

In memory of David Yochanan ben Moshe z"l

בס"ד

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# DAF HASHAVUA

## יּוֹם כִּיּוּפּוּר | YOM KIPPUR

### YOM KIPPUR ENDS:

London 7.39pm  
Southend 7.35pm  
Birmingham 7.46pm  
Leeds 7.46pm  
Hull 7.46pm  
Sheffield 7.50pm  
Manchester 7.50pm  
Liverpool 7.53pm  
Cardiff 7.54pm  
Southport 7.56pm  
Edinburgh 7.56pm  
Glasgow 8.01pm  
Dublin 8.04pm  
Jerusalem 7.09pm



*"Like the clay in the  
hand of the potter...  
so we are in Your hand"  
(Selichot)*

# Strategic Planning



**SHIRA  
JACKSON**

United  
Synagogue  
Educator

Have you ever thought to yourself that it feels like Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are the wrong way round? Why do we have the Day of Judgement before we have had the Day of Atonement? Would we not be better off atoning before we are judged?

Imagine that you are the boss of a huge, global company. It was entirely your innovation, your expertise and your funding that built this company from scratch. As such, from the very start, it operated with you as its CEO, COO, CFO and every other acronym one could possibly think of. There is nobody else who understands the objectives and needs of the company like you.

Although it is a huge undertaking, you feel it is extremely important that every single employee, every single client, every single business partner and every customer gets to know you personally. So that you can ensure that they feel adequately supported and can reach their full potential, everyone involved is offered a one-to-

**On this day the liturgy focuses on both the past and the future. We go back and reflect on past mistakes and think about how to rectify them and avoid them in the future.**

one meeting twice a year.

The purpose of the first meeting is to determine if they would like to renew their contract. Its sole aim is to make sure that they would still like a role in your company and that they are still happy to have you as their chief. Without that first meeting, the second meeting would be entirely pointless.

The purpose of the second meeting is strategic planning for the year ahead. During this meeting you review the previous year and highlight what went well, what could have gone better and what in hindsight was a mistake that ought to be avoided going forward. Having done that, you can then discuss the year to come. What does this person hope to achieve, how can they ensure past mistakes will not be repeated,

and what support can you provide them with to ensure they achieve their objectives? Perhaps they need a better health provider or maybe a pay rise? Are there people you could introduce them to who could help them reach their targets?

Rosh Hashanah is the anniversary of the day that God created humanity. He had a clear purpose in mind for every single individual as well as for the world at large. Judgement Day each year is an assessment of whether every individual still wants to be a part of the grand plan.

Once that has been established, we move on to Phase 2, the Day of Atonement. On this day the liturgy focuses on both the past and the future. We go back and reflect on past mistakes and think about how to rectify them and avoid them in the future. It is also an opportunity to plan ahead and think about what we would like to achieve in our personal lives; what we want for our families and wider community as well as the world at large. It is the day we can ask the Number One provider, who loves us and wants us to succeed, to give us anything and everything we want and need. This is our most important strategy meeting of the year – let us make sure we ask for our best year yet.

In loving memory of Harav Yisrael ben Eliyahu z"l



## United Synagogue Daf Hashavua

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# What is the Objective of Yom Kippur?



**RABBI  
NATAN  
FAGLEMAN**

Allerton Hebrew  
Congregation,  
Liverpool

Fasting is not easy. However, abstaining from food has a purpose. It is supposed to orient us away from our physical comforts and help us focus on the core task of Yom Kippur.

What is that task? Shul attendance? Yizkor? Prayer? No. Whilst these are all extremely important, they are not as important as repenting and achieving atonement; they are but a means to this. This is the essence of Yom Kippur, the day when God forgave the Jewish people for the sin of the Golden Calf and the day on which we can achieve our atonement more easily than at any other time of year (Rashi, Devarim 9:18). Everything we do on Yom Kippur, including our prayers and Torah readings, is therefore focused on repentance and being forgiven by God.

People can be scared of the word *Teshuva*, repentance. They might associate it with the notion of being a *Baal Teshuva*, someone who decides to strive for fuller observance of the Torah. If they are not prepared to make a complete lifestyle change, they think they cannot engage with the process of repentance. This is not so!

True forgiveness and atonement



are achievable for us all. The process requires three stages: regret, followed by a verbal confession to God (*Viduy*) and a firm resolve to avoid that transgression in the future.

*Teshuva* can thus be done by every person at their own level of religious observance. The holiest and most righteous of people might repent for the precious few minutes they wasted when they could have been performing a mitzvah, whilst someone of lesser religious commitment might recognise occasions on which they let themselves down, which they now regret. Both of them can engage in the same process of repentance and both can avail themselves of the opportunity to come closer to God through it. Repentance is nothing to be afraid of; it is a gift to be embraced. When we stand before God and repent out of love and appreciation for all that He does for us, God wipes our slate clean and we can move into the

coming year guilt free.

As Rambam (Maimonides, 1135-1204) teaches: "Even if a person denies God's existence throughout his life and repents in his final moments, he merits a portion in the World to Come, as implied by Isaiah 57:19, 'Peace, peace, to the distant and the near, declares God. I will heal him.' Any wicked person, apostate or the like who repents, whether in an open, revealed manner or in private, will be accepted, as further implied by Jeremiah 3:22, 'Return, faithless children!'" (Laws of Repentance 3:11).

It is not easy to make lasting changes. That is why we often come to Yom Kippur with many of the same sins that we did last year! However, if we commit to improving slowly, in ways that are manageable and sustainable, that change can happen. It is a process of growth and self-discovery that we have the special opportunity to engage with on this holy day.

# The Hardest Word



**REBBETZEN  
ALLI  
STURGESSE**

St Albans  
United Synagogue

Sir Elton John wasn't wrong when he sang, "Sorry seems to be the hardest word". Many of us have experienced times when we have upset someone, and the resulting tension can be cut with a knife. Yet, why is it that, when we manage to do so, saying a heartfelt "sorry" can make everything better?

Dr Michael McCullough (et al.) from the National Institute for Healthcare Research in Maryland, USA, conducted a series of scientific studies on the power of apologising. The research demonstrated that an apologetic wrongdoer can help to reset the power balance in a relationship. When someone causes hurt to another person, this gives them an aspect of power over the victim. Then, when the victim receives an apology from their offender, the power balance shifts, and the victim is now in the driving seat to forgive. McCulloch's studies show that the apology of a wrongdoer often arouses empathy in the victim, more quickly resulting in forgiveness, and getting the relationship back on track.

Furthermore, when we apologise to a person we have wronged, something else occurs which is

integral to the growth we want to achieve on Yom Kippur. Rambam (Maimonides, 1138-1204) writes that all *middot*, character traits, have two extremes, and our job is to balance them out so that we reach the middle path (Mishneh Torah, Hilchot De'ot 2:2). The Hebrew word for a character trait, *middah*, means a measure – not too little, not too much. For example, being too lazy can lead to a life of unproductivity, yet being too zealous can lead to a life of stress. Little giving can lead to a life of selfishness; too much giving can turn people into doormats.

However, Rambam goes on to explain that there is one *middah*

**... when I say sorry to someone I have wronged, and truly admit that I was at fault due to a personal weakness, I open the lines of communication between us; I am ready to learn from them how I can become a better person in this relationship.**

you can never have too much of, and that is humility:

*"If a person is only humble, they are not following a good path. Rather, they must be lowly and their spirit very unassuming. This is why the Torah (Bemidbar 12:3) describes Moshe as 'very humble' and not simply 'humble'. Therefore, our Sages taught (Pirkei Avot 4:4): 'Be very, very humble of spirit'" (Mishneh Torah, Hilchot De'ot 2:3).*

To be humble means you recognise and accept your own strengths and weaknesses. Rabbi Noach Weinberg (1930-2009) explained in his exposition of *Pirkei Avot's* "48 ways to wisdom" that true learning can only come from being humble. When I accept that I have weaknesses, I keep my ears open and am ready to learn. This is the road to wisdom which leads to true greatness. Therefore, when I say sorry to someone I have wronged, and truly admit that I was at fault due to a personal weakness, I open the lines of communication between us; I am ready to learn from them how I can become a better person in this relationship.

Yom Kippur is a day on which, through doing *teshuva* with humility, God can wipe our slates clean so we can get our year off to a fresh start. It is also a day on which, through humbling ourselves and admitting where we have wronged others, we can renew and refresh our relationships too.

# YOM KIPPUR

4

chapters  
in the book  
of Jonah

50

years since the  
Yom Kippur War



5

shul  
services

25

-hour fast



1

night and day

10<sup>th</sup>  
day of  
Tishrei

12

the age girls  
start fasting

13

the age boys  
start fasting

10

days of  
repentance  
between  
Rosh  
Hashanah  
and Yom  
Kippur



# THE FESTIVALS IN NUMBERS



The  
United  
Synagogue

# Thoughts for Yizkor

This article is adapted from Rabbi Cohen's "A Yahrzeit Companion", available in full at [www.rabbijeffrey.co.uk/Yahrzeit%20observance.pdf](http://www.rabbijeffrey.co.uk/Yahrzeit%20observance.pdf), which includes profound meditations on the memorial lights kindled for both a yahrzeit and prior to lighting Yom Kippur candles. This year is also the fortieth anniversary of Rabbi Cohen's widely used "Yizkor: A Memorial Booklet", first published whilst he was rabbi of Kenton Synagogue.



**RABBI DR  
JEFFREY  
COHEN**

Emeritus Rabbi of  
Stanmore & Canons  
Park Synagogue

Although the loss of a close relative leaves a void in one's heart that one bears throughout life, Yahrzeit and the recitation of Yizkor bring their memory to the fore so that the heart is especially sensitive and the memory acute.

Yahrzeit and Yizkor are, therefore, times of memory, dedication and resolve.

**Memory** — to recall the happy family memories, the sacrifices our departed made for us, their special qualities, and the love, nurturing and encouragement they gave us.

**Dedication** — to honour their memory and express gratitude for all their love and care, and the values they imparted to us.

**Resolve** — to renew our determination to live up to their expectations, to embody their values and to teach them more positively and vigorously to our children and grandchildren; to attempt to realise their hopes for

us, and to build even further on their sense of mission, commitment and responsibility.

As long ago as 1983, I compiled a booklet entitled *Yizkor: A Memorial Booklet*, with a foreword by the late Chief Rabbi Lord Immanuel Jakobovits, of blessed memory.

It was the first of its kind. For those who are blessed not to have to recite Yizkor, I also included a special prayer for the health and well-being of their parents and family. The booklet was used by many synagogues and today, many produce their own versions.

Let us begin with a question that most of us have pondered, certainly as youngsters, probably in old age, and possibly in between. It is, will we be reunited with our loved ones when we leave this world?

American Jewish Colonel David Marcus, who became the first general in the nascent army of the State of Israel, gave a novel definition of death, which, I believe, also addressed this question: *I am standing on a seashore quayside. A ship at my side spreads her white sails to the morning breeze and starts out for the blue ocean. She*

*is an object of beauty and strength, and I stand and watch her until at length she is only a ribbon of white cloud just where the sea and sky come to mingle with each other.*

*Then, someone at my side says, "There, she's gone!" Gone where? Gone from my side, that is all. She's just as large, in mast and hull and spar, as she was when she left my side, and just as able to bear her load of living freight to the place of her destination. Her diminished size is in me, not in her! And, just at the moment when someone at my side says, "There, she's gone!" there are other voices to take up the glad shout, "Here, she comes!" And that is death.*

We may hope — many will take it for granted — that our departed loved ones will be among those standing on that far-off quayside, awaiting the ship that will bring us that blessed reunion. The person who has faith believes that there is a world beyond the grave, that death is a starlit strip between the companionship of yesterday and the reunions of tomorrow, and that, just as we sometimes breathe a sigh of relief on awakening from a nightmare, so it will be the moment after death.

**The person who has faith believes that there is a world beyond the grave, that death is a starlit strip between the companionship of yesterday and the reunions of tomorrow...**

# Sefer Yona (the Book of Jonah) and a Different Sort of Teshuva



**PNINA  
SAVERY**

Maayan and  
United Synagogue  
Educator

If someone was trying to make amends for having wronged you, they might well say, "I should never have done it", "it was a big mistake" or even the simple words "I'm sorry". These phrases are the basics of forgiveness.

These phrases are surprisingly absent in the story of Yona which we read during Mincha (afternoon prayers) on Yom Kippur. The reluctant prophet runs away from God. He does not wish to carry out the prophetic mission of encouraging the people of Nineveh to repent. Ignoring a Divine command as a prophet is a rather large misdemeanour.

Yona's story is often used as an example of *teshuva* (repentance), yet his own *teshuva* seems rather lacklustre.

When Yona flees from his Divine mission, he boards a ship for Tarshish. A storm envelops the ship, and Yona, when discovered to be the cause of the storm, is thrown overboard. Next, Yona finds himself swallowed by a giant fish. It is only then that we hear Yona addressing God. He prays from the belly of the fish, acknowledging the power of God, who caused this to happen.

However, Yona does not apologise, admit guilt or show any regret for his actions. Certainly, acknowledging God's power forms part of repentance; often our sins

stem from forgetting that God is in charge. At least Yona shows awareness that God is all-powerful. Yet we cannot read this as a complete form of *teshuva*.

In fact, the medieval rabbinic commentator Rashi (1040-1105) quotes an interesting *Midrash* (early rabbinic teaching) that adds to our question. Originally, when the text tells us that Yona was inside the fish, it refers to it as a male fish (Yona 2:1). Then, when Yona begins to pray from inside the fish, it is referred to as a female fish (*ibid.* v.2). Rashi explains that God caused the male fish to spit Yona out and he was then swallowed by a pregnant female fish. It was only at this stage, when Yona experienced significant discomfort, as he was squashed into the pregnant fish's smaller stomach, that he actually started to pray. The fact that he only begins to pray when feeling pain emphasises that this is an insincere form of *teshuva*.

Why then do we read Sefer Yona on Yom Kippur, the day when we are focused on the highest level of *teshuva* that we can possibly accomplish?

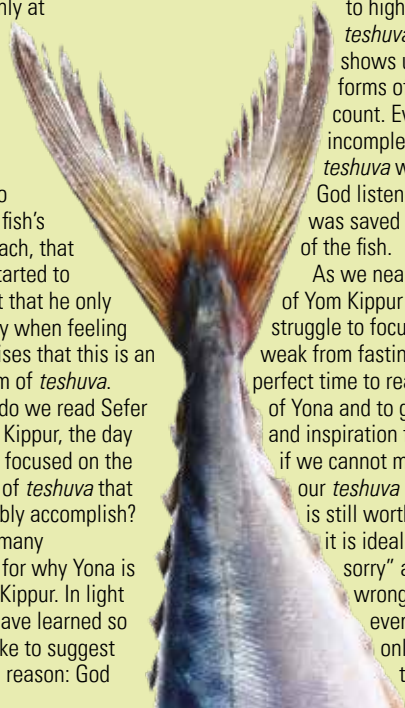
There are many explanations for why Yona is read on Yom Kippur. In light of what we have learned so far, I would like to suggest the following reason: God

**Why then do we read Sefer Yona on Yom Kippur, the day when we are focused on the highest level of *teshuva* that we can possibly accomplish?**

understands human nature. He realises that sincere and complete *teshuva* is extremely hard. So, while we are meant to aspire

to higher levels of *teshuva*, Yona also shows us that lesser forms of *teshuva* also count. Even Yona's incomplete form of *teshuva* was accepted. God listened and Yona was saved from the belly of the fish.

As we near the afternoon of Yom Kippur we might struggle to focus and feel weak from fasting. This is the perfect time to read the story of Yona and to gain strength and inspiration from it. Even if we cannot manage to get our *teshuva* 100% right, it is still worth trying. Whilst it is ideal to say, "I'm sorry" and "I got it wrong", God will even accept it if we only get halfway there.



# Nu!

## A Drasha for Neila



**RABBI LORD  
JONATHAN  
SACKS ZT"l  
(1948-2020)**

There's a little Yiddish word which no dictionary in the world will ever be able to translate. The word is *Nu*. You know it? What does it mean?

I can remember in the old Jewish days of Commercial Road and the East End when two Jewish businessmen used to meet, they could have a whole conversation using no other word.

Do you remember those conversations?

*Nu?*

*Nu.*

*Nu Nu?*

*Nu Nu.*

Which roughly translated means: How's business? Could be worse. And the family? Can't complain. You

could convey all the information you wanted just by the word *Nu*. Which is of course how we got the word news. There were good *Nus*, and there were bad *Nus*. I've just won the pools. *Nu?* The business has just burned down. *Nu-Nu?* *Nu* could mean almost anything, it had so many shades and inflections, which is how Yiddish put the *Nu* into *Nuance*.

*Nu* can sometimes mean *azoi* (not so great). As in that wonderful Jewish proverb: when all else fails... *Nu*... why not read the instructions? But most often *Nu* just means, so tell me, don't get excited, what else is new?

The reason I mention it now is that come Neila I have a terrible dream. I picture heaven at this hour, assuming for a moment that the Almighty speaks Yiddish, and I see the Jewish people coming before God and saying:

Lord of the Universe, we have repented.

*This drasha was delivered approximately 40 years ago by Rabbi Sacks whilst serving as the rabbi at Marble Arch Synagogue (today, the Western Marble Arch Synagogue). Its messages remain relevant today and we thank The Rabbi Sacks Legacy for permission to reproduce it. With minor adaptations, we have preserved the style and content Rabbi Sacks used in preparing this as an oral rather than a written presentation.*

***Teshuva* means that we are resolved to change our lives. And some time between Rosh Hashanah and now, you and I, each in our own way, said to ourselves at some moment: There's something I ought to do differently.**

And God strokes his beard, or whatever is the metaphysical equivalent of a beard and says: *Nu?*

*Nu?* But we have fasted for a whole day, prayed, poured our hearts out?

*Nu?*

*Ribbono shel olam*, Master of the Universe. What do you mean:





*Nu?* Your people Israel have come to tell you that they are deeply and sincerely sorry for any wrongs they have committed and beg for your forgiveness. *Nu?* You did that last year. So, what else is new?

Which is the real question of Neila. We've said in our prayers that this year we're going to be different; this year we're not going to do what we did wrong last year. But we said that last year and look what happened. So, *Nu?*

*Teshuva* means that we are resolved to change our lives. And some time between Rosh Hashanah and now, you and I, each in our own way, said to ourselves at some moment: There's something I ought to do differently. Did you think back to the dreams you had as a child of how you were going to change the world, or make your parents proud of you? What happened to those dreams? Or did you think of how you might salvage a relationship that's gone sour? Somewhere, even if only for a moment, each of us thought of something in ourselves with which we're not completely happy; because there is no-one who is completely happy with the way he or she is unless they've lost all sensitivity.

But what do we do about it? How do we change the way we are? When we're young we say we're not ready to change: we have to enjoy life first. When we're a little older we say: we're too old to change. Somehow, the right moment is never now.

When it came to Neila, the great Chassidic Rebbe, Reb Chaim of Sanz (1793-1876), used to tell this story. He said there was once a poor woman who had nothing. And then a passer-by gave her a newly laid egg. She thought to herself: I could eat the egg. But no. I will wait until it hatches into a chicken. And then I could eat the chicken. But no, I will wait until it lays eggs; and then I won't eat the eggs; I'll wait until they grow into chickens. And then I won't eat the chickens. I'll sell them and buy a cow. But I won't kill the cow: I'll leave it to give milk; and I won't drink the milk, I'll sell it, and I'll keep on and on until I'm the richest woman in Lithuania. And as she thought all these thoughts, she grew excited... and she dropped the egg and it broke.

That's us, said Reb Chaim. We dream on Yom Kippur of what fine Jews we'll become, and we won't stop there, we'll go on and on until we're everything we ever hoped to be. And in the meanwhile, while we're still dreaming, we drop the egg and we're back where we started. The problem isn't the great dreams. The problem is the first beginnings.

Please let us begin with just one more mitzvah. I don't want to say what it should be. Perhaps it should be coming to shul more often; perhaps a decision to be a little more careful of what and where we eat; perhaps we should say to ourselves I'm going to give my child

or grandchild a present of a Hebrew teacher once a week; whatever it is; wherever we are spiritually; the important thing is that we shouldn't finish Yom Kippur exactly the same as were when we began it.

I know the problem. I often say to myself: Jonathan – you're such a *lobbos*, there's so much you do wrong, so many sins you commit, own up, you're never going to be any different. What difference is one extra mitzvah going to make? One mitzvah set against all those failures? And yet the rabbis of the Talmud didn't think so.

How much more so are there single mitzvot which can restore our souls. And none of us know which one that might be.

We can change our lives, so long as we begin with one mitzvah; and so long as we do it now.

One night, tomorrow or the day after, the Almighty is going to ask us, *Nu-Nu?* And the only answer to *Nu* is now. May we have the answer ready for Him. Today: Yes, this I must do. Tomorrow: Yes, this I have already done.

*AviNu malkeNu choneNu ve-aneNu ki ein baNu ma'asim.*

Our Father, our King, be gracious to us and answer us, though we have no worthy deeds; act with us in charity and loving-kindness and save us.

*AviNu malkeNu chottmeNu besefer chayyim tovim.*

Our Father, our King, seal us in the book of good life.

**In loving memory of Yaacov ben Shmuel z"l**



# Asher Cailingold:

## A Century of Modern Jewish History



**RABBI  
BARUCH  
DAVIS**

Daf Hashavua  
Editor-in-Chief

Meet Asher Cailingold, 93, veteran of the Six-Day War of 1967 and the Yom Kippur War of 1973 and who, with his late wife Edna a“h, visited Soviet refuseniks in the 1970s. Asher was a senior social worker for the *aliyah* department of the Jewish Agency, both in Israel and overseas, and introduced major changes in the treatment of PTSD, especially amongst soldiers. All of this was following his and Edna’s *aliyah* in 1957, before which Asher served as Director-General of British Bnei Akiva.

One of Asher’s sisters was Esther Cailingold, who was tragically killed during the War of Independence in the fight for the Old City of Jerusalem. His other sister, Mimi, married Yehuda Avner, former Israeli Ambassador to the UK and Australia.

On a recent visit to Asher, I was intrigued to understand what kind of Anglo-Jewish home produced three children with such a commitment to Judaism and Israel, and to understand the impact of Esther’s death on the family and on Asher himself.

Asher took me back in time to his grandparents’ home in Warsaw in the early years of the twentieth century. They were Karliner Chasidim as well as being among the founders of the Mizrachi



Rabbi Baruch Davis with  
Asher Cailingold

**On a recent visit to Asher, I was intrigued to understand what kind of Anglo-Jewish home produced three children with such a commitment to Judaism and Israel...**

movement. Grandfather Naftali ran a bookstore and he and his wife raised six children in a home “filled with the air of Eretz Yisrael”. In addition to the regular Shabbat *zemirot*, they sang songs about the Land of Israel.

Then came a dramatic turning point: shortly after World War One, Naftali’s oldest son, Moshe, aged 20, saw a Polish soldier attacking a civilian. Just like his namesake, Moshe jumped on the attacker, gave him a good beating – and fled to Britain! Soon afterwards, he married a daughter of the family who hosted him on his very first Shabbat in London.

Moshe’s father, Naftali, felt that they should all leave Poland and put their religious Zionism into practice. They and their five younger children made *aliyah*, as did much of the wider family, and were thus spared the Holocaust. The one sad exception was an uncle who remained behind to manage the family bookstore.

Naftali urged Moshe to remain in London, from where he might be able to support the family in Palestine. But Moshe and his wife raised Esther, Mimi and Asher with the same strong religious and Zionist values. Asher heard songs about Eretz Yisrael in **his** childhood home before he even learned nursery rhymes!

Outside the home, Asher experienced considerable anti-Semitism. He particularly recalled being chased on the streets and viewing a large mural saying, “Jews go home to Palestine”! At

Esther Cailingold a”h



the outbreak of war in 1939, all three children were evacuated to the home of a lovely, childless non-Jewish couple, to whom Asher's sister, Esther, aged 14, explained the laws of Shabbat and Kashrut.

Esther made *aliyah* in 1946. Her letters home, combined with emerging details of the horrors of the Holocaust and a resurgence of anti-Semitism in post-war Britain, all had a profound impact on young Asher. So did the emergence of Bnei Akiva, which gave him pride in being Jewish, rather than the poor self-image many British Jews had of being a minority, unwanted, even a danger to society.

In November 1947, 17-year-old Asher began helping to recruit WWII military veterans who could volunteer their skills in the fledgling Israeli army. When Esther was tragically killed, Asher postponed his own *aliyah* plans, not wishing to leave his parents. Asher married

his beloved Edna in 1955 before making *aliyah* in 1957, where they were welcomed by his large, extended family.

In June 1967, Asher was in an infantry unit, confronting Syrian forces on the Golan Heights. He shared several memories from that time: "Seeing my commander killed, along with 22 soldiers in my battalion, left a very deep impression." "I was in a bunker with a friend. We were called up on Shabbat, but I took my tefillin with me and my friend had his tallit, so we shared both." "I recall arriving home a week after the war, filthy and bedraggled – to the news that my father was critically ill, and so travelled to London, where my father passed away soon afterwards. I remained behind to tie up his affairs, and then brought my mother back with me to Israel, where she lived for several good decades."

Israeli losses sustained in the

1973 Yom Kippur War were far greater, and Asher became involved in counselling soldiers suffering from shock and life-changing injuries. He also found himself counselling bereaved parents and introducing group therapy.

Asher was to face further trauma in his own life with the loss of his oldest son, Avi, aged 41, and then his wife Edna's dementia and subsequent passing in recent years. When I reflected on his extraordinary contributions alongside his own personal traumas, he said that he "tries to keep things in proportion". He is extremely proud of his children and their achievements, and described Edna as a *gibora*, very brave. On the two occasions that they visited the Soviet Union, she memorised all the names and phone numbers of the refuseniks, and the petrol station landmarks. (Asher had to memorise four-hour lectures, which he delivered in Moscow, Leningrad, Odessa and Minsk.)

To conclude our chat, I asked Asher which Yom Kippur stood out for him the most. "1973", he answered, without hesitation. "We were just back from *shlichut* in Philadelphia, with our belongings still in boxes. Edna's parents were visiting from Manchester and were deeply traumatised when the siren sounded at 2pm and we suddenly had to mobilise. I spent weeks in the army, followed by an intense period of 3-4 times a year reserve duty. It was a terrible shock to the country, but a lesson we had to learn", concluded Asher in his characteristic direct way.

In his tenth decade, Asher Cailingold - with his outstanding achievements and deep sorrows - so much embodies the incredible journey our people has been on in recent times. What a rare privilege it is to know such a man.

# 50 Years On Memories from the Yom Kippur War



**RABBI MEIR  
FACHLER**

Former Assistant Rabbi  
and Chazan at Marble  
Arch Synagogue

Two years after I left rural England and the beauty of Letchworth Garden City to attend the Nechalim Yeshiva High School near Petach Tikva in Israel, I was 15 years old and participating in the yeshiva's unbelievably inspiring Yom Kippur services. Suddenly, a car was

seen driving up the main road of the *moshav* (village) where my yeshiva was situated. Nechalim was a religious moshav and the idea of cars driving on Yom Kippur was simply unheard of! We were all in shul, towards the end of the Mussaf service, when the rumour of cars driving in began to spread. They were being driven mostly by fathers on their way to the front, coming to say goodbye to their children who were at the yeshiva. We all knew right then – we were at war!

At some stage, the very loud air-raid siren was sounded, and everybody moved to the air-raid shelter under the dining room, where we recited Tehillim (Psalms) and then continued with Mincha and Neila. As soon as the fast was over, everyone was in a rush to return home. I hitched a ride to the nearby town of Petach Tikva, to my elder brother's apartment. His family was in Jerusalem with my parents for Yom Kippur, while he had stayed in Petach Tikva to lead the services in one of his local synagogues. Upon my arrival, he told me that he was driving to Jerusalem to be with his family and requested that I stay the night in his apartment because his



neighbour needed me to be there; her husband had been called up during the day and she was with two little children.

I remember turning on the television to see the news. I can vividly recall watching, on the only channel that Israel had in those days, first the defence minister, General Moshe Dayan, followed by Prime Minister Golda Meir, valiantly trying to calm everybody down, saying that we were at war, but we were on top of it, we were well prepared and we were pushing the aggressors back. But as I was watching, it was clear, at least from my perspective, that, despite their valiant attempts to calm us down, their body language told another story; as we now know, they were not painting a true picture.

After the news, a most amazing thing happened. Every Motzei Shabbat, there was a special programme called "*Hamavdil*". This Motzei Yom Kippur the programme was no different. It featured a recorded concert by the London School of Jewish Song, otherwise known as Pirchei London, and all of Israel who were glued to their televisions were being cheered up by these young boys from London singing songs like *Ko Amar Hashem*, prancing around the stage with their amazing leader, Yigal Calek!

The following day I hitchhiked to Jerusalem to my family, who were at their apartment in Ramat Eshkol, Jerusalem. I had several friends living in the building, most of whom were new immigrants from English-speaking countries. Young people were being asked to volunteer to paint over car headlights so that the cars would not be seen at night, in the case of enemy bombings.

I will never forget an event that occurred a couple of days later, just before Succot. A whole platoon of armoured cars was on the way

## **Over half of our teaching staff were absent due to reserve duty, and substitute teachers were brought in. We all volunteered to do as much as we could.**

to the Jordan Valley, to guard the Israel/Jordan border. Jordan had not entered the war (and never did). Our apartment was on a major crossroads from Jerusalem towards the Dead Sea area, and they parked all along the road outside our apartment building. Within minutes, everybody in our building had come out with food and invited the soldiers to come in to freshen up and make phone calls to their loved ones. One of the soldiers turned out to be my eldest brother's closest friend!

We were in the early days of the war, unaware of how precarious a position the country was in at the time. We were also unaware of the number of severe losses we were incurring and how close the enemy was to actually taking over large swathes of land of our very young state. Maybe it was just as well. Soon, reports came in of the very successful counterattacks both in Sinai and in the Golan Heights, where we retrieved areas that had been lost, and we were even advancing in the north towards Damascus and in the south towards Cairo. Only then did we realise what an amazing turnaround had taken place.

News was coming in thick and fast of the terrible casualties. Families whom we knew were mourning the

losses of their loved ones.

The war continued, and eventually we returned to the yeshiva. Over half of our teaching staff were absent due to reserve duty, and substitute teachers were brought in. We all volunteered to do as much as we could. I vividly remember taking a short bus ride to some enormous hangars outside Ben Gurion airport where there were maybe a couple of thousand soldiers who had just returned from Egypt. We had volunteered to entertain and to sing to them. We chose a medley of Jewish songs especially from the London School of Jewish Song.

A year later, in the last year of school, I was part of a small group that went to the Golan to lead the Yom Kippur services on the first anniversary of the war. There was an enormous contingent of reserve duty soldiers there, keeping the peace in the Golan Heights. It was a nervous period generally, and it was also the first time that I had led services on Yom Kippur. It was a quick Kol Nidrei, after which we all got into command cars to do routine security checks around the village, making sure that there were no infiltrations. All this, of course, under rabbinic supervision!

Looking back now, for a 15-year-old it was a big and scary adventure. In the aftermath, we all tried to understand how such a thing could happen. The post 1967 euphoria was replaced by a grim realisation that, while it was clear that God was "on our side", allowing belief in His assistance to blind us into a false sense of invincibility was a very dangerous route to take.

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# THE TRIBE WEEKLY

24-25 SEPTEMBER

10 TISHREI

## Are you ready for the high jump?



**RABBI  
ELI  
LEVIN**

South Hampstead  
Synagogue and  
Director of Tribe

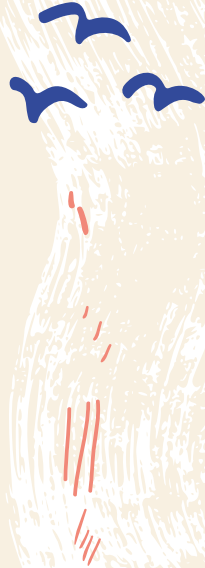
A few months ago, we witnessed the historic coronation of King Charles III and Queen Camilla. There is a legend about the King's grandfather, King George VI who was on the throne from 1936 – 1952.

Berel Gartner arrived in the UK from Germany as a young boy on the Kindertransport and was taken to an orphanage. One day, it was announced that King George would pass through the village and the children would stand on the side of the road to watch the procession go by. As the carriage appeared, Berel leaped over the security barrier and ran towards the King. Guards pulled him back, but seeing the commotion, the King said he wanted to talk to the young boy. Berel said, "Your Majesty, thank you for your kindness in allowing me and thousands of children to come to England, but I miss my parents so much and would be grateful if you could arrange for them to join me." The King replied, "My dear boy, that would be wonderful, but we are in the middle of a war." Yet, sensing Berel's emotion and feeling the weight of his plea, he added, "I will see what I can do." Berel was not sure what would become of this encounter.

Young Berel was surprised that no-one from the orphanage reprimanded

him for his wild act, until a few weeks later he was called into the office. Berel was sure that he would be punished now, but instead, waiting there to greet him, were his parents.

We all have things that we want to achieve and sometimes we need to 'jump over barriers' to get there. The prophet Jonah does not seem to be the best example of this, as he tried to run away from his mission at first. Yet, a very important feature of Jonah, and one of the reasons we read about him on Yom Kippur, is that he achieved it in the end. We should not be put off 'jumping over a barrier', doing everything we reasonably can, even if it does not work the first time. Yom Kippur gives us the chance to try again. What are you hoping to jump over this year?



# YOM KIPPUR

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## Our Window of Opportunity



**BATSHEVA WOLF**

Head of Education,  
Tribe

Let's start with a story. A story set in Lithuania, 1797, where a famous Rabbi, the Vilna Gaon, was nearing the end of his life. The Rabbi had lived a full life, he had impacted many people's lives positively and had really used his days to the max. As his last hours on earth were approaching, he was surrounded by his students. Suddenly, he grabbed his Tzitzit and burst out crying. His students were startled, they hadn't seen their teacher like this before. What were they to say or do? Why was their Rabbi scared of the Afterlife – surely, he knew what great rewards awaited him?! One of the students mustered up the

courage and asked his Rabbi what the matter was. The Vilna Gaon answered him, his voice full of emotion, "All my life on this earth I could buy Tzitzit for a few pennies and earn myself huge rewards in the World to Come. Now that I am entering the World to Come, everything is going to be unchanging. I won't have any more opportunities to do more Mitzvot and earn more reward".

The story of the Vilna Gaon is imprinted in my mind as the most visual example of someone who saw his 'window of opportunity' close.

The Rabbis of the Talmud teach us that between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, all the gates of heaven are open to us: the Gate of Repentance, the Gate of Forgiveness, the Gate of Atonement. God is inviting us in every way possible to look at our lives, analyse where we

are heading and, if necessary, take out a compass and change directions. That is what Yom Kippur is about - asking ourselves, "where am I and should I be heading somewhere else?". God loves us and therefore offers us many 'windows of opportunity'. As the end of Yom Kippur draws near, the last prayer service is called '*Neilah*', which means 'the closing of the gates'; the time is drawing closer that those gates which God opened to us, are closing. Get in there while you can!

Looking at Yom Kippur as a burden, an annoyance, is very common. However, what the Vilna Gaon teaches us, is that deep within something which may seem like a burden, lies a treasure, an opportunity to earn reward and to build a life that is as beautiful as you make it. Let us grab those opportunities and turn this Yom Kippur into our biggest 'window of opportunity'.

## True or False?

1. On Yom Kippur, we wear black because it is such a serious day.
2. There are 5 main *Tefillot* (prayer services) on Yom Kippur.
3. Everyone should fast, even children under 10 years old.
4. During parts of the prayer service, we kneel down, bowing all the way to the floor!
5. During *Birkat Kohanim* (Priestly Blessing), we should not look at the *Kohanim*.
6. At the end of Yom Kippur, there is a custom to go outside to pray to the moon.

1. False. There is a custom to wear white because it is the holiest day of the year and we are like angels, free of sin.
2. True. Can you name them? Kol Nidrei, Shacharit, Mussaf, Mincha, Neilah.
3. False. Some children in the year before their Bar or Bat Mitzvah do try to complete the fast, but there is no obligation for children to do so.
4. True. This happens during the prayer *Aleinu* and the prayers which recall the High Priest's service in the Temple.
5. True. We don't look at their hands, where the blessing is coming through.
6. False. There is indeed a custom to go outside at the end of Yom Kippur and say a blessing called "*Kiddush Levana*", praising God for the new moon. But we never pray to the moon, only ever to God.

## ANSWERS



# THE TRIBE SCRIBE

YOM KIPPUR: STARSTRUCK!

D'YA KNOW WHAT I MISS ABOUT OUR CAMPING TRIP? THE NIGHT SKY! THE SKY WAS SO BLACK, AND STARS TWINKLED SO BRIGHTLY - I'VE NEVER EVER SEEN SO MANY STARS BEFORE! WE LAY OUTSIDE FOR AGES, JUST STARING AT THE ZILLIONS OF SHINING STARS. WE EVEN SAW A SHOOTING STAR!

BACK HOME IN THE CITY THERE ARE HARDLY ANY STARS. WHEN I LOOK UP AT NIGHT, I CAN ONLY SEE A FEW. BUT ON HOLIDAY THERE WERE SO MANY WE COULDN'T COUNT THEM!



WHEN WE CAMPED IN THE COUNTRYSIDE, FAR AWAY FROM LIGHT POLLUTION, THE BLACKNESS ALL AROUND ENABLED US TO SEE LOADS MORE. THE STARS ARE ALWAYS THERE, BUT THE INTERFERENCE OF THE CITY LIGHTS PREVENTS US FROM SEEING THEM.



DAN, YOU DO REALISE THAT THERE ARE THE SAME NUMBER OF STARS HERE IN THE CITY AS IN THE DARK COUNTRYSIDE! IN THE CITY THERE IS SO MUCH LIGHT FROM BUILDINGS, CARS AND LAMPPOSTS THAT WE CAN'T SEE MOST OF THEM.



THAT'S RIGHT! TODAY, YOM KIPPUR, IS LIKE THE STARRY SKY. ALL YEAR LONG WE ARE BUSY WITH ORDINARY, EVERYDAY LIFE. GETTING ON WITH SCHOOL OR WORK, EATING AND DRINKING.

YOM KIPPUR CHECKLIST  
PAUSED

- WORK ✓
- SCHOOL ✓
- EATING ✓
- DRINKING ✓
- DISTRACTIONS ✓



ONCE A YEAR, ON YOM KIPPUR, WE SWITCH OFF ALL THE EVERYDAY STUFF. WE PAUSE WORK AND SCHOOL; WE STOP EATING AND DRINKING. WE TAKE A DAY TO REMOVE OURSELVES FROM THE DISTRACTIONS OF ROUTINE AND THAT ALLOWS US TO SEE HOW BRIGHT WE AND THE PEOPLE AROUND US SHINE.

SWITCHING OFF THE EVERYDAY ASPECT OF OUR LIVES ENABLES US TO FOCUS ON OUR DEEPEST SELVES.



YOM KIPPUR IS ABOUT WHO YOU ARE, HOW YOU ARE, YOUR HEALTH, YOUR SPIRITUALITY, YOUR GOALS AND DREAMS, NOT JUST WHAT YOU HAD FOR LUNCH AND IF YOU MADE IT ON TO THE TEAM.

TAKE A MOMENT TODAY TO NOTICE HOW BRIGHTLY THE PEOPLE AROUND YOU SHINE. TAKE A MOMENT TODAY TO NOTICE HOW BRIGHTLY YOU SHINE. TAKE A MOMENT TODAY TO PRAY THAT YOU LIGHT UP THE YEAR AHEAD! \*6MAR TOV!



\*MAY YOUR GOOD YEAR AHEAD BE SEALED!



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Tribe is the Young People's Department of the United Synagogue: Creating a future for our community through engaging, educating and inspiring the next generation.