will disturb him on Yom Kippur. His enemies will fall before him."[64]

- **Viduy**[65]

When saying the *viduy* (the confessionary prayers), it is proper to specify one's sins. If his sin is not known to the public, he should confess silently as it is not respectful to G-d to proclaim one's sins to others. (This refers to sins that are not included in the "*Al Cheit*.") If, however, others are wrongly suspected of committing the sin that he did, he should admit publicly that he did it in order to exonerate them.

One who is davening without a minyan need not repeat the *viduy* that is normally said during the repetition of the Amidah.

- **Torah Reading**

If possible, one should endeavor to receive an Aliyah during the Days of Awe.[66]

- **Yizkor** [67]
  After the reading of the Torah, *Yizkor* is recited (in Ashkenazi Shuls). Those who have both parents living should leave the shul during *Yizkor*. This is to prevent an *ayin hora*.

Mourners during the first year of mourning should stay in shul but not recite *Yizkor*. This is the Chabad custom. In some communities those in the first year of mourning leave the shul as well.

At this time, it is customary to make a pledge to tzedakah in honor of the departed souls of those mentioned in *Yizkor*. This is beneficial to both the living and those who have passed on. If the departed person were alive, he or she would have given tzedakah, and since we are now

[63] Shulchan Aruch HaRav, 620:2.
[64] Elyah Rabbah 46:15, cited in Sefer HaMa'amarim 5703, page 11.
[65] Shulchan Aruch HaRav and Kaf HaChaim 607.
[66] Mateh Efrayim.
[67] O.C. 621 and Shulchan Aruch HaRav.

giving in his or her stead, G-d considers it as if they had given. (In the case of a wicked person who did not give tzedakah during his lifetime, giving in his memory does not help him.)[68]

One who is praying without a minyan may recite Yizkor.

The Lubavitcher Rebbe mentioned that many chassidim customarily mention the Rabbe'im (whom they knew,) during Yizkor.[69]

Even those who don't say Yizkor should say *Av HaRachamim*.

Musaf[70]

- **Bowing[71]**

When bowing during the repetition of the Amidah of Musaf, if one is praying in a Shul that doesn't have a carpet and the floor is stone, tile, or brick, one should put something down on the floor to make a separation between his face and the floor. This is because the Torah forbids bowing on a stone floor as it was an ancient idolatrous practice. Some place a separation down even if it is a wood floor. The Chazzan should not move his feet to bow as he is in the middle of the repetition of the Amidah. Rather the *amud* (lectern) should be moved away so that he can bow in his place.

One should try to keep pace with the congregation during the *Avodah* (part of Musaf prayer describing the Kohen Gadol's service of Yom Kippur in the Holy Temple) so that one will be able to bow at the appropriate times with the community. If one is behind, he should skip ahead when the community bows and say that prayer with them. He may then return to where he left off.

One should strike one's chest when recounting the viduy of the Kohen Gadol during Musaf.

- During Musaf, the blessing of the Kohanim is said.
    - Sefardim say Birkat Kohanim in Shacharit and Ne'ilah as well as in Musaf.
- The Kohanim's hands should be washed up to their wrists. The Levi'im who customarily wash their hands before washing the Kohanim's hands may also wash their hands but only until their knuckles.[72]

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[68] Shulchan Aruch HaRav, 621:14.
[69] Sicha of Acharon shel Pesach 5726, ot 17.
[70] Ibid.
[71] Mateh Efrayim, 621:16 – 18.
[72] Mateh Efrayim 621:17.

It is good to smell *Besamim* (good-smelling spices) on Yom Kippur and say the appropriate bracha. This is so that the person reaches the ideal of saying 100 blessings a day. In addition, one should listen carefully to the blessings on the Torah and Haftorah so that these can "count" towards the 100 blessings.

The Chabad Rebbes were particular to have at least a short break (usually about forty-five minutes) during the prayers of the day, between Musaf and Mincha. They would use this time to learn their daily study sessions.[73]

Mourning the Sons of Aharon

If one feels sorrow over the death of Nadav and Avihu, the sons of Aharon, and sheds tears over their [death] on Yom Kippur, his sins are pardoned, and [he is assured that] his sons will not die in his lifetime.[74]

We should calculate that if G-d punished Aharon's sons who were on such a high spiritual level, we should surely make a reckoning of our own spiritual standing and repent accordingly.

From a Chassidic perspective this can be seen in a positive vein. The Torah[75] prefaces the commandments concerning the Yom Kippur sacrificial worship with the words, "G-d spoke to Moshe after the death of Aharon's two sons, when they came close before G-d and died." Aharon's sons died because their Divine service was impelled only by *ratzo*, the rapturous desire of the soul to run forward and cleave to its Source, without being grounded by *shuv*, the soul's sober determination to return and fulfill its mission in its physical body and in the physical world. On Yom Kippur, paralleling this dual dynamic, we tap into these same intense spiritual energies (the *ratzo*) while remaining grounded (the *shuv*).[76]

Mincha

After the Torah reading of Mincha, the half-kadish is not recited until after the Haftorah.

[73] It is possible that this break also served another purpose: When one starts Musaf after Mincha Gedolah and is planning to daven Mincha immediately thereafter, some say he should daven Mincha first. Whereas if he is not planning to daven Mincha until later, all agree he may daven Musaf first, which is the preferred order (see Shulchan Aruch HaRav, 286:5.

[74] Ibid. 621:15.

[75] Levit. 16:1.

[76] Notes to the translated Shulchan Aruch HaRav citing the Mateh Efrayim and Likkutei Sichot, Vol. 3, p. 987 and Vol. 32, p. 98.

It is considered a special honor to read the Haftorah of the Book of Yonah (known as Maftir Yonah). The Previous Lubavitcher Rebbe said that reading this Haftorah gives one (extra) power to do teshuvah and is a *segulah* for wealth.[77]

Nei'lah and Ending the Fast[78]

The Rebbe Rashab said that one can receive completely new physical and spiritual strength for the prayer of Ne'ilah. Even one who was tired out during Mincha-time can be refreshed and fully charged for Ne'ilah just as he was for Kol Nidrei. This comes from the essence of the soul.

According to Chabad custom, the ark is opened for Ne'ilah. It should remain open for the entire Ne'ilah.

One should pray Ne'ilah with tremendous concentration.[79]

During the Kaddish of Ne'ilah, the chazzan (and a mourner reciting kaddish) says, "*Le'eilah ule'eilah mikol birchata.*"

At the conclusion of Nei'lah, the congregation says *Avinu Malkeinu.* Following this, we recite Shema Yisrael once, *Baruch Shem* three times, and *Hashem Hu Ha-Elokim* seven times.

When saying Shema, one should have the intention to give up one's life for the sake of G-d. This will be accepted on High as if he did so.[80]

Reciting *Hashem Hu Ha-Elokim* seven times signifies that the *Shechinah* (Divine Presence) is departing to the seventh heaven. The Chazzan then says Kaddish. In the middle of the Kaddish, the Shofar is sounded according to Chabad custom.

The Shofar blast represents the departure of the *Shechinah* when the *Shechinah* departed from Mount Sinai. The blast is also a victory cry that we were found righteous in judgment. In addition, it confuses the Satan who begins to prosecute as soon as Yom Kippur ends.

By the letter of the law, one may blow the shofar even before nightfall. Nevertheless, it is best not to blow the Shofar until after the fast is over in order to ensure that people do not think that Yom Kippur is over and break their fast too early.

The fast ends at 7:52 p.m. (Miami time). One may not eat, drink, or do any work before that time.

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[77] HaMelech Bimesibo 1:73.
[78] O.C. 623, Ta'amei HaMinhagim and Torat Shalom page 35.
[79] Mateh Ephraim 623:4.
[80] Shela, cited in the Chabad Machzor.

- Before the sounding of the Shofar, it is the Chabad custom to sing and dance a victory march (the tune is called Napoleon's March) to show our confidence that G-d has accepted our prayers.

Motzo'ei Yom Kippur

Monday night, Sept. 21/11 Tishrei

- We pray Maariv with the Tallit and Kittel.
- According to Chabad custom, men take their Talitot off their heads and put on a hat. The reason for this is that nighttime is not the time for the (full) mitzvah of tzitzit.
- Women who do not pray Maariv should say *Baruch Hamavdil Bein Kodesh L'chol* before doing any work.
- One who mistakenly said *Hamelech hakadosh* or *HaMelech Hamishpat* instead of *Hakeil Hakadosh* etc. need not repeat the *amidah*.[81]
- Before *havdala*, one should wash one's hands fully for *Negel Vasser* (until the wrist) without a *bracha*. Even Kohanim whose hands were washed completely before reciting Birkat Kohanim should wash their hands at this point.
- As mentioned above, the Chabad custom is to not recite *She'asa li kol tzarki* – the blessing on the shoes at this time. According to others, it should be recited (Minhagei HaGra).

Havdalah [82]

The fire for the Havdalah candle should be taken from a candle that was lit before Yom Kippur. This is to emphasize that we were not permitted to use that fire over Yom Kippur but may use it now. If we were to strike a new fire after Yom Kippur, it would not be clear that it was forbidden to use that fire during Yom Kippur since that fire didn't exist during Yom Kippur. By using a fire that was burning during Yom Kippur which we refrained from using [for cooking or the like], we are emphasizing that this Yom Tov is holier than any other Yom Tov and that using fire on this day is forbidden. It is best to use a candle that was kindled for this purpose, e.g., an extra Yahrtzeit (24-hour) candle. Alternatively, one may use a Yahrtzeit candle (that was kindled in memory of someone) together with a new candle that one kindles from it.

- If one does not have such a candle, he should seek to obtain one. If he cannot, he cannot say this bracha.

[81] Sha'arei Teshuvah 118, But see there that some disagree and obligate one to pray again. In practice, some say to pray again as a *tefilat nedava* (voluntary prayer) having in mind that it is either obligatory or is a *nedava.*

[82] O.C. Shulchan Aruch HaRav, 624, Otzar Minhagei Chabad.

- Some have the custom that the person making Havdalah share the wine with others although this is not customary for a regular Havdalah.[83]
- One who forgot to say havdalah on Motzei Yom Kippur may say it the next day (without the blessing on fire) but not after that.

Kiddush Levana

- It is proper to do *Kiddush Levana (*Sanctification of the New Moon) on this night as we are joyous after having achieved atonement.
- It is best for one to put on his regular shoes, wash one's face, hear *havdalah,* and eat something before reciting *Kiddush Levana.*
- It's customary to shake the ends of one's tallit katan after Kiddush Levana even if one is also wearing a talit gadol.

- After Yom Kippur, it is customary to wish others a "Good Yom Tov." This is because the night after Yom Kippur is considered a (mini) Yom Tov. For this reason, we have a festive meal (with a tablecloth, candles, challah etc., etc.) after Yom Kippur.
- One should have a full and proper sit-down meal. This meal elicits blessings for one's physical needs throughout the year.
    - One should dip the challah in honey when eating on this night.

- It is commendable to begin building the Sukkah on this night in order to go from one mitzvah to another. If it is not possible, one should at least discuss building the Sukkah. If possible, one should complete the building of the Sukkah on the next day.

    - Another reason for this custom is that when one finishes doing Teshuvah and begins a day that might include sins, one should (instead) begin with a mitzvah immediately. This can be understood as follows: After doing Teshuvah one is likely to revert to sin if he thinks that one need only serve G-d at certain times or with certain limbs. We therefore begin with the mitzvah of Sukkah which encompasses the entire person and all of his daily, and even mundane, activities (i.e., one does everything that one normally does in the house in the Sukkah). When one realizes that all of these must be used to serve G-d, he will not return to sin.[84]

Hashem's Name (*G-tt's Nomen*)

Tuesday, 11 Tishrei/ Sept. 22

[83] Otzar Minhagei Chabad.

[84] Maharil and Igrot Kodesh vol. 2, page 6.

It is proper to wake up early for davening the morning after Yom Kippur. This is so that the Satan not accuse us of being lazy regarding Mitzvot. This day is known as "Hashem's Name" to indicate that as a result of the days of Teshuvah, we reached a level that is an essential level of G-d, beyond any specific name. In addition, it alludes to the fact that we go back to saying "*HaKeil hakadosh*" in the Amidah (*Keil* is one of G-d's names) instead of "*HaMelech hakadosh*."[85]

Building a Sukkah

Following are some laws regarding building a Sukkah. For more information, please see Orach Chaim, 626 – 638

- If possible, one should personally be involved in building his Sukkah.
- A Sukkah can be kosher with two walls and a partial third wall. This is complicated and should not be done without Rabbinic consultation. The Chabad custom is to have a Sukkah with four proper walls.[86]
- The walls must be sturdy enough so that they do not fall over or sway in the wind. One who is using a thin material should tie it down to the frame of the Sukkah so that it doesn't sway in the wind. If the walls sway only slightly (less than nine inches from the center to either side), it is kosher.[87]
- The walls should be at least 39 inches high. They may not be higher than 30 feet.
- The *s'chach* should consist of non-edible vegetation that has not been fashioned into any sort of utensil, e.g., palm fronds, bamboo sticks or other branches and leaves.
- If one of the walls reaches the level of the *s'chach*, but there is a covering that is not kosher for *s'chach* between the wall and where the *s'chach* begins, if that covering is less than six feet long, that wall can count as a wall of the Sukkah. This is based on the principle of *dofen akumah* (a bent wall).
- If the walls do not reach the *s'chach*, i.e., there is an open space between the top of the walls and the *s'chach*, if the walls are directly beneath the *s'chach*, it is kosher. This is known as *gud asik* - a wall which goes up.

[85] Taamei HaMinhagim, Sefer HaMinhagim Chabad.
[86] Sefer HaMinhagim Chabad.
[87] Piskei Teshuvot 630:9.

- If there is an area in the middle of the Sukkah that is covered by an object that is not kosher as *s'chach* (e.g., a light), if that object is 12 by 12 inches, one should not eat underneath it.[88]

- The *s'chach* (foliage that covers the Sukkah) should be thick enough so that even if it dries, the Sukkah will still have more shade than sun. It is best to be able to see the stars through the holes in the *s'chach*. Despite this, the Chabad custom is to use a large amount of *s'chach*, even if this makes it impossible to see the stars.[89]

- If one is using bamboo mats, one should make sure that they have a *hechsher* (Rabbinic approval) as not all mats are acceptable as *s'chach*.[90]

- From the language of the Alter Rebbe, it seems that one should specifically intend to build a Sukkah for the purpose of shade in order for the Sukkah to be kosher.[91]

- The *s'chach* should be supported and held in place by wood or other material that is kosher to be used as *s'chach*.

- The Sukkah should be open to the sky. If there are overhanging branches from nearby trees, those branches should be cut away. If this is not practical, a rabbi should be consulted.

- If a gentile put up the *s'chach*, a Jew should pick up and put back down at least one piece of *s'chach* having in mind that it is for the sake of the mitzvah of Sukkah. The same applies if one is using the *s'chach* that remained on his Sukkah from last year.

- It is not the Chabad custom to adorn the Sukkah with pictures and the like.[92]

Wishing you and all of Klal Yisrael a Good Shabbos, a Good Yom Tov, and a Gmar Chatimah Tova for a Shana Tova Umetuka!

[88] See O.C. 632, and Piskei Teshuvot 1.

[89] See ibid, Sefer HaSichot, 5750 Sicha of the fourth night of Sukkot, ot 11.

[90] See here for an interesting article (in Hebrew) about this topic. For an article in English, see here.

[91] Shulchan Aruch HaRav, 625 and 626, 1. See Likutei Sichot, 32, page 142 and note 7.

[92] Sefer HaMinhagim, Chabad. See Sicha of Simchat Torah 5730, ot 10 that explains the reason for this custom.

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Yom Kippur Times 5787

Please double check on www.chabad.org

Locations:	Candle lighting, Eve of Yom Kippur: Sun. 9/20	Fast ends on Motzoei Yom Kippur Mon. 9/21
Miami, Fl	7:01 pm	7:52 pm
Brooklyn, NY	6:42 pm	7:38 pm
Los Angeles, CA	6:35 pm	7:28 pm
Jerusalem	5:59 pm	7:14 pm
Melbourne, Australia	5:57 pm	6:54 pm

Shabbat Shalom Umevorach and Gmar Chatima Tovah!

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