

A PARASHA THOUGHT

Singularly Focused

When the Torah describes Yom Kippur (*Vayikra* 23:32), the language the Torah uses is:

"It shall be a Shabbos of complete rest for you, and you shall practice self-denial; on the ninth day of the month at evening, from evening to evening, you shall observe this your Shabbos."

The Torah calls Yom Kippur the double Shabbos (*Shabbos Shabbason*). The *meforshim* explain that the term double Shabbos is coming to point out that on a regular Shabbos we rest from *melacha* (work that is prohibited on Shabbos); however, on Yom Kippur we additionally rest from eating and drinking, which makes it a Shabbos on top of Shabbos. Rav Gedaliah Schorr explains that Shabbos is from the word *בש* (*shav*), to return, where we return to our natural state of closeness to Hashem. Therefore, the language that the Torah uses to describe Yom Kippur, *Shabbos Shabbason*, connotes a much deeper level of return.

Why does not eating Shabbos or Yom Tov meals on Yom Kippur help us to reach this deeper level of return?

The *Mesilas Yesharim* teaches that the *yetzer hara's* (evil inclination) main trick is to keep us super busy so that we don't think about the direction our life is taking. He adds that this is the trick of Pharaoh as well, that he kept the Jewish people super busy so they wouldn't have a chance to think about leaving Egypt. My Rebbe, Rav Nosson Stein, *Shlit"a*, added that we think the *yetzer hara* only keeps us busy doing sins. However, it's not just that; he wants us to keep busy doing *mitzvos* as well, as long as we don't think about or take any inventory of life or where our life is heading. Perhaps for this reason why, on Yom Kippur, we totally abstain from even the *mitzvah* distractions of eating that we have on Shabbos and Yom Tov in order to focus exclusively on the *avodah* (service) of Yom Kippur, to be singularly focused on this goal of connecting to Hashem.

Being that Yom Kippur is a time for focus, here are two practical ideas my Rebbeim shared that we can focus on. If we think about the struggles that we deal with throughout the day, we often attribute them to this struggle we have with the *yetzer hara*. However, our struggles don't come from some big battle of whether the *mitzvah*

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THE RABBI WAS ASKED

THIS WEEK WITH
RABBI YITZCHAK PREIS

Q. *Sefer Yonah* (the Book of Jonah), which we will read on Yom Kippur, describes Yonah's behavior as his boat is threatened by a powerful storm. Yonah "descended to the hold of the boat... ." Why?

A. Malbim offers two approaches:

1) Yonah was concerned that if he would be cast into the sea, Hashem would see to it that he would be washed ashore. Were that to happen, he would once again be subject to the mission he was desperate to evade.

2) Understanding that he was the direct target of Hashem's fury, Yonah wanted to protect others from having to join in his fate. By placing himself in the lowest point of the boat, he would likely be first to die if the boat would start flooding. With his death, Hashem – and the sea – would be "calmed."



The Kollel will be on recess until Tuesday, October 29th

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Interestingly, Malbim notes that the two Hebrew names used to describe this boat reflect on the different “aspects” of boats. The earlier *pesukim* call the boat an “*oniya*” which is a general term for a boat and can easily refer to the upper deck. When Yonah descends to the depths of the boat, it is for the first time called a “*sefina*” – from the root “*safun*”/hidden – indicating that this was the type of boat that had a hold into which one could descend as well. 🤖

Something always bugged you about the upcoming parasha (or last week's)? Ask! Submit a question on the parasha by Monday at noon by emailing parasha@cincykollel.org. Questions will be selected to address at the discretion of the Rabbi who is answering that week. Questions may be edited for brevity/clarity.

A PARASHA THOUGHT

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in front of us is really important; rather, it's generally a bit of a lack of motivation on our part. The *yetzer hara* is often not as big as it may seem. In all likelihood, in many of the areas we struggle with a bit of a can-do attitude will go a long way in being victorious in our struggles, whether with getting out of our bed in the morning or being careful with forbidden speech.

When it comes to making a *kabbalah* (accepting something new) for the future, we should try to focus on an area that will have an effect on something holding us back in our growth. While giving *tzedakah* every day, or saying *Shir Hashirim* on erev Shabbos, are both noble actions, for most of us there are many more pressing areas of our service of Hashem that need to be addressed. Therefore, when thinking about how we will make this year better than last, a *kabbalah* that will

make significant change in our life is where we should be putting the focus. 🤖



PARSHAH RIDDLE- NEW COLUMN!

RABBI MOSHE STEINER

Q. Yom Kippur is referred to as Shabbos (*Vayikra* 16:31). Is there a *neshama yeseira* (expanded *neshama*) on Yom Kippur like there is on Shabbos? What proof can you bring to this? What about when Yom Kippur falls out on Shabbos (like this year)? Would that be different?

A. The *Shulchan Aruch* says in *Orach Chayim* 624:3, “one does not say the benediction over the spices even if it (Yom Kippur) falls on the Sabbath.” The *Mishna Berura* explains that since the reason for *besamim* (spices) was to compensate for the loss of the expanded *neshama*, one does not need *besamim* at *Havdalah* after Yom Kippur. Therefore, says the *Mishnah Berurah*, it is not needed even when Yom Kippur falls out on Shabbos. Since one fasts the entire Shabbos, there is no expanded *neshama*.

However, the *Mishna Berura* quotes others who argue and say when Yom Kippur is also Shabbos you should have *besamim* by *Havdalah*. As a result, the *Mishnah Berurah* rules that one should make a blessing on *besamim* and, since one has pleasure from the smell, it is not a question of a “pointless blessing.”

Rav Moshe Twersky, z”l hy”d, is quoted as saying that on Shabbos, where it is only *meyen olam haboh*, like an *olam haboh* (world to come) experience, that is where *besamim* can help, but Yom Kippur is an actual *olam haboh* day, so then *besamim* would not help us feel better!

Gmar chasima Tovah 🤖