

# LampLighter

7 Tishrei  
Ha'azinu - shuvah  
**897**  
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## LIVING WITH THE TIMES

The Torah portion Ha'azinu begins with Moshe saying: "Listen heaven and I will speak; hear earth the words of my mouth." The *Sifri* notes that concerning heaven Moshe used an expression denoting closeness, ha'azinu, while regarding earth he used an expression indicating distance, v'sishma, for Moshe was "close to heaven and distant from earth."

All of Torah serves to instruct each and every Jew. Since it tells us "listen heaven and hear earth," it is evident that like Moshe, we are expected to become "close to heaven and distant from earth." How are we to reach such a level?

Ha'azinu is often read on the Shabbos between Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur, a Shabbos known as "Shabbos Teshuvah," a "Shabbos of Repentance."

The simple reason for the name is that this Shabbos falls within the Aseres Yimei Teshuvah, the "Ten Days of Penitence." However, since every aspect of Torah is extremely precise, it is to be understood that the name "Shabbos Teshuvah" serves to indicate that Shabbos enhances repentance, so that the Teshuvah of this Shabbos is superior to the Teshuvah of the other "Ten Days of Penitence."

What is the connection between Shabbos and a superior form of Teshuvah?

The Alter Rebbe explains that the Teshuvah of Aseres Yimei Teshuvah involves the soul's essence, while Teshuvah during the rest of the year involves only the soul's internal powers. Thus, the former period of Teshuvah is far superior to the latter.

These two times for Teshuvah also correspond to the two general levels of repentance, the lower level — whose purpose is to rectify man's sins, and the higher level — which sees the soul returning and cleaving to its Source.

In a general sense, these two forms of Teshuvah are mirrored in the difference between spiritual service during the week and spiritual service on Shabbos. During the week man is involved in mundane affairs, seeking to elevate the physical world to holiness. This corresponds to the lower level of repentance, in which the service is that of reuniting the soul's internal powers with G-dliness.

On Shabbos, however, mundane labour is prohibited, for the sanctity of the day is such that man transcends the physical. His labour on that day involves achieving ever-higher levels within the framework of holiness.

Thus the Teshuvah of Shabbos is the loftier level of Teshuvah, whereby the soul is elevated and cleaves to its Source. The superior Teshuvah of "Shabbos Teshuvah" as compared to repentance during the other days of the "Ten Days of Penitence" will be understood accordingly.

The seven days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur correspond to the seven weekdays of the entire past year; each day of the seven rectifies the misdeeds committed on that weekday in the year just past, with Sunday rectifying for all past Sundays, Monday for all Mondays, etc.

Shabbos, however, is the Teshuvah for past Shabbosos, which themselves are inherently superior in service and Teshuvah. It therefore follows that the Teshuvah of Shabbos Teshuvah is the loftiest of all the Aseres Yimei Teshuvah.

It is the attainment of this level on Shabbos Teshuvah that enables each and every Jew to be like Moshe — "close to heaven and distant from earth."

*(Based on the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe)*

## “Business as usual”

It was the day after Yom Kippur when Yankel the village thief made an appearance at the house of the rabbi. Yankel was "well-respected" for his prowess in burglary; indeed, although his shady occupation was common knowledge, he had never been caught red-handed throughout his lengthy career. In his hands were two large sacks filled to the brim with stolen goods. Candelabras, jewellery, antiques — you name it, it was there. "Rabbi," Yankel tearfully blurted, "I was so inspired by the services yesterday that I decided to return all these items to their rightful owners. Would you do the honours?"

The delighted rabbi congratulated Yankel on his courageous and upright deed and proceeded to deliver the valuables to their grateful owners. When he returned home, he saw that his office had been ransacked. Gone was all the cash intended for the poor for the holiday of Sukkot.

The rabbi raced to Yankel's home. "How could you do such a thing? What happened to all the remorse and inspiration?!" he roared.

"Rabbi," Yankel responded, "Yom Kippur is Yom Kippur, but business is business..."

The Yom Kippur Torah reading discusses the service of the High Priest in the Temple on this holiest day of the year. The reading begins with the words: "The L-rd spoke to Moses after the death of Aaron's two sons, when they drew near before the L-rd, and they died."

Other religions, all of which are predicated on the pursuit of spirituality, would reward such an act with instant sainthood. What bearing does this prefatory verse have on our personal Yom Kippur service? An examination of the "sin" which led to the premature deaths of Nadab and Abihu will answer this question.

The Tabernacle was inaugurated by a Divine revelation witnessed by the entire nation. The entire nation breathed a collective sigh of relief, as they realized that G-d had in fact wholeheartedly forgiven them for the sin of the Golden Calf. At this historic and hallowed moment, Aaron's two saintly sons were seized by holy ecstasy. Their spiritual high caused them to dash into the Holy of Holies with an incense offering, where their souls overdosed on divinity and slipped away to be absorbed into the Holy Fire which emerged to welcome their pure souls.

While other religions, all of which are predicated on the pursuit of spirituality, would reward such an act with instant sainthood, Judaism looks askance at their deed. Spiritual highs are elating and inspiring, but they are not the reason for which we were created. Rather, we were created to infuse our physical environment with G-dliness, through the seemingly mundane acts of mitzvot. Any spiritual high which does not express itself in subsequent daily life is exhilarating — but virtually pointless.

What an important lesson to bear in mind on Yom Kippur!

"Business is business" cannot simply continue after Yom Kippur. The whole point of this holy day, the day when we are likened to angels, is to bring meaning and holiness to the everyday "business as usual."



## The Blame Game

By Sarah Zadok

Taking responsibility for things isn't always my forte. There are definitely times when I can be very "adult-like" and pull off an impressive measure of self-introspection and responsibility. But there are plenty of times when I throw my hands up, with the deportment of an outraged child, ready to shift the blame to someone else.

Yesterday morning was a prime example and my husband was on the receiving end... poor guy. I had to be at a doctor's appointment at 8:30, but we pressed "snooze" on the alarm clock one too many times and all got up late. We rushed around trying to get kids fed, adults caffeinated, lunches made, hair done, teeth brushed, sandals found and backpacks packed... the usual morning madness, just way short on time.

By the time we got everyone strapped in their car seats and delivered to their classrooms, we were pushing 8:20 and I still had to drop off my husband and get to my appointment. By the time the last kid was dropped off, the stress of the morning reached its crescendo, and I proceeded to lay down my royal flush of emotional cards in my epic battle to win the "blame game" with my husband.

"Why didn't you set the alarm to go off earlier? You know I hate being late... Why is it always my job to pack the lunches? You should be way more supportive!" By the time I screeched up to his office building, my poor husband had been exposed to enough verbal toxins to destroy a whole layer of ozone. But I sped away in a tizzy, feeling completely justified in my attack.

It wasn't until after my appointment (which I made with time to spare) that I started to feel like perhaps I had overdone it in the "my-husband-is-to-blame-for-everything" department. I started to feel really badly for behaving so childishly. So I called his office, and left an urgent message with his secretary. I told her to tell him "*Ain*

*hadavar talui ela bi* (The matter rests entirely with me, the responsibility is all mine)." I knew he would understand what I meant. We had learned that lesson together through the following story...

The Talmud tells a story about a man named Elazar ben Durdaya. Elazar was a man who made a lifestyle of sinning. He was known as the most immoral person of his time, with a particular compulsion towards pleasures of the flesh. One day, while visiting a brothel, a renowned prostitute said to him: "Elazar, you are beyond salvation, there is no World to Come for you." Something about what she said or the way she said it shook Elazar to the core.

He left her chambers full of shame and remorse and fled for the mountains. He was driven by an overwhelming desire to return to a G-dly path, if only G-d would forgive him. He cried out to the mountains and hills and said, "Please, plead my case for me, ask G-d to have mercy on me." But they responded, "We must plead for ourselves." He turned heavenward and cried, "Please, heavens and earth, intercede on my behalf." But they too answered, "We must ask mercy for ourselves." "Sun and moon," he wailed, "please beg for mercy for my soul." They too answered, "We must ask for ourselves." Finally, he gazed at the sky above and begged, "Please, stars and constellations, plead my case for me." Elazar received the same response.

Elazar fell to the ground, his head in his hands and cried from the depths of his soul. After a time he rose and spoke the truest words that had ever crossed his lips, "The matter rests entirely with me, the responsibility is all mine" (*Ain hadavar talui ela bi*). And in that moment his soul left his body. A heavenly voice then rang out and said "Elazar ben Durdaya, your repentance has been accepted, you are worthy of the World to Come."

Elazar was trying to make amends, but he was also trying to shift the blame. Our Sages explain that the mountains and hills in this narrative represent his mother and father (the Hebrew word for mountains being "*harim*" similar to the word "*horim*," parents). When he asked the mountains and hills to intervene, he was really thinking, "It's my parents' fault that I turned out like this. They didn't discipline me enough, they didn't have the time to invest in me, and they spoiled me." But this plea was rejected.

In further defence of his shortcomings, he turned to heaven and earth, both symbols of

the society that he was raised in. "It was the environment I grew up in, my friends, my school... Everybody was doing it. That's why I behaved the way I did. It wasn't my fault." But this defence wasn't answered either.

He tried again, and turned to the sun and moon, both symbols of affluence (Rashi). "It was the glitz and the glam of how I grew up. There was so much emphasis on the material world, I couldn't escape it. It's not my fault, we were rich... Rich kids are raised with a different value system." But again, nothing.

In his last attempt of self-defence, he blamed the cosmos. "It was my '*mazal*,' my destiny to be how I am. If I had been born under a different astrological sign, I would have had a chance." But the heavenly court did not accept this defence either.

Finally after a cathartic cry he found the strength to look inward. He realized that he couldn't shift the blame to anyone else. "It's all my fault," he admitted, "I am the only one truly responsible for my behaviour." And in that moment he merited eternal life.

When I had settled down from my ranting and raving about the morning's stress, I was able to self-reflect. I totally understand Elazar's drive to shift the blame from himself. It's hard to accept things when they don't go the way we hoped. It is even harder to take responsibility for behaving obnoxiously. It's embarrassing and requires major mental and spiritual energy. And it often involves an apology, which requires gargantuan effort if you happen to be in the kind of headspace I was in yesterday morning.

It's hard to accept things when they don't go the way we hoped; but I realized that I was to blame for behaving like a brat. Everything I accused my husband of, I shared *at least* an equal part in. I love my husband and I value him, and I hate feeling disconnected from him. I knew the only way to truly reconnect with him was to take responsibility for my part in the story, just as I expect the same level of accountability from him.

Ultimately, this is what these High Holidays are all about: reconnecting with our Creator who loves us boundlessly. If we are to truly connect with Him, we need to do some serious soul-searching and be accountable for our part in the relationship. He's always ready to accept our apology and re-establish our connection; we just need to be tough enough to take responsibility for our actions.

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## MOSHIACH MATTERS

At the close of Neila, we declare Shema Yisrael and "G-d is the L-rd" - statements that emphasize the oneness of G-d with our material existence. This oneness will be realized as we conclude "Next year in Jerusalem," with the coming of the Redemption. Furthermore, as the Previous Rebbe explained, the intent of that statement is not that we must wait until next year for the Redemption to come. Instead, the Redemption will come immediately and, as a result, next year, we will celebrate the holiday in Jerusalem. (The Rebbe, Yom Kippur eve, 5752)

# INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE



## PLAN AHEAD

*From an audience of the Lubavitcher Rebbe with a group of Jewish students:*

The Ten Days of Teshuva (Repentance) which begin with the two days of Rosh Hashana and continue through their culmination, the Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur, are the ten days of the inauguration of the new year. Between these three solemn days of the year we are given a period of seven days, containing every day of the week; one Sunday, one Monday, and so forth. This complete week, neither more nor less, is given to enable us to atone and repent for any wrong deeds accounted for during the previous year, and to better our way of life in the new year. That we have been given a complete week in which to accomplish this is significant: Spending Sunday of this week as we should, and making the most of the time, serves as a repentance and atonement especially for all the wrong done on all the Sundays of the previous year; the same may be done on the Monday of this week for all the Mondays of the past year, and so on.

However, repentance implies two essential conditions: regret for the past and resolution for the future. Therefore, this seven-day period is also a means of planned preparation for the forthcoming year. On the Sunday of this week we should think in particular of bettering the Sundays of the upcoming new year. This will give us the strength and ability to carry out and fulfil our obligations on the Sundays to come. Likewise, with regard to all the other days of this as regards the forthcoming year.

By considering only ourselves, however, we would deal with just a part of our obligations. As I have emphasized many times in the past, one should not and must not be content with leading a proper Jewish life personally, in one's own home and family. One must recognize and fulfil one's obligation to the environment by influencing others in it to adhere to the Torah and to its precepts. This duty is particularly required of youth, on whom G-d has bestowed an extra measure of natural energy, enabling them to become leaders, particularly among their youth groups, and to inspire others in the ways of our Torah and Torah-true way of life.

I hope and pray that everyone of you will become a leader and source of positive influence in your environment, leading Jews, and Jewish youth in particular, to a true Jewish life, a life of happiness, a life in which its spiritual and material aspects are properly balanced. Such perfect harmony of the spiritual and material can only be found in the Torah and mitzvot, and in the light of the Torah you will lead your colleagues and friends to true happiness.

# A WORD from the Director

*We are now in the midst of the Ten Days of Repentance between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur. During these awesome days we perform many mitzvot and customs whose purpose it to inspire us to understand our frailties as human beings, our reliance upon our Creator for everything, and the need to sincerely regret our previous inappropriate actions and resolve to improve in the future.*

*An interesting story is told about one of these customs.*

*In many synagogues and shuls on the eve of Yom Kippur, plates and containers are put out for various charities. As people enter and leave the synagogue, they drop a few coins into the containers. The larger or busier the shul, the more noise is made by the clanging and jingling of the coins as they are dropped in. And, of course, during these solemn days, more charity than usual is given.*

*In the Baal Shem Tov's shul, there was constant noise from the rattling of coins, so much so that some of the people found their prayers sorely disturbed. One person approached the Baal Shem Tov and asked him if it might not be possible to abandon this disruptive custom.*

*"Heaven forbid," cried the Baal Shem Tov in horror. "It is this very jingling and clanging of the coins that is our deliverance during these awesome days. It confuses the Adversary on High who is spending his time trying to convince the Almighty that we are not worthy of being forgiven."*

*On Yom Kippur, we solemnly intone the ancient words: "Repentance, prayer and charity, annul the harmful decree." It is not only the noise made by the charity, then, as the Baal Shem Tov mentioned, but the actual giving of the charity that is so important. Let us all remember this in these days before Yom Kippur.*

*My best wishes that all of you, dear friends and readers, be sealed for a good and sweet year, and that we all celebrate Yom Kippur together in true joy and happiness in the Holy Temple together with Moshiach.*

*J. I. Gutnick*

1) It is customary to perform the rite of kaparot (symbolic "atonement") on the day preceding Yom Kippur.

2) It is a special Mitzvah to eat well on the day before Yom Kippur. During both afternoon meals of this day it is traditional to start with Challah (the Hamotzie) dipped in honey. Many also have a custom to eat Kreplach on this day. At the final meal neither fish nor beef are eaten, but chicken is allowed.

3) It is customary to request lekach (honey-cake) from the shamash or rabbi after the morning services. Besides the blessing for a sweet year represented by the cake's sweetness, there is another symbolism behind this custom. In the event that it was decreed that we depend on the kindness of others during the upcoming year, we pray that we need ask for nothing more than the honey cake we are receiving.

4) All men are required to immerse in the Mikvah on the day before Yom Kippur.

5) Before the minchah prayer it is customary for all men to receive "lashes." Using a leather strap or belt, one person lightly "whips" (taps) the back of another 39 times. The recipient faces north and kneels while the lashes are being administered, and both the administrator and the recipient recite

the following verse three times: "But He is merciful, He atones iniquity and does not destroy; many times He takes back His wrath and does not arouse all His anger."

6) It is customary to bless one's children after the meal, immediately before the fast. There is no required formula for this blessing, but it is customary to say: "The Lord spoke to Moses saying: Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying: This is how you shall bless the children of Israel, saying to them: 'May the Lord bless you and watch over you. May the Lord cause His countenance to shine on you and favour you. May the Lord raise His countenance towards you and grant you peace. They shall bestow My Name upon the children of Israel, and I will bless them.'"

[For a son:] May G-d make you like Ephraim and Manasseh.

[For a daughter:] May G-d make you like Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah.

7) Just before sunset on the eve of Yom Kippur people who have experienced the loss of a parent light yahrtzeit candles; everyone lights a Neshamah (Soul) Candle.

## CUSTOMS CORNER

# It Happened Once...



Reb Shmuel, a respected scholar and chasid, sat in a corner of the shul swaying in prayer when he walked a peddler. "Oy," sighed the man. "The exile is terrible. Just today I was walking past the Squire's mansion. Suddenly, some one cried out, 'Hey, Jew!' My blood ran cold. Thank G-d, it was only the squire's servant, who wanted to buy a scarf from me. He told me about a Jewish family imprisoned in the squire's dungeon. They owe him rent, and if they don't pay by tomorrow, they'll all be killed. If only I had that money... what a terrible exile."

By the time the man had finished his tale, Reb Shmuel had left the shul; soon he was knocking at the gates of the squire's mansion. "I must speak with His Excellency," he said to the guard. He was allowed to enter and he proceeded to the room where the squire sat. When the squire saw the Jew, he was infuriated: "How dare you! What do you want, Jew?"

"I want to know the debt of that poor, unfortunate family you have imprisoned."

The ruthless landowner's eyes lit up. He smiled slyly and began to calculate: "Well, there's the debt, then there's all the money to feed the whole brood, then there's the penalty payment; there's also the money required to cancel their hanging — it would have provided good entertainment." At the end of his "calculations," Reb Shmuel was faced with an exorbitant sum.

"Somehow G-d will help me raise that sum," Shmuel replied to the squire.

It was getting late. Reb Shmuel went from door to door, telling everyone about the plight of the imprisoned family, and although they were as generous as possible, they themselves were poor. When he had finished his rounds, Reb Shmuel had a pitifully small sum in his hands. "This will never do," he thought to himself. "I must do something else, and fast."

He was walking aimlessly, thinking of his next move, when he looked up and found himself in front of a tavern. The sound of loud, drunken voices emerged from within, and Shmuel was seized with the thought that just perhaps his money was waiting for him inside. As soon as he entered, he was sickened by the smell of liquor and stale smoke. A group of card players looked up, surprised to see a Chasidic Jew in their midst. "What do you want, Jew?" "The lives of an entire family hang in the balance. I must raise a large sum of money" replied Shmuel. "Well, if you can down this beaker of vodka, I just might give you this money," said one of the players as he pointed to a towering stack of gold coins. Reb Shmuel was never much of a drinker, but what choice did he have? He downed the vodka, and true to his word, the card player handed over the money. In quick succession, the other players offered their winnings if he would drink two more huge cups of vodka.

Reb Shmuel's eyes were beginning to cross, but the glimmering piles of coins steadied his resolve. He staggered out with his pockets bulging and stumbled in the direction of the squire's mansion.

The squire couldn't believe his eyes, but he greedily accepted the gold and released the grateful family.

Reb Shmuel could barely put one foot in front of the other; his eyes no longer focused, but, he still remembered the holy day. He managed to get to the shul, where he promptly collapsed in a heap. The worshippers were startled to see Reb Shmuel snoring away, dressed in his weekday clothes which showed evidence of his tavern experience. "What could have come over him?" they wondered.

As the sun dipped below the horizon, a hush descended upon the crowd: the Rebbe entered the room and made his way to his place at the eastern wall. At his signal, the ark was opened, and the *gabbai* began taking out the Torah scrolls in preparation for the *Kol Nidrei* service.

This was the moment that the drunk chose to rise from his slumber, climb the steps to the reading platform, pound on the table, and announce: " *Attah horeissa lodaas!*" [the beginning of *hakkafot* on Simchat Torah]!

The congregation fell into confusion. What was Reb Shmuel doing reciting the words of the Simchat Torah prayers?! Why, didn't he realize that today was Yom Kippur? Suddenly the Rebbe rose and turned toward the congregation: "Leave Reb Shmuel alone. He has far outpaced us. With the great deed he has done today, his atonement is complete, and he is waiting for us at Simchat Torah!"

## THOUGHTS THAT COUNT

A Jew once came to the saintly Rabbi Yisrael of Ruzhin and cried, "Rebbe! I am a very great sinner and I want to repent." "So why don't you repent?" the Rabbi asked him. "I don't know how," he replied. "Where did you learn how to sin?" the Rabbi asked. "First I sinned, and only afterward did I learn that it was a sin," he explained. "In that case, you already know how to proceed," the Rabbi said. "All you have to do is repent. Afterwards you'll see that you did it properly!"

### And Moses went (Deut. 31:1)

"To the house of learning," explains the commentator in the Targum. Before Moses began his address to the Children of Israel he went to verify what he was about to teach. From this we learn that one must never rely on his own memory when deciding a matter of Jewish law; one must always consult the proper sources to make sure that the decision is correct. (Lubavitcher Rebbe)

### CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

#### PARSHAS HAAZINU 8 TISHREI • 26 SEPTEMBER

FRIDAY NIGHT: CANDLE LIGHTING: 6:00 PM  
MINCHA: 6:10 PM  
KABBOLAS SHABBOS: 6:40 PM

SHABBOS MORNING: SHACHRIS: 10:00 AM  
MINCHA: 6:00 PM  
SHABBOS ENDS: 6:58 PM

#### YOM KIPPUR 10 TISHREI • 27-28 SEPTEMBER

SUNDAY 27 EVE OF YOM KIPPUR  
MINCHA: 3:00 PM  
CANDLE LIGHTING/FAST BEGINS: 6:02 PM  
KOL NIDREI: 6:15 PM

MONDAY 28 YOM KIPPUR DAY  
SHACHARIS: 9:00 AM  
YIZKOR: 11:00 AM (APPROX)  
MINCHAH: 4:45 PM  
NEILAH: 6:00 PM  
FAST ENDS: 7:00 PM

WEEKDAYS: SHACHARIS: SUN-FRI: 9:15 AM  
MINCHA: 6:10 PM  
MAARIV: 7:00 PM

#### CANDLE LIGHTING: 25, 27 SEPTEMBER 2009



25th	27th	26th	28th
6:00	6:02	MELBOURNE	6:58
5:55	5:57	ADELAIDE	6:53
5:27	5:28	BRISBANE	6:21
6:25	6:25	DARWIN	7:14
5:25	5:26	GOLD COAST	6:19
5:56	5:57	PERTH	6:52
5:35	5:36	SYDNEY	6:30
5:54	5:56	LAUNCESTON	6:54
5:43	5:45	CANBERRA	6:40
6:01	7:02*	AUCKLAND	6:58
6:01	7:03*	WELLINGTON	7:01

Fast begins and ends at the times given for candle lighting  
\*daylight savings has started at this location

Dedicated to the beloved, revered leader of World Jewry

### The Lubavitcher Rebbe

זצוקלה"ה נב"מ זי"ע

May he succeed in imploring the Almighty to redeem His people speedily in our days.