

THE HALACHAH SHEET

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Yom Kippur

Erev Yom Kippur

- **Eating.** There is a *mitzvah d'Oraisa* to eat and drink on Erev Yom Kippur.¹ Chazal say that the reward for one who eats on Erev Yom Kippur will be that it's considered as though he fasted for two days.²
- **Mikveh.** It is customary for men to go to the mikveh on Erev Yom Kippur.³ The ideal time to go is from one hour before *chatzos*.⁴
- **Minchah.** You should daven *minchah* before eating the *seudah hamafsek*⁵, and dress in yom tov clothing for davening.⁶
- **Seudah Hamafsek.** If you plan to eat, drink, or brush your teeth after the meal, you should say (or at least have in mind) that you don't want to accept the fast upon *bentching*.⁷

Tefillah

- **Tallis.** Those who usually wear a tallis during *shacharis* should wear one for *maariv* on Yom Kippur. One should put it on before *shekiyah* in order to be able to make a berachah on it. Once it's past *shekiyah*, it's questionable whether you can make a berachah, and therefore you shouldn't.⁸
- **Blessing One's Children.** There is a widespread minhag for parents to bless their children on Erev Yom Kippur. There is a text printed in the machzor. One may add any *tefillos* he wishes in any language.⁹
- **Kittel.** Many customarily wear a kittel on Yom Kippur. A kittel is considered a garment set aside for *tefillah* and therefore should be removed before you enter a bathroom.¹⁰
- **Tefillah Zakah.** This is a long *tefillah* printed in the machzor that many recite before Kol Nidrei. If you don't have time to say the whole thing, the two essential parts are:
 - 1) The words of viduy ("אנא ה' חטאתי עויתי פשעתי"),¹¹ recited while standing, and 2) the words that proclaim you are *mochel* all of Klal Yisrael ("ועתה ראה עמך...").¹²
- **Baruch Shem.** In Krias Shema on Yom Kippur we recite "*Baruch shem kevod malchuso l'olam va'ed*" aloud as an expression of our similarity to the angels on Yom Kippur.¹³ This is also applicable when reciting *Krias Shema al Ha'mitah*.
- **Personal Requests.** It is permitted to add בקשות in Shemoneh Esrei during Elokai Netzor (before "*yehiyu l'ratzon*"), even when Yom Kippur falls out on Shabbos.¹⁴
- **Open Aron Kodesh.** You must stand when the sefer Torah is removed from the *aron kodesh* until it is set down on the bimah.¹⁵ However, it is customary to stand any time the *aron kodesh* is open, especially if the Torahs are in your view.¹⁶
- **Bowing.** It is customary to bow on the floor in a kneeling position at different points during *chazaras ha'shatz of mussaf*. However, it is an *issur d'rabbanan* to kneel with one's head on a stone floor, and the minhag has extended this to any type of floor.¹⁷ Therefore, we place a separation between

our head and the floor to avoid this.¹⁸ Many also put paper towels under their knees. This is for a practical reason (so their pants don't get dirty), and not for a halachic reason.

- **Shabbos.** When Yom Kippur falls out on Shabbos, make sure to add the appropriate additions to Shemoneh Esrei. If you mistakenly omitted all of them, you must repeat Shemoneh Esrei (but not viduy).¹⁹ If you realized during Shemoneh Esrei, go back to "*Atah Bechartanu*." If you only inserted some of the additional phrases consult a *rav*.

עיונים

- In addition to refraining from doing *melachah* on this yom tov, there are five additional prohibitions *mi'd'Oraisa* unique to Yom Kippur. They are 1) eating and drinking, 2) washing one's body, 3) applying oils and creams, 4) wearing leather shoes, and 5) marital relations.

Eating and Drinking

- **Mouthwash.** You may not rinse out your mouth with water or mouthwash for the duration of Yom Kippur.²⁰
- **Medication.** There are medicines that can be taken on Yom Kippur. A *rav* should be consulted before taking any medication.

Washing One's Body

- It is forbidden to wash or rinse any part of your body. This includes even placing your finger in water.
- **Exceptions.** In some cases, you are permitted/required to wash all or part of your hands:
 - **Part of your hand** — If your hand(s) get dirty, you may wash off the dirt.²¹
 - **Fingers only** — You must wash your fingers in their entirety in the following instances: 1) For *negel vasser*²² (the regular number of times)²³, 2) after using the bathroom,²⁴ 3) after touching a usually covered part of your body²⁵ (such as scratching your scalp or your back).
 - **Entire hand** — When washing for Birchas Kohanim, kohanim should wash as usual (until the wrist).²⁶

Applying Oils

- It is forbidden to apply oils to any part of the body, even a small amount.²⁷
- **Deodorant.** Deodorant cannot be used on Yom Kippur, but can be applied beforehand.
- **Cologne.** It is forbidden to put cologne on your body or clothing on Yom Kippur.

Wearing Leather Shoes

- One may not wear shoes made of leather.²⁸ This includes shoes that are only partially leather.²⁹
- **Comfortable Shoes.** Non-leather comfortable shoes may be worn on Yom Kippur.³⁰

1. שו"ע (תרא:א), ע' רבינו יונה (שע"ת שער ד' אות ח') שהביא ג' טעמים 2. מ"ב (תרא:א) 3. ביה"ל (תרא ד"ה ינול) 4. מ"ב (תקפא:סק"ל) 5. מ"ב (תרא:א) 6. מ"ב (תרא:א) 7. מ"ב (תרא:א) 8. מ"ב (תרא:א) 9. מ"ב (תרא:א) 10. מ"ב (תרא:א) 11. מ"ב (תרא:א) 12. בשם הח"ח 13. מ"ב (תרא:א) 14. הלכות שלמה ח"א פ"ז ס' י"א 15. ט"ז (וי"ד רמ"ב:סק"ג) 16. שעה"צ (קמו:סק"ח) 17. מ"ב (קלא:סק"מ) 18. רמב"ם (הל' ע"ז ו'ז) 19. אשי ישראל עמ' תצח 20. רמ"א (תרא:א) 21. שו"ע (תרא:א) 22. שו"ע (שם:ב) 23. שו"ע (תרא:א) 24. שו"ע (שם:ג) 25. מ"ב (שם:סק"ו) 26. מ"ב (שם:סק"ז) 27. שו"ע (תרא:א) 28. שו"ע (שם:ב) 29. מ"ב (תקנ"ד:סק"א) 30. הלכות שלמה ד:ד הע' 19

Teshuvah

- There is an obligation all year round to do *teshuvah*, but an additional mitzvah specifically for Yom Kippur, as the *pasuk* (*Vayikra* 16:30) states, "... כי ביום הזה יכפר עליכם לטהר אתכם. לפני ה' תטהרו"
- The Ramban teaches that when the Torah (*Devarim* 30:14) says, "כי קרוב אליך הדבר מאד," it refers to *teshuvah*, teaching us that it's something within our reach to do. However, like all mitzvos, we have to know exactly how it's done to fulfill our obligation properly.

The Mitzvah

- **All Aveiros.** *Teshuvah* works for all *aveiros* — sins that were done intentionally or unintentionally, and sins from previous years.³¹
- **Teshuvah Mei'Ahavah.** The *teshuvah* procedure deletes *aveiros* as if they never happened. Further, *teshuvah* done out of love for Hashem has the power to turn these same *aveiros* into mitzvos!³² An explanation for this is that because the distance caused by these *aveiros* served as a springboard to yearn to come closer to Hashem, these *aveiros* themselves played a part in the mitzvah of *teshuvah*.
- **Partial Teshuvah.** In order to do a complete *teshuvah*, it is necessary to perform all three steps (outlined below). However, there is a special leniency in the area of *teshuvah* that we don't find by other mitzvos. In regard to other mitzvos, if you don't perform an essential part of the mitzvah (for example, you only take three *minim* on Sukkos, or you eat less than the required amount of matzah), your action has no effect. By *teshuvah*, however, each step of the process is considered an independent entity and serves to lessen the punishment for the *aveirah* to an additional degree.³³

Step 1: Charatah (Regret)

- **How.** The first step of *teshuvah* is feeling regret in your heart for transgressing the *aveirah*. Regret is not a feeling of depression but rather of remorse — that you messed up and wish you hadn't. Recognizing that in the long run your sin wasn't worth it can help bring about these feelings.
- **Amount.** The more strongly you feel *charatah*, the more effective your *teshuvah*. It is not necessary to regret each *aveirah* specifically; rather, a feeling of remorse for all *aveiros* in general suffices.

Step 2: Viduy (Confession)

- Viduy entails verbally acknowledging that you sinned: inadvertently (חטאתי); intentionally (עויתי); and out of ignorance (פשעתי). The viduy we say on Yom Kippur include all these variations of sin.
- **Reason.** A common aspect of every *aveirah* is the disregard for the fact that Hashem is constantly overseeing us. The purpose of viduy is to stand before Hashem and admit to our sins and take responsibility for them ("על חטא שחטאנו לפניך").³⁴
- **Specifying Aveiros.** You are not required to specify *aveiros* in order to achieve *kapparah*. However, it is correct and preferable to do so.³⁵ This doesn't have to be done all in one Shemoneh Esrei; rather, it can be spread across the whole Yom Kippur.

- **Intent.** You should try to say viduy with feelings of regret, and resolve not to repeat the *aveiros* that you are listing. Saying viduy by rote is itself an *aveirah* mentioned in viduy!
- **Posture.** You must stand while reciting viduy.³⁶ Leaning onto something that is totally supporting your weight isn't considered standing. It's "טוב" to bend over (as you would for Modim).³⁷ However, when doing so, care should be taken not to lean onto something, as the Mishnah Berurah is in doubt whether you're *yotzei* viduy if you aren't standing. You may stand upright when the *tzibbur* is saying "... ועל כולם..."
- **Beating your Chest.** It is customary to gently bang your heart with your fist to show that it caused you to sin.³⁸ It's proper to bang for the words: 1) "על חטא שחטאנו"; 2) each word of "אשמנו"; and 3) "על חטאים שאנו חייבים".

Step 3: Kabbalah L'Habah (Commitment Going Forward)

- The final step in the *teshuvah* process is to make a mental commitment to not repeat your mistake. This doesn't mean that you're expected to guarantee that you will never do a certain type of sin ever again. Rather, it means accepting upon yourself now that should you again find yourself in the exact situation as when you sinned (with the same level of urge), you will not succumb.³⁹
- **Inadvertent Aveiros.** For *aveiros* done unintentionally, you should commit to learning the relevant halachos or *mussar* relating to the area in which you sinned.

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- **Asking Forgiveness.** Sins committed toward another person require an additional step before the *teshuvah* process listed above: you must request forgiveness from the one you harmed (physically, emotionally, verbally, or financially).⁴⁰
- **How.** Ideally, you should state the wrongdoing when asking *mechilah* from the one you harmed. However, if by doing so you'll further hurt the person (for example, he'll feel bad hearing that you spoke *lashon hara* about him), it's preferable not to mention the sin and to just ask in a general way.⁴¹
- **When.** Really you should ask forgiveness immediately after harming someone, but many postpone this until Erev Yom Kippur, when it's less embarrassing to ask.⁴²
- **To Whom.** It's wise to ask *mechilah* from those you are close with and frequently come into contact with, such as parents, siblings, roommates, *chavrusas*. Even if you can't recall a specific instance when you offended them, it's very likely that such an incident has occurred.
- **Forgiving.** Chazal teach us that whoever forgives the faults of others will have his own sins pardoned by Hashem.⁴³ Try your utmost to fully forgive anyone who harmed you so you will merit this reward.

Motzei Yom Kippur

- **Shacharis.** It's customary to daven *shacharis* a little earlier than usual on the morning after Yom Kippur. We do this in order to show that we are serious *ovdei Hashem* even when we aren't standing in judgment.⁴⁴

31. רמב"ם (הל' תשובה א:ג) 32. ע' יומא (פו): 33. מבי"ט, בית אלוקים שער התשובה פי"ב 34. חינוך מצוה שס"ד 35. שו"ע (תרו"ב) 36. שו"ע (שם:ג) 37. מ"ב (שם:סק"י) 38. מ"ב (שם:סק"יא) 39. רמב"ם (תשובה ב:ב) כוכבי אור סימן ז' 40. שו"ע (תרו"א) 41. מ"ב (שם:סק"ג) 42. שעה"צ (תרו"ב) 43. מ"ב (שם:סק"ח) 44. מ"ב (תרכ"ד:סק"י"ד)