

# TAL Torah Action Life

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9th TISHREI 5776 / 11th October 2016

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Fast starts - 17:59

Fast ends - 19:03

## YOM KIPPUR 5777

## Community Parasha Sheet

**RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL**  
Director, TAL



*do the dead  
outnumber  
the living?*

As of August 2016, the world population was estimated at 7.4 billion. The United Nations estimates it will further increase to 11.2 billion in the year 2100.

A student recently approached me and told me that, "there are more people alive today than ever have lived!"

I was startled at this statement. Could it be true that currently in the world there are more people living on earth now than have ever died since the beginning of creation?

It is true that if you delve back into the mists of time, the population of Earth was tiny in comparison to today and logically it might seem plausible that the living outnumber the dead.

But after researching the matter I saw there were many professors that have since denied this "fact". Wendy Balwin of the Population Reference Bureau in Washington estimated that in the history of mankind there has been 107 billion people. This implies that alive today, we are only 6.55% of the world's historic population.

Whatever the statistic, historically, we live in the most populated world. That means more people, but also more opportunity.

Globalisation has led to the demise of borders and international interaction of people. There has never been a more opportune time.

We are blessed with clean water, spoilt for choice with food, high living standards that

our grandparents only dreamed of and higher life expectancy rates.

Yet we are challenged.

Have you ever been under so much pressure you can't keep up? Just when you arrive home after a long day, placing your bag down at the entrance, you hear a Bing. It's another email from work.

We have had Generations X Y and Z, but this one is the busiest!



This generation is so busy making a living we hardly have time to live!

Life – that is the key word of Yom Kippur.

Zochrenu Lechayim – remember us for life, King who loves life; write us into the book of life, for Your sake, G-d of life.

The entire prayer of Yom Kippur focuses on our beseeching G-d for forgiveness and asking for life.

Little do we know that the answer for life lies squarely in our own court!

It is our choice!

The Rambam famously explains what the message of shofar is.

It's an alarm bell ringing screaming at us to stop and open our eyes. Is this really the

way to spend life –traveling so fast you have no time to enjoy view?

Life is G-d's greatest gift. He grants it to all of us on equal terms - no matter how rich or poor we are, there are still only 24 hours a day seven days a week – and a span of years of life.

The question is how did we spend the last year how are we going to improve?

Many times we mistake the means for the end – focusing on how not why.

The car industry has really improved over the years producing four wheel drive MPV's that can travel the north pole and Sahara desert. Going from 0 to 100 mph in seconds. 150 years ago there were no cars; rather there were plenty of horses and carriages. The average speed of traffic in central London was 10 miles an hour.

Today the average speed in central London in the day is? 8.98mph!

We have gotten carried away with the 'how' and left the 'why' behind.

Life in Judaism means the ability to reflect, recognise your strengths and build a meaningful future.

For us life has a purpose. Our magnificent bodies have been imbued with a spiritual soul from the highest of realms. A person is defined by their soul. It is the soul that oozes emotion and spiritual connection with G-d and it is for that soul that we require life.

Imagine being offered a magical suggestion. You are told that if you agree then simply lie on the grass outside your home for your entire life. All your needs will be provided for - food, clothing, etc. You will never have to work again. Sound good? Or would you perhaps intelligently say, "Thanks but no thanks".

Why? Is this not the ultimate in luxury - the worry-free life



1. Each festival has its own Mishnayos named after it – e.g. Mishnayos Shabbos, Rosh Hashana, Sukka, etc. Why then is the name for the Mishnayos of Yom Kippur called a different name of Yuma?
2. On Erev Yom Kippur there is a special inyan to eat and this is considered as having fasted (Gemora Rosh Hashana 9a-b). Why?
3. Both on Yom Kippur and on Tisha BeAv we fast with five afflictions. What is the difference between them?
4. Why do we blow the shofar at the very end of Yom Kippur?

Answers on Page 3

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the world has been dreaming of?  
The answer is, Yes it is for a cow!  
There can be no better life for a cow, let her lie every day in the pasture and chew the best straw. A person who is emotionally healthy cannot simply lie in pasture all day. Not all "life" is considered by man as a true "life". A person possessed of his full intellect and emotions understands full well that life which is just centred around food and a place to live is not a real life.

In Hebrew the word for life is Chayim. The centre of this word is two Yuds. G-ds written Name begins with a Yud, and G-ds pronounced name (A-don-ai) ends with a Yud.



**RABBI DOV LEVY**  
**KOLLEL**  
**NETZACH YISRAEL**

*The root of all sins*

*"Ki ata solechan leYisrael umochalan leshivte Yeshurun umibal'adecha en lanu melech mochel vesoleyach."*

*For you are the pardoner of Israel and the forgiver of the tribes of Yeshurun and without you we have no forgiver and pardoner. (Yom Kippur prayers)*

At the end of 'Al Het' in each prayer of Yom Kippur we proclaim Hashem as the Pardoner of Israel and the Forgiver of the tribes of Yeshurun. Describing the Jewish people as The Tribes of Yeshurun (Yaakov Avinu) is unique, not used in any other part of the Yom Kippur prayers. What is the significance of this reference? Furthermore why do we repeat the proclamation of

At the centre of our lives must be G-d.  
He is our Creator; He is with us from birth to death and beyond.  
Whilst we will desist at one stage in this world, He Was Is and Always Will Be.  
It is to Him that we answer too on the day of reckoning.  
The two letters on the outside of the word Chayim are Chet and Mem – spelling Cham – warmth. Backwards they spell Moach – brain – centre of our intelligence  
If we are able to implant G-d in the middle of our lives, to make him warmly part of our actions then we have achieved life.  
This Yom Kippur Choose life! Don't let the dead outnumber the living.

Hashem as our forgiver and pardoner – seemingly the same thing in different words? It is well known that the main focus of the service in the Bet Hamikdash on Yom Kippur was to achieve atonement for the sin of the golden calf. Hashem, at the time of the sin, was appeased to agree not to destroy the Jewish people (*Salachti kidvarecha*) but warned that a remnant of this sin would hang over us for all generations. And so Chazal (Sanhedrin 102a) tell us that every generation endures some punishment for the sin of the golden calf. The punishment is realised when we repeat and reconnect to that original sin. It left a remnant of evil in us and each time we sin the worshipping of the golden calf is awakened and invokes a punishment. We can understand it as a primary sin under which all out subsequent sins connect back to.  
The Meshech Chochmah explains that this applies to all subsequent sins between man and Hashem (ben adam laMakom). However there was historically another primary sin, the selling of Yosef by his broth-

Take a stop out of your busy schedule, ask yourself where you are heading in LIFE. Remember that life is full of opportunities and Yom Kippur is one of them.  
Today is the day we are granted the biggest blessing itself – a clean sheet and the ability to create our own lives.  
You are living in the most opportune generation, don't get carried away busying yourself, rather concentrate on yourself and build your bright future.  
May we all be written in the book of LIFE, fulfilling our potential in this world.  
Tizku Leshanim Rabot Tovot Veneimot - Gemar Vechatima Tova

ers, which affects us for all generations in a similar way. Each sin between man and his fellow man (ben adam lachavero) is a subsidiary, an offshoot, of the original catastrophic decision to sell Yosef. Each time we sin against a fellow man we plug in to the power of that original sin and re-enact it in a small way and in turn invoke a punishment for that sin.

On Yom Kippur we attempt to gain atonement for both sins, hoping to free ourselves of the shackles of these two events. We proclaim that Hashem is the Pardoner of Israel – Solechan Leyisrael, in line with Hashem saying '*Salachti Kidvarecha*' after they'd proclaimed so horrendously 'ele elohecha *Yisrael*'. So too He is the Forgiver of the tribes of Yeshurun - Hashem forgives for the sins between man and his fellow man which are rooted in the selling of Yosef by the tribes of Israel.  
May Hashem give us strength and inspiration to free ourselves of these sins, meriting a year of blessing and true devotion to avodat Hashem. Tizku Leshanim Rabot Neimot Vetovot!

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Thankyou, Chag Sameach & Shabbat Shalom





Chasidim are accustomed on Erev Yom Kippur to come to their Rabbi and give some charity as a pidyon nefesh — redemption of the soul. In the city of Berditchev where the famous interceder on behalf of Klal Yisrael, Rabbi Levi Yitzchak, was the Rabbi, this custom was practiced religiously from year to year. Rabbi Levi Yitzchak would prepare a pidyon — prayer — with which he would petition Hashem on behalf of the members of the community. He would list them all by name, and he would beseech that they all be inscribed in the book of life.

One year he clearly stated that he would not allow anyone to be included in the list without paying one ruble per person. There would be no exceptions: young or old, man, woman, or child, all were to pay one ruble.

The people wondered: In today's times when things are tough, expenses are staggering, and income is decreasing, how could the Rabbi demand that a family with ten — twelve children come up with one ruble per person? Nevertheless, everyone knew that if the Rabbi said something, one must not argue. Even if it was necessary to look, search, or borrow, everyone was to bring a ruble to the Rabbi.

The Rabbi sat at his place by the table and greeted all the people happily. A bowl on the

table filled up with money and a list with the name of every Jew in the community was before him. As each person came in and made his payment, the Rabbi checked off the name and wrote it in his pidyon. Suddenly the door opened, and a woman was standing there broken-hearted. She had come with her small child and wanted the Rabbi to know that she was a widow and life was very difficult. All she could come up with was one ruble for the two of them. The Rabbi sternly said, "No. It is not enough. I will not make any exceptions. You must bring me another ruble, for I will soon close the door." The woman left his room crying and begged the people to help her. She gathered a few groshen — pennies — but it did not add up to another ruble. The streets were starting to fill up with people on their way to shul. The Rebbetzin was screaming to the Rabbi to come to eat, as the food was getting cold and soon it would be too late to eat, and the poor widow with her child in hand, ran to the Rabbi in hope that the door was still open.

When she arrived, the door opened and the woman walked in broken hearted. "Rabbi," she said, "I promise you I have searched everywhere, but I cannot put together another ruble." The Rabbi said, "I am sorry. No exceptions. Give me the one ruble that you have, and I will put your name on the list. The child has no sins, so it is not so bad if I do not put his name on the list." The woman broke down in tears. The thought of not being with her child overwhelmed her, and she screamed, "Rabbi, no! You do not feel the pain in the heart of a mother. Listen to me, I am going to give you one ruble; write my child's name on your list, for I have already

lived my life and whatever happens with me is immaterial."

Upon hearing the anguished cry of the mother, Rabbi Levi Yitzchak jumped up from his seat and looked upwards to the heaven and said, "For these words I have been waiting all day. Hashem, hear these words, and You do not need to hear anymore. There is nothing even to think about. You have seen how a mother cares for her child. She is willing to give her life for her child. Hashem, Your people are Your children. I beg you to have pity on them as a mother has pity on a child."

I am not Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev and fortunately BH we are not as impoverished as the mother of the little child in the city of Berditchev, but Yom Kippur approaches, let us learn from this poor mother and give of ourselves, of our time, and of our resources for the sake of our children. Unfortunately, there are many parents who deny their children a proper Jewish education because of the cost of tuition while at the same time they spend on luxuries they can well do without. I can go on and on with examples, but suffice it to say that like that mother of Berditchev, let us put our children on the list, even if it means giving up a little bit of ourselves for their benefit.

Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev evoked heavenly mercy through the anguished cry of a mother on behalf of her child. Let us hope that we too, in merit of our resolutions regarding the benefit of our children, will succeed in beseeching Al-mighty G-d to bestow upon us the very best materially and spiritually in the year to come.



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## Living with Mitzvos

### ANSWERS

1. The Maharsha (to Yuma 2a) brings that Yuma in Aramaic means day expressing that Yom Kippur is a special day of the year. This new name highlights it being spiritually higher than the other festivals.
2. Even though eating and fasting are usually two opposites, however at times they can be complementary. This is when the eating is in order to assist better fasting. By doing so, it can be even considered as fasting itself!
3. The five afflictions on Tisha BeAv come as a sign of mourning. However, on Yom Kippur they come as an atonement as well as raising us to the levels of Angels.
4. This is to remind us of the Yovel year when the shofar would be blown on Yom Kippur and since we do not know which year is the yovel, we therefore do it each year. Another idea is as a sign of victory over the Soton who tries to make us sin and now we have achieved forgiveness for those sins. It also acts as a warning sign to remind us to not sin again in the coming year.

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