

Points to Ponder
Yom Kippur 5775

Vidui – Rav Hershel Schachter Shlita would often quote **Rav Soloveitchik ztl** who noted that Vidui follows an Alef Bet pattern in the same way that Eicha too, follows that pattern. What is the connection? **Rav Schachter** explained that when we sin, the gravity of the Aveiros is so great, we do not know where to begin to rebuild on them. The Churbanos too, are so great we are at a loss as to how to atone for them. The use of the Alef Bet pattern provides us a structure from within which we can begin to rebuild a connection to Hashem and to atone for our misdeeds.

Kol Nidre: The placement of this Tefillah at the start of the Tefillos is most interesting. The **Radziner** Chassidim point out that the Rebbe had a wagon driver, Reb Yonah who once told the Rebbe that the Tefillah Kol Nidre can be interpreted as Kol (a name for Hashem) Nit Drei – Hashem doesn't want us to drei with him and he won't drei us either.

Ki BaYom Hazeh – When Yaakov takes the Berachos, he tells his mother that his brother is an Ish Sayir and he, an Ish Chalak. **Rav Volch Shlita** explains that this is like the bald person who goes to the field with his friend full of hair. When the winds blow all of the leaves and chaff around, it sticks to the one who has hair. The same is true of sin, it sticks to Esav but can peel off Yaakov and his children.

Lifnei Hashem – Rav Yehuda Tzedakah ztl. would note that there are 2 types of Tahara – primary Tahara and complete Tahara. Man often thinks that we will never achieve perfect and complete Tahara. Rav Tzedaka says that this approach is incorrect. If we take the steps so Hashem will help us through the rest of the process. This is what Rabbi Akiva told the people Lifnei Mi Atem Mitaharin U'Mi mitaher Eschem – it is a double process – man begins it but Hashem definitely helps out.

The Avodah – When the **Rambam** discusses the matter in Sefer HaMitzvos, he notes that we are all commanded to do the avodah on Yom Hakippurim – not just the Kohein Gadol. The **Chinuch** notes that it is the mitzvah of the Kohein Gadol. Why does the Rambam attach the mitzvah to the entire Jewish nation? **Rav Asher Weiss Shlita** explains that there are two different rules in the Beis HaMikdash – the Avodah of Yom Kippur (specifically) and the Avodah done on Yom Kippur (which includes daily things done on Yom Kippur too). Technically the daily Avodah is not a requirement on the Kohein Gadol. He performs it but he need not according to the Rambam. Since this is included on the Avodah of the day – the Rambam writes that it is the mitzvah on the entirety of Am Yisrael which is being conducted by the Kohein Gadol in order to achieve Kappara on behalf of the people.

V'Kach Tefillaso Shel Kohein Gadol - Another interpretation to the issue of for whom is the Avodah might be found if we consider the Tefilla of the Kohein Gadol. The Machzor notes a text that the Kohein would ask for a year that we are brought speedily to our land. **The Taz** asks how it is possible to have such a Girsah if the Kohein was doing the Avodah in the Beis HaMikdash ON THE LAND? He answers that the tefillah has been enriched through the years and is a ripe place to add needs of the current time. Moreover, as we note when we say the avodah and fall to the ground – most of us are not in the actual Azara nor would we be allowed to be. Still, at the time of the recitation of the Avodah it is as if we are there ourselves.

Maftir Yonah – Rav Shaul Yisraeli ztl. suggested that one of the reasons for reading Maftir Yonah on Yom Kippur might be the message that everything that happens in the world happens to get us (compared to Yonah) to open our eyes and our mouths on behalf of the world at large. The nations of

the world (According to the Yalkut represented on the boat) all want to cry out to Hashem but only we know how to access him. Therefore the nations ask us why we sleep? – Yonah reminds us to remember it is all for us to take note and achieve our destiny in the world – l'Taken Olam B'Malhus shakai.

And the city of Elokim has been diminished (Selichos of erev erev Yom kippur and of Neilah) – Rav Aharon of Primishlan would note that the Ir Elokim here refers to the Hisorirus of Spiritual matters. (based on the possuk in Shir HaShirim Im Taeeru V'Im Tioriru) In other words, although we tend to be awakened and infused when physical matters are on the agenda – Ir HaElokim mushpeles – the arousing for spiritual matters is diminished. We need to think and wise up to that too.