

## The Prayer of Women on Yom Kippur

Special thanks to Revach L'Neshama for the story

One year, there was an issue at hand for Yom Kippur at the Ponovitch yeshiva. The yeshiva was a popular place to *daven* for the *Yomim Neroim*. This year, the yeshiva just didn't have enough room. Year after year, they made expansions, but this year, it reached its limit.

The members of the yeshiva proposed a plan: "Let's put a *mechitzah* through the women's section, thereby giving more space to the men's side" But this would be decreasing the Ezras Nashim by half.



The question was taken to Rav Shach. "Do you know what kind of women come to shul on Yom Kippur to *daven*?" he asked. "Those that come are made up of widows, women who are alone, and so on. And the prayers of the entire yeshiva ascends to Heaven on the backs of these women."

Based on this, Rav Shach's answer was: "No, you may not put up a *mechitzah*."

### Special Thanks to Menucha Supporters



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## Halacha Challenge

### Blessing the Children on Erev Yom Kippur

All of us are aware of the beautiful minhag to bless children on erev Yom Kippur. This article will deal with a common issue: 'running out of time' to take the sufficient amount of time to bless the children whole heartedly.



On erev Yom Kippur, the Silver family sat down around the table to eat *seudas hamafsekes* (the final meal before Yom Kippur).

At the end of the meal, Mr. Silver thought to himself: "Tomorrow is the fast day. Perhaps I should have a second serving." Mr. Silver put a second serving of chicken and potatoes on his plate.

But then he thought: "Wait. I need to make sure that I have enough time to give the special erev Yom Kippur blessings to my children." He started making a calculation in his mind: "It will take me ten more minutes to eat the second serving, then two minutes for each bracha to each one of my six children, five minutes to say Birkas Hamazon, three minutes to put on kittel and tallis and four minutes to go to shul. I have enough time!"

**Q:** Should Mr. Silver eat the second serving?

### DEDICATIONS

- By **Avi and Adina Landy** in honor of **Isroel Yaakov's** bar mitzva
- In honor of **Joel Padowitz AKA Tati**. From your biggest (and smallest) fans.

Special thanks to kehillas **Beis Tefillah Yonah Avraham**



**Help:** Mr. Silver is right - it is a *mitzva* to eat on *erev* Yom Kippur. In fact, eating on *erev* Yom Kippur is a *mitzva de'oraysa* (a Torah commandment). Consequently, the Shulchan Aruch (OC 604:1) writes: "It is a *mitzva* to eat on *erev* Yom Kippur, and to increase (the quantity / quality of food) during *seuda*."

Having said that, the Shulchan Aruch (OC 608:4) writes the following regarding *seudas hamafsek* (the final meal before Yom Kippur): "On *erev* Yom Kippur, a person should only eat foods which are easy to digest, so that he will not be fully satiated and not feel haughty when he will pray."

**Menucha's Answer\*:** It's better for Mr. Silver to save the second serving for his festive meal on *motzei* Yom Kippur.

**Explanation:** By eating a second serving at *seudas hamafsek*, a person might end up eating a bit too much for that meal. Is that a problem? Yes. As we saw in the teaching of the Shulchan Aruch (see the Help section above), a person should not pray Ma'ariv (and perhaps also Kol Nidrei) of Yom Kippur on a fully satiated stomach.

In addition to that, Mr. Silver made improper calculation by thinking that he just needs to give two minutes to each child to give the blessings. The *erev* Yom Kippur blessing that the father and the mother<sup>(see note 1)</sup> give to their children is very important, because it opens up the spiritual well<sup>(see note 2)</sup> within the children to love Hashem and to be in awe of Him, to have great desire for mitzvos and Torah, and to go in the path of *tzadikim* for the rest of their lives (see Chayei Adam 144:19). Thus, it's critical that this blessing should be said with the entire heart and soul. The Mateh Efraim (one of the central *halachic* works on the laws of Rosh Hashana, Yom Kippur and Succos) writes the following regarding this blessing: כפי מערכי לבו ושינון לשונו שופך תחנונים בבכי ובדמעות - to paraphrase: *based on the ability of his heart and tongue to compose prayer, the father should pour out his heart with crying and tears when he blesses his child on erev Yom Kippur*. Consequently, this requires time to prepare the mind and heart to give a blessing to each child.

**Note 1:** The *minhag* of Klal Yisroel has been that both the father and the mother bless their children on *erev* Yom Kippur (Mateh Efraim 619:2)

**Note 2:** The Elef Lamagen [619:6] explains that the one who blesses another person is not giving him anything new. Rather, he unlocks or widens the spiritual spring that already exists within the recipient of the blessing.

\* Note: Menucha's answer is for Torah learning purposes only and not as a *halachic* ruling.

## Riddles



Reb Leib, was served a festive meal on *erev* Yom Kippur, so that he can fulfill the *mitzva* of eating on *erev* Yom Kippur with *simcha*. At the end of the *seuda*, the dessert was served. What was for dessert? Cookies, cakes, candy, and fruit.

Reb Leib takes care of his health. So he put on his plate a date and a piece of pineapple. He had full intention to eat both of them. Of course, Reb Leib did not forget the rule "*shivas haminim is kodem*" that he learned 9 days ago before eating the *simanim* on Rosh Hashana. Nevertheless, he first made a *bracha* on the pineapple and ate it, and then, he made a *bracha* on the date and ate it. And what he did was correct according to halacha!



*Why is that the correct order in Reb Leib's case?*

## Last week's Riddle

Reb Yehuda knows *halacha* well. Therefore, when he began eating the *simanim* on Rosh Hashana, he pushed away the apple that was in front of him and asked for a date. "A fruit from *Shivas Haminim* is *kodem*!" he explained.

But when he was served a piece of date, he shook his head in disapproval and pointed to a fruit that was on a platter in the middle of the table. "According to *halacha*, I need to have that one," said Reb Yehuda.

*What halacha was Reb Yehuda referring to?*

## Answer

He was referring to the halacha of "*shalem kodem*" (i.e., the *bracha* needs to be said on the fruit that is whole). For more details of this halacha, see the Mishna Berura 211:4). Thus, Reb Yehuda was pointing to a whole date that was on the platter.