



A united nation can never be broken, the Yom Kippur Perspective 2020

This week is the 100th episode of the Parsha Perspective. The Gemara in Chagigah (9b) quotes the great elder Hillel that you must study it 101 times to fully understand a concept. So I hope you tune in for the next 101 perspectives and gain as much as I have from the past 100 episodes!

The Yom Kippur Perspective is dedicated in memory of Shlomo Ben Edward. May his soul be uplifted and his memory a blessing.

The Yom Kippur Perspective is in honor of Sasson Betzael ben Batya and Sapir Bas Ariela. May they and all those who need have a quick and speedy recovery.

This week is a notable Shabbos called Shabbos Shuvah, the Shabbos of repentance. Many have a custom to light an extra candle in honor of this special Shabbos. Traditionally, this is a week that the rabbi gives a speech focusing on repentance, prayer, and charity.

We are approaching the holiest time of the year in the most unique set of circumstances, a Yom Kippur during a pandemic. A day that we abstain from physical enjoyment to feel the amazing spirituality that is palpable and unmistakable during this time.

A day that is holiness alone atones for sins against G-d. This holiness can be felt more deeply when we are praying together in unity. But with all the social distancing guidelines in place to save lives, the focus on unity must be at the top of our minds.

There is a powerful idea regarding Vidui, the confession that we say many times during Yom Kippur, that will hopefully give us some perspective.

When we say Vidui, we declare *Ashamnu- we have sinned, Bagadnu-we have betrayed, Gazalnu-we have stolen*, etc. Next, we articulate many different types of sins, “*for the sin which we have committed before You with immorality. For the sin which we have committed before You openly or secretly and so on.*”

However, there is a famous question asked about Vidui. Does a person who has not done one of the specific sins that are written need to say it, or can they just ignore it?

Furthermore, why do we say Ashamnu and Al Chet in a plural way, “*we have sinned, we have betrayed, or for the sin which we have committed before You with immorality*”? Shouldn't these confessions be said in a singular and personal manner?!

The answer to both these questions can be found in one word, unity. Each of us is responsible for every single Jew. So if you did not commit one of the written sins, you still declare that “*we have sinned.*”

Because if even one Jewish person lacks in their relationship with Hashem, we are all lacking in our connection as well. For the Jewish nation is inherently connected; therefore, each of our futures lies in every person's hands.

Even though we will have a socially distant Yom Kippur never like before, prior to saying Vidui this year, reach out to a fellow Jew that you usually would not have. Whether it is through a phone call or just a text message, connect with another Jew. So we can be signed and sealed together with a year of health, happiness, and ultimate redemption!

May we all experience G-d's forgiveness and a year of health, happiness, and prosperity!

Have an easy fast, and meaningful Yom Kippur!

G'mar Chasima Tova!

Rabbi Sholom Yemini