

Yom Kippur



RECONNECT

A Message From **SOS** **MOM**

Yom Kippur: Reconnecting With Purpose

Forgiveness and self reflection is a value all parents and moms strive to teach their children, this holiday serves as a great opportunity to teach your kids about forgiveness and growth while connecting to Judaism and each other.

But children and Yom Kippur - not the easiest combination for anyone. The challenge of keeping them interested is almost as hard as explaining WHY this day is so important to children who cannot understand or connect easily with the idea of repentance, forgiveness, and of course, fasting. Hopefully this kit will help you and your family connect to this challenging but very important holiday.

We are pleased to share with you **two pieces** you can read aloud with your family to spark interesting conversations, and **a set of questions** to help you encourage them to share what they think or feel.

Our featured **recipes** are easy for you to make with your kids for a pre-holiday or post-fast meal that can help them consider how food is a part of their holiday experience, and to prepare them for understanding the meaning of fasting even if they do not.

As you gather with your community and family this week, we want to encourage you to connect with your inner spirit - the WHY that works for YOU as a woman, as a mom. To make Yom Kippur meaningful for our children, it has to begin with a seed of inspiration from within each one of us.

Out of respect for Torah and Jewish law, we ask that you do not do any writing activity on Shabbat or Yom Kippur day.

We ask as well that you don't cook on Shabbat, or turn your oven on on Yom Kippur day.

We also ask that you print any article you plan on reading on Yom Kippur before the holiday begins.

We ask the same of any articles you plan to read on Shabbat.

Versions of Silence

Print this article out and have each member of the family read a personal experience.

On this Yom Kippur, experience this Holy Day in Israel through photos and personal stories that were shared with us from around the world.

However you may honor this day, we at Israel Forever hope that it includes an exploration of your personal connection to the one thing in the world that can indeed unite us: Israel, however you may define her.



1

On my first Yom Kippur in Israel since I was about 2 years old, I couldn't help but compare it to what I was used to in America. For my four years of college, I had spent the day praying in the Hillel House at UMass Amherst, trying to block out the sounds of partying college students, trucks driving on the road outside, and focusing on not letting my lack-of-caffeine-headache turn me into a total witch in front of my friends. While last year I still struggled with not becoming a witch with my host family, there was one noticeable difference that I had never before experienced.

There was a shocking silence in Jerusalem that I had never before heard in any city. On this day no cars are started unless a matter of life and death arises. Even for those who do not observe Jewish law join the rest of Israel by "cutting off" from the hectic noise of daily life. Televisions stay off, telephones don't ring (who would dare call on such a day?), computers are given a well-deserved respite from gmail, facebook, google, twitter, and the rest of the social media etcetera etcetera etcetera.... Israelis, children and adults alike, take to the streets and relish the quiet. **And the stillness is startling.**

Those who aren't fasting celebrate a holiday of bicycle riding through the empty streets, some lying smack dab in the middle of what would otherwise be a jam-packed Ayalon highway.

This Day of Repentance, Day of Judgment is transformed in Israel into a Day of Peace and peacefulness. Yom Kippur remains special on some level, even for the secular Jews within the Jewish State. The concepts of soul-searching, calculating your actions good and bad, and asking forgiveness from our friends and family are simply a part of the national culture.

To honor the holiness of this day as a cultural and national essence in addition to its religious meaning, the State of Israel is essentially closed down. There is no public transportation, there are no stores, restaurants, or governmental offices open, no flights in or out of Israel, public or

broadcasts such as radio or the news are canceled unless the country is in a state of emergency. Border crossings to Gaza and Jordan are closed as a preventative action against potential terrorist infiltrators. With a hope for peace, the sounds of prayer and reflection emanate from every corner, as the streets come alive with Jews of every walk of life. Dressed all in white, the religious intermingle with the secular as Jews all over the country use the day to reflect and enjoy the silence that rarely graces us in today's world.

There is a strong common thread among all Israelis on Yom Kippur; a feeling of connecting to others and being part of a community.

The fast ends and normal life resumes at sundown after 25 hours of this blessed peace with a blast of the shofar and the immediate singing of *Next Year in Jerusalem*. And then, the return to the hubub of the daily reality with a glimmer of hope that the People of Israel, and the State of Israel as a whole, has been sealed in the Book of Life.

by Anat Goldberg

2

I ask myself what makes Yom Kippur here in Israel unique compared to those I have known in other places such as in travels to Italy and Ireland and especially my home town of Rochester, New York. The most obvious difference here is that it is not only a religious holiday but it also involves everyone in the country. **Although we may not all be religious to the same degree, there is a common sharing and a tradition in being together...**

Most impressive to me is that the country is **'Quiet'**. I write this in bold print although perhaps it should be in soft script like quiet. In Israel, unlike any other place I have lived, the whole population participates. We become a world without cars and their accompanying horns and brakes. Along with this absence of motor vehicles are the many children and adults readying themselves with their bicycles, scooters and so forth. They await the exact moment to begin their easy riding down the streets.

Walking down the street to the Bet Kneset, I pass the children and their parents and notice that even the houses are quieter than usual. There is no music or TV or loud voices. It is the beginning of a time of peace and quiet. I join with others approaching our small neighborhood Bet Kneset. Men and women and children are walking quietly, dressed in traditional white, carrying their prayer books. Unlike my childhood memories, when fashion was held in high regard on the holidays, here in Israel there seems to be less attention to dress. Styles vary; dresses, skirts and blouses, pants and even jeans are worn. Comfort in apparel in the heat is important here...

Here I feel closer to others, and as we are singing, I have a stronger sense of hope for our country.

by Netta Kaplan

3

Maybe it isn't so clear to Jews or others outside of Israel what happens on Yom Kippur in Israel. Cars stop for the day. They just stop. It looks like a post-apocalypse movie where the oil ran out one night and all we have left are bicycles and roller blades.

There really is no enforceable law against driving, it just isn't done. The police could stop you, but they'd just ask why you were driving, tell you to be careful and let you go. There is no religious police to enforce this kind of thing in Israel as it isn't a religious state...

On Yom Kippur, everything stops. Non-observant Jews and observant Jews alike, just hide the car keys. For sure, if your kid falls off his bike or your wife goes into labor and needs the hospital nobody (from both those communities) would think twice about driving the car to the hospital... The air smells good, the visibility gets better and from sundown to sundown the streets are full of people strolling or cycling along 10 lane highways. People have found a way to organize their lives that for just one day a year, nobody drives except for emergencies. I left my apartment to have a look last year and I saw one pickup truck and 3 policecars moving. Slowly.

So why is being Jewish so different when you're in Israel? Here we can just BE Jewish and the calendar and the customs and norms push us into being culturally Jewish even if we don't want to study the Torah 9 hours a day.

Jews don't want anywhere else, we just want this one tiny little place to feel Jewish in.

by Brian of London, [Being Jewish is easy in Israel even on Yom Kippur](#)

4

A somber day of introspection in most of Israel... With all cars banished from the pavements for 25 hours, helmet-clad children take to the streets in their masses. In contemporary Israel, where land is running out, asphalt is eating up the landscape, the air is thick with smog and gas isn't getting any cheaper, a day like this is an absolute necessity, reminding us all that the car's dominance of our living space is not a divinely-ordained decree, but a conscious decision that we have made - and that we can decide otherwise if we wish."

An unusual quiet pervades the city - no honking, no tires squealing - and suddenly the air is clean. People take to the streets to casually stroll about. Absolutely nothing is open.

The city center, which on most days feels cramped, crowded and stressful, suddenly feels spacious and open. This frenetic metropolis, the country's financial and cultural capital, acquires the feel of a remote village.

Of course, not every day can be like this in the city - people have to work, study and somehow get from place to place. However, the experience of reclaiming the city's public spaces certainly leaves an impression. Perhaps one day Tel Aviv will create a system of transport that makes the city feel like it's Yom Kippur every day...

by Jesse Fox

So as you enter into this unique and special day on our Jewish calendar, think about how lucky we are to have a place where our daily life is in sync with our faith and identity, where Jews of every background and practice feel the peace that emanates from our land, and where we can all accept our misgivings and differences of opinion and say "for this I am grateful."



Biking on the car-free highway, Yom Kippur
photo credit: Ari Miller

Israel, Too, Deserves Our Forgiveness

Yom Kippur. A time to forgive and accept forgiveness.
A time to let go.

I recently came across a powerful list of five ways to let go that got me thinking about forgiveness in a new light. I've shared it below because I think there is great value to having food for thought this time of year (well, any time of year really...)

By now, we have begun to reach out and ask *mehila*, forgiveness from those we may have harmed, either intentionally or unintentionally. We seek out ways to mend what is broken and build bridges when possible. But I wonder:



Can we follow this same prescription when it comes to our relationship with Israel?

Can we forgive Israel for not being perfect?

Can we look at her achievements and be proud, knowing that our nation can and will eternally seek out good and strive to be better?

Will we, can we forgive a world that blindly follows the venomous demonization of our brethren? A world that barely bats an eyelash when our people are under attack, living with an ongoing threat of pain and suffering because of an ideological hatred based on nothing but lies?

Can we forgive our friends, family, colleagues who were and are silent in the face of the continued declarations to destroy our nation state and exile us from our ancestral land?

Can we look at our fellow Jews we may disagree with - left, right, religious, secular, Diaspora, settlers, whomever and wherever - and say "I forgive you as I hope you will forgive me for our differences of opinion or perspectives, our ideas on what is best for Israel."

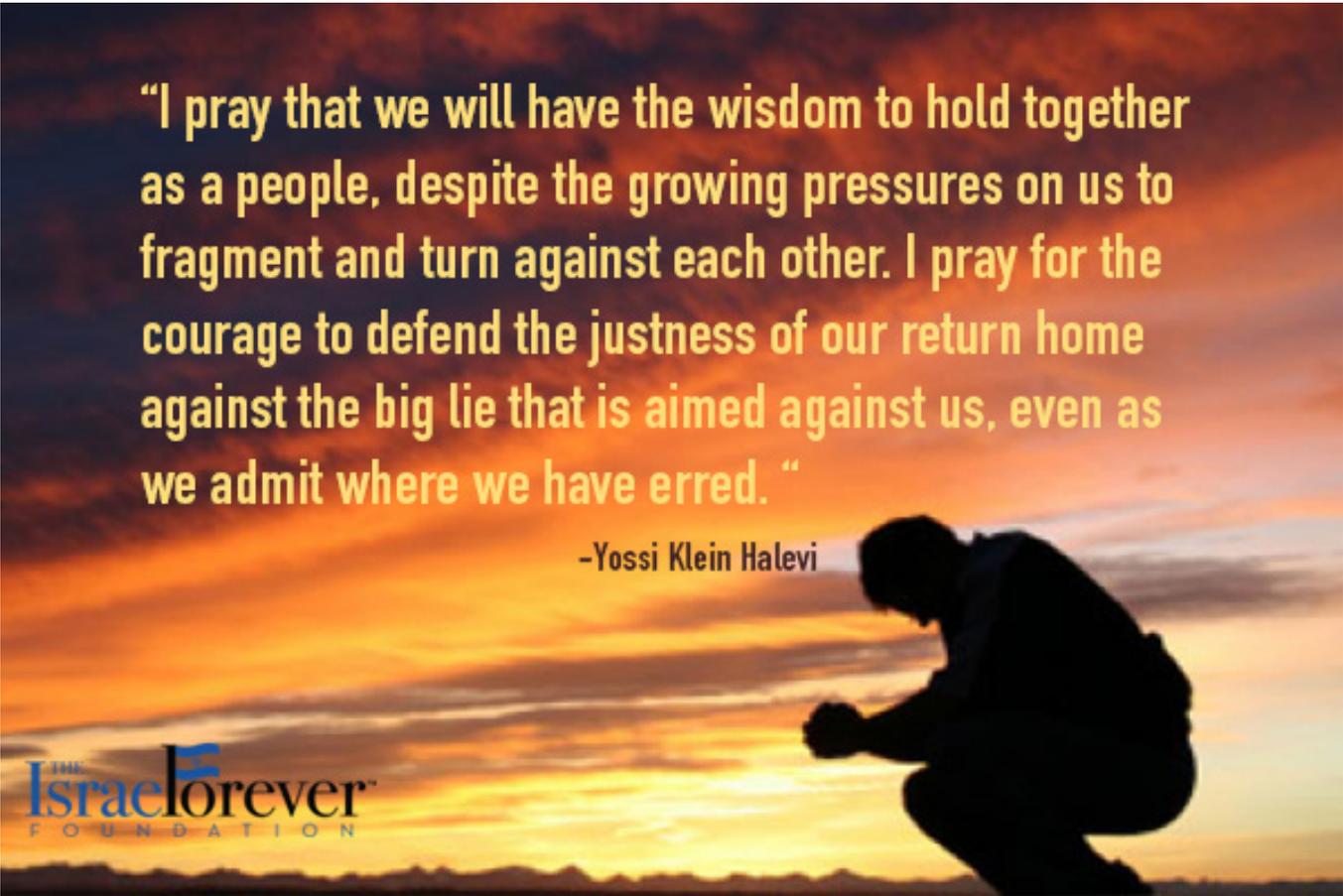
The myriad of articles and polls that try to quantify the relationship with Israel for Diaspora Jews are not giving our people any benefit of the doubt. For, in truth, the relationship between Israel and the Jewish People is unquantifiable. Spanning generations, we must have faith that even with the current divisions facing our people, this, too, we shall overcome. Even with the rise of hatred against our nation, this, too, we shall overcome.

Israel, too, deserves to be inscribed and sealed in the Book of Life.

And our collective commitment is part and parcel of ensuring this for today, tomorrow, and forever.

Our nation is a living, breathing entity - scattered across the globe, yet bound together through faith, history, and hope to the land of our freedom. It is our pride and commitment, our struggle for perfection, our belief in the greater good, that makes us a light among the nations. And Israel is a part of that destiny.

So as we reach toward the Day of Judgment, let us strive to seek out ways we can forgive ourselves, each other, and, yes, Israel - none of us are perfect. No one side is at fault. And we have a collective AND individual obligation to create the peace among our people and in our relationships with Israel just as we pray for peace for all mankind.



“I pray that we will have the wisdom to hold together as a people, despite the growing pressures on us to fragment and turn against each other. I pray for the courage to defend the justness of our return home against the big lie that is aimed against us, even as we admit where we have erred.”

-Yossi Klein Halevi

THE Israel**Forever**
FOUNDATION

FIVE WAYS TO LET GO

- 1. Look in the Mirror.** Recognize that you are a difficult person to live with, that you have your own imperfections and limitations that others have to deal with all the time. Forgive the weaknesses of others the same way you overlook your own mistakes.
- 2. See the Big Picture.** Think of Yom Kippur as a lookout on the top of a mountain that you have been climbing all year. See your days and their moments spread out before you. Be willing to look now at this big picture of your life. Your ultimate goals. Your beliefs. See each person in your life as part of that picture. What lesson have they taught you even if you had to learn it through pain?
- 3. Say Something.** Asking forgiveness doesn't require a long letter or a meticulously planned speech. Often we just need to say something. Anything. I'm sorry. Let's start over. I want to talk. It's that first step that begins to chip away at the buried resentment.
- 4. Break the Cycle.** Sometimes we get into patterns with people that we love that aren't working. Even if you feel that you are 'right,' break out of the cycle. Stop having the same argument over and over again. Have the courage to put blame aside and say: Let's start over. "Insanity is not doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results; insanity is doing the same thing over and over again knowing full well what the results will be." - *Anonymous*
- 5. Forgive Life.** Sometimes we resent others for hard circumstances in our own lives. It is easier to blame people than to face our own disappointments. We need to go one step further. To forgive God for all of our frustrations and challenges. To forgive Him for hiding His Face when we needed Him most. To forgive Him for the times when it seemed like He gave up on us altogether. To now turn around and say thank You. For life. For another chance. For the gift of forgiveness itself. Knock incessantly on the closing gate of Yom Kippur. He wants to forgive us and for us to forgive.

Read [the original post](#) by Sara Debbie Gutfreund

Forgiveness is like a web. It is not a straight line of cause and effect. Remember – you tend not to forgive and forget. Sometimes you seem to be going in circles, as if you have made little progress. But you have. The progress in the world of the spirit is like a good refrain: it repeats over and over again. You heal, you feel anger, you accept, you learn, you forgive, you heal, and then life continues and you are soon called upon to repeat one or more of these steps. But each repetition is not in vain. It's not that you have not learned a lesson, rather, it's that the lessons of the spirit are learned throughout a lifetime, each time going deeper into the truth of it all.

Excerpt from [The Bridge to Forgiveness](#)

ACTIVITY

Shabbat Talks

FORGIVENESS



Jewish tradition demands that every new year, we examine our lives, see where we have gone wrong and how we can do better in the year to come. A major part of this is taking personal responsibility for our mistakes and asking for forgiveness from the people we have offended or hurt.

Interestingly, we must first ask forgiveness from other people before we can on Yom Kippur ask forgiveness from God.

We have a “scheduled” time of the year to deal with issues surrounding forgiveness but this discussion is relevant any time of the year.

LET'S TALK!

1. Why do so many people find it **difficult to ask for forgiveness**?
2. **What do you think about “blanket apologies”** people often make before Yom Kippur: “If I have hurt or offended anyone, please forgive me”?
3. **Different religions have different attitudes towards forgiveness and who can forgive.** In Christianity and Islam the “sinner” can ask God for forgiveness. In Judaism, if offense was towards another person, only that person can forgive. God only forgives trespasses against God, not between people.
 - a. Why do you think that is?
 - b. How does this set of beliefs shape the type of society we live in?
4. Jewish tradition dictates that **we must not hold grudges** against people who have expressed sincere regret and tried to make amends for the hurt they have caused. In such a case it is a religious obligation to forgive. Why do you think that is?

5. In contrast, there is **no obligation to forgive someone who has not taken responsibility for the hurt they caused**, expressed regret and asked for forgiveness from those that were hurt. What do you think is the reason for this?

6. At the same time, **there is no obligation to not forgive**.
If a person caused offense out of utter ignorance or because they are not of sound mind (and thus not responsible for their actions) it is considered an act of grace to forgive.

7. **In Judaism it is possible to ask forgiveness from the dead.**
In funerals one explains to the dead soul that we hope we haven't caused offense in anything that was done to the body in the preparation for the funeral, that everything that was done was in order to take care of the body respectfully.
For personal offenses against the dead there is a ritualistic way to ask forgiveness over the grave. To close a debt to the dead, one gives to the inheritors.
Why do you think so much emphasis is put on conducting a responsible, respectful relationship even with someone who is no longer part of the physical world?

8. Christianity promotes the idea of "turning the other cheek". Judaism does not. Judaism is the religion of justice and thus **accepting abuse is not acceptable but neither is revenge**. It is the Torah that gave the world guidelines for legal mitigation of offenses, for example paying reparations rather than meting out the same kind of injury to the offender (rather than an eye for an eye, leaving two people half-blind, solving the problem by paying for the loss of the eye).
 - a. Can you imagine living in a time when anyone strong enough took revenge on the person that hurt / offended them?
 - b. Can you think of any cultures that still live this way?
 - c. Before the legal system laid out in the Torah it was up to the ruler, to define what justice means. Fairness was not a concept that could exist in a time when justice changed according to the perspective of the strong.
What happens in a world where the concept of justice is fluid rather than defined by laws derived from unchanging values?

9. One of Golda Meir's most famous quotes is: "**We can forgive the Arabs for killing our children. We cannot forgive them for forcing us to kill their children.** We will only have peace with the Arabs when they love their children more than they hate us."
 - a. What does this say about Israeli society?
 - b. Could you forgive someone who kills your loved ones?
 - c. Why did she differentiate between the pain caused by the deaths of Israeli children and the pain caused by being forced to kill Arab children?

ACTIVITY

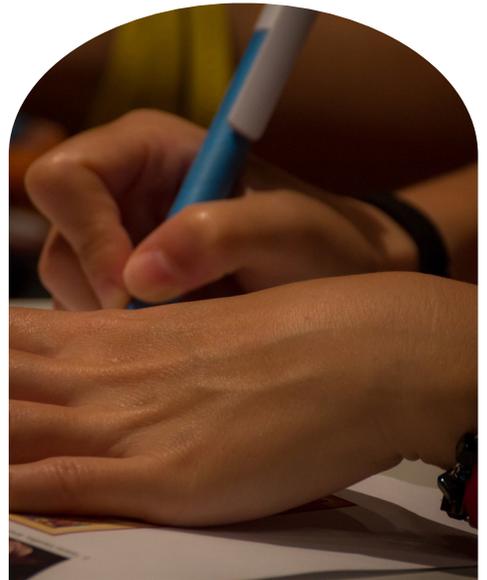
Write A Letter

Write a letter to yourself, or to someone else in your family. Gather the family together, hand out paper and pencils, and have them write a response to any of the following questions:

- Why do I appreciate having a day of forgiveness?
- What would I like to do differently in how I think about Yom Kippur this year?
- How can I be a better, more sensitive person in the coming year?
- How can I be a better friend? Parent? Daughter or son?
- What is something you wish someone else would apologize for? How can you forgive them anyway, even if they haven't apologized?
- What should I apologize for, but just can't find the right words?
- Why should I apologize even if I don't think I am wrong?

Have each person write their letter, and seal it. Save the letters to read again together during the year, perhaps at Passover, or just prior to the next Yom Kippur.

You and your family members will enjoy exchanging these letters, which can be used to spark discussion on things that you have experienced individually or as a family over the past year. Keep them in a scrapbook, which as your kids grow up, can become a precious record. And it will make a touching gift for their children many years later.



To those I may have wronged,
I ask forgiveness.
To those I may have helped,
I wish I did more.
To those I neglected to help,
I ask for understanding.
To those who helped me,
I sincerely thank you so much...

Roasted Cauliflower with Tehina Silan Sauce

INGREDIENTS

- 1 head cauliflower, cut into florets
- Olive oil
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup tehina
- 2 tablespoons silan (date honey) or pomegranate molasses
- ½ tablespoon sumac
- 2 cloves garlic, pressed
- 1 tablespoon fresh parsley, chopped
- 3 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon sesame seeds
- Salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 400°F.
2. Drizzle oil and sprinkle salt over cauliflower florets.
3. Arrange in a single layer on a baking sheet.
4. Roast until golden, about 20 minutes.
5. Lay out on serving dish to cool.
6. While the cauliflower is roasting, combine tahina, silan (or preferred substitute), garlic, sumac, lemon juice, and sesame seeds in a small bowl.
7. Whisk to combine.
8. Drizzle sauce over cauliflower and an extra dash of olive oil.
9. Add the finishing touch of a sprinkle of parsley, salt and pepper.
10. Serve warm or at room temperature.



B'TEAVON AND ENJOY!!

Thanks to my mom, in my family it's become a tradition to eat lentils during the meal before the fast. There is some symbolism to lentils, but primarily we do this because lentils take longer to digest, so you don't feel as hungry over the course of the fast day.

Natalie Yakov Hay, creative manager at Israel Forever

Majadara - Lentils and Bulgur Wheat

from *Paul Nirens of Galileat*

Majadara is a popular dish in Sephardic and other Middle Eastern cultures. The mix of lentils and grain is believed to have its origins in the Biblical story of Jacob, Esau, and the exchange of the birthright for a bowl of lentils.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups brown lentils
- 2 chopped onions
- oil for frying
- 1 cup bulgur wheat
- 1 spoon cumin
- 2 teaspoon salt

DIRECTIONS

1. Fry the onions in oil until very brown, almost black, about half an hour - until it is past the point of caramelization and is almost burnt. This is very important, as it gives a very rich flavor.
2. Add the lentils and 4 cups of hot water. Bring to boil and reduce heat to low. Do not add salt until the lentils have started to soften, about 20 minutes. Add salt and cumin together to the lentils just as they start to soften.
3. Add the bulgur. Very gently mix everything together and continue to cook over low heat for 10 minutes, until all the liquid has been absorbed by the bulgur.
4. Remove from stove and wait another 5 minutes before serving. The bulgur will continue to absorb more liquid.

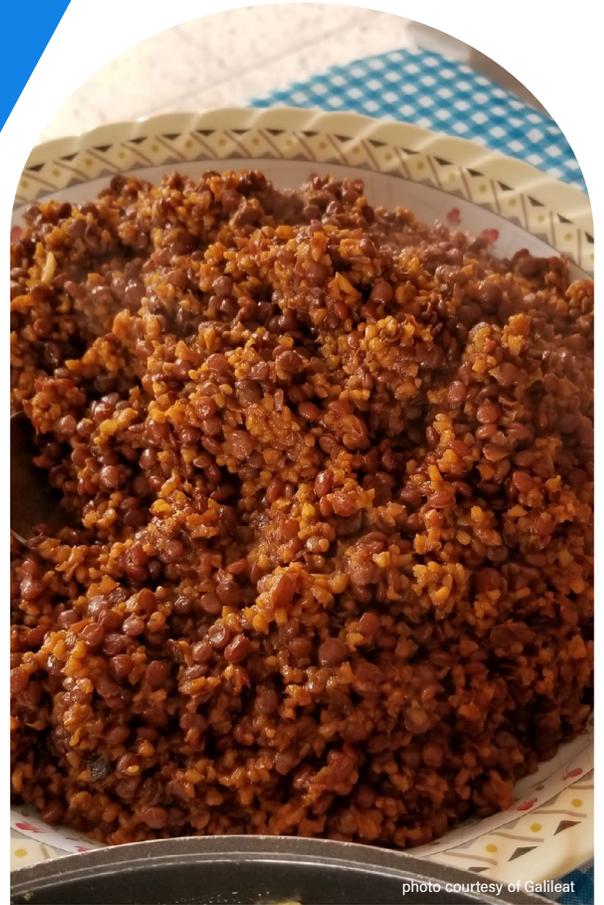


photo courtesy of Galileat

In my family, we eat round foods to break the fast for good luck and to commemorate a new year and new cycle of the Jewish calendar. For this reason we often break our fast on foods like bagels and pizza.

Dafna Horowitz, creator of SOS MOM

Moroccan Reifa Cookies

INGREDIENTS

- ¼ cup of oil
- ¼ cup of water
- 1 tablespoon of anise seeds, washed well
- 1 egg
- zest of half a lemon
- ¼ cup of sugar
- ½ teaspoon of baking powder
- 250 grams of flour

DIRECTIONS

1. Mix oil, water, egg, lemon shavings and anise seeds in a bowl.
2. Add in dry ingredients (sugar, baking powder and flour) gradually until dough forms.
3. Roll out dough until approximately ½ centimeter thick.
4. Cut out cookies to desired shape and make design using fork tines.
5. Preheat the oven to 325°F.
6. Bake for 12-15 min or until golden.



Song Selections

Music touches us emotionally, where words alone can't. The tunes and melodies that we have inherited, some from thousands of years ago, are not known to us all. Written to bring us comfort during these days of awe, these notes have been carried along with our people through each generation, each form and fusion of Jewish identity and lifestyle as it has been developed over the centuries.

Help your kids get into the spirit of Yom Kippur already days in advance by playing some of these powerful tunes.

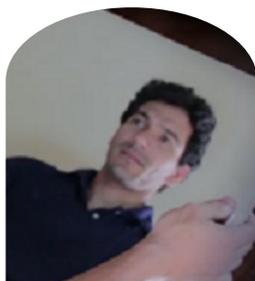


photo courtesy of Sarah Zadok

ISRAEL INSPIRATION: DAYS OF AWE PLAYLIST

"Songs help me try harder and help me feel closer to what matters during these days between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, these Days of Awe."

Sarah Zadok is a Jewish educator, lecturer, and writer, as well as a mother. These are some of the songs that move her the most.



screenshot from Elevate Our Pleas

ELEVATE OUR PLEAS: YA'ALEH TAHANENU

Elevate my voices from the West / And may our righteousness come from the morning / And show us our redemption in the evening.

Asking for Forgiveness. From the Slichot Poems.



screenshot from One Day

ONE DAY, I PRAY, L'CHAYIM

The world will change, won't fear what's right / Without hate and division, only harmony and love. / One Day.

This song shares the hopes and prayers of every Israeli, of every Jew, as we wait for the day when we will no longer be surrounded by hate, forced into wars, and splintered in our unity.



screenshot from Shirat Machar

SHIRAT MACHAR: HEAR MY PRAYER

I will write poetry, and sing my appeal...and I will shed a tear...When I call, "Answer me, God of justice, Hear my prayer."

May this beautiful rendition of an ancient prayer inspire you.



No matter how you express your Judaism, this special time of the year gives us all an opportunity to examine our individual lives, how we can improve our relationships with each other and deepen our connection to Am Yisrael and Eretz Yisrael. These are the values we pass on to the next generation, and these are the tips and tricks that sustain our spirits as Jewish moms. Let us inspire our children today and every day.

Gmar Chatimah Tovah!

May you, your families, and all of Am Yisrael
be sealed for a good year.