

Erev Yom Kippur

Erev Yom Kippur is a festive day which both celebrates the giving of the second Luchot (tablets) on Yom Kippur and looks forward to hopefully receiving Kapparah (atonement) on Yom Kippur.

There are several traditional practices on this day, owing to both its festive nature and the fact that it is the day before Yom Kippur:

1. There is a biblical Mitzvah to consume food on Erev Yom Kippur, especially during the day, in preparation for the fast to express the festive nature of the day.
2. Men traditionally go to the Mikveh as part of a spiritual purification process. The local Mikveh, at 86 Hubinger St is open 9:30 AM-4 PM.
3. Many practice Kapparot, where one designates a proxy, waving it over one's head to carry one's sins away. Given the objections of the Shulchan Aruch, and following the Aruch Hashulchan's compromise, it is advisable to do Kapparot with money rather than chickens. YIHY will be having Kapparot tomorrow morning following Tefillah (around 8:30 AM).
4. It is customary to ask forgiveness from one's friends and colleagues before Yom Kippur, and to be gracious in granting forgiveness to others, as part of the Teshuva process. If we forgive others, hopefully God will forgive us.
5. There is no Tachanun on this day, and only a short Selichot.
6. Based on the Gemara in Yoma, we have an early Mincha on Erev Yom Kippur (at 1:15 PM), including Viduy (confession). The goal is to ensure that we say a Viduy before the meal, because one might experience difficulties doing so after the meal.
7. Prior to the fast is the Seudah Hamafseket (the pre-fast meal), which is meant to be a large and festive meal and to prepare us for Yom Kippur. This will take place at 4:30 PM in the dining hall.
8. One should light candles for Yom Kippur day, with the following two Berachot:

ברוך אתה א-דני א-להינו מלך העולם, אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו להדליק נר של יום הכפורים.

ברוך אתה א-דני א-להינו מלך העולם, שהחיינו וקימנו והגיענו לזמן הזה

Baruch ata Adonai Eloheinu melech ha-olam asher kiddeshanu bemitzvotav vitivanu lehadlik ner shel yom hakippurim

Baruch ata Adonai Eloheinu melech ha-olam she-hechianu ve-kייyemanu ve-higgianu lazeman hazeh

9. There is a positive Biblical commandment to start Yom Kippur a few minutes early (Tosefet Yom Kippur), which is why we will begin Kol Nidre services at 6:15, a bit before sundown.

Yom Kippur

There is a biblical prohibition against consuming food or drink on Yom Kippur. Those who are ill, pregnant, or nursing should consult a Rabbi and doctor in determining their proper practice.

There are an additional four prohibitions for the period of Yom Kippur:

1. Marital relations are prohibited. Additionally, couples traditionally keep *harchakot* at night, and during the day to varying degrees of stringency.
2. Washing: Any washing that is not for basic cleaning purposes (e.g. Netilat Yadayim to the knuckle) is prohibited.
3. Oils and lotions: Use of oils and lotions is prohibited.
4. Wearing leather shoes (but not other leather clothing) is prohibited on Yom Kippur.

A few Halachot relating to Tefillah on Yom Kippur:

1. It is traditional for married men to wear a Kittel on Yom Kippur.
2. Yom Kippur has not only the four prayers of the usual holiday, but Ne'ilah as well, following Mincha, as a last gasp at prayer during the locking (*ne'ilah*) of the doors on Yom Kippur. At Ne'ilah, one petitions God to seal (not write) our judgment for good, and thus one should be aware of the lines in Tefillah that are changed.

Post-Yom Kippur

The fire used to light the Havdalah candle should come from a Ner Sheshavat, a candle that was lit for all of Yom Kippur (like a Yahrzeit candle).

Kiddush Levana is traditionally recited on the night after Yom Kippur. Given the difficulty of the fast, we will allow people to break their fast and shortly thereafter reconvene for Kiddush Levana.

The day after Yom Kippur, in order to get a head start on the new year, we start Shacharit five minutes earlier than usual, so Shacharit on Thursday is at 7:25 am. Following Yom Kippur, there is no Tachanun throughout Tishri.

Many have the practice of going from one Mitzvah-filled holiday to the next, and beginning to build the Sukkah on the day after Yom Kippur.