

To fast or not to fast

By Rabbi Gershom Barnard



Fasting on Yom Kippur is one Jewish observance that has the strongest hold on our allegiance. Outsiders are often amazed that we abstain completely from food and drink for more than 24 hours. However, we do it, and most of us would be horrified at the idea of eating on Yom Kippur; fasting on that day is basic to our feeling of being Jewish. Indeed, the Torah says that "whoever does not afflict himself on this day shall be cut off from his people" (Leviticus 23:29).

However, there is another side to the matter. We know that all commandments of the Torah (with three specific exceptions, which do not include Yom Kippur) are set aside in cases of danger to life. This rule is based in part on Leviticus 18:5: "You shall keep My laws and My rules, by the pursuit of which a per-

son shall live: I am the Lord." Our sages commented on the verse: "a person shall live" – and not die" (Yoma 85b), and they inferred from the passage that danger to life overrides observance of Shabbat (and, by extension, most of the other commandments).

If the doctor says that fasting would endanger one's health (not necessarily one's life), then one should eat, even if he feels personally that he would be able to fast. Also, if one does not feel able to fast because of illness, even if the doctor does not confirm that fasting would be dangerous, then, too, he should eat.

Furthermore, it is a general principle of Jewish law that matters of personal safety are

to be considered more seriously than purely religious prohibitions (*hamira sakanta me-issura – Hullin 10a*). Therefore, no one should fast on Yom Kippur if doing so would endanger his or her health, and fasting when one should not do so is just as bad as eating when one should fast. If one has any question in this matter, one should consult one's physician.

If the doctor says that fasting would endanger one's health (not necessarily one's life), then one should eat, even if he feels personally that he would be able to fast. Also, if one does not feel able to fast because of illness, even if the doctor does not confirm that fasting would be dangerous, then, too, he should eat. (*Shulhan Arukh Orach Hayim 618:1*). (All of this applies, of course, to adults. Children do not fast on Yom Kippur. However, as they approach the age of bat/bar mitz-

vah, they should be trained to fast for part of the day.) Rabbi Simkha Weintraub has composed a meditation for those who are unable to fast on Yom Kippur, in order to put the experience into a spiritual framework. See page 3. Since, 1975 Rabbi Barnard has been the spiritual leader of Congregation B'nai Avraham - Northern Hills Synagogue in Cincinnati.

Maintaining Spiritual Fitness

By Rabbi Avroham Litvin

Healthcare providers will readily agree that maintaining good health is due in large measure to having the proper approach to exercise and diet. They also recommend taking an annual physical exam to determine the status of one's health and enable us to address any deficiencies that may be found.

What happens at a physical examination? The doctor will begin by checking your height and weight and then most often will check your blood pressure. After that initial information has been taken, blood will be drawn to test one's cholesterol. The final part of an exam usually involves going up and down on a little staircase and then a stress test on a treadmill is administered.

Most people have a "physical" examination every year, but do most consider taking a "spiritual" examination?

What is our "height"? Of course, we may know our physical height but do we know our spiritual height? Do we walk tall? Are we proud and upright Jews or are we apologetically stooped or bent over by the burden of a spiritual inferiority complex?

What about our "weight" and "cholesterol"? We know what our target weight is and if the scale shows we are too heavy, we may choose to adjust our diet to get things back to where they belong. The same is true with our cholesterol. If our numbers get too high, we can adjust our fat intake or eat foods with more fiber. What about our spiritual diet? Are we on a well-balanced diet of Torah, which will sustain our souls, or do we suffer from spiritual malnutrition?

How is our heart? A Jewish heart does not only pump blood, it pumps love and com-

passion as well. A healthy Jewish heart is happy when others are blessed and feels sad when others are in pain. If we aren't feeling what we should, might we be suffering from spiritually blocked arteries?

Then comes the stress test. Up and down on the stairs. Again and again. How do we handle the ups and downs of life? Do we trust in G-d that everything has a purpose? Or do we become bitter and angry at life's unkind twists of fate.

Finally, the treadmill...Life sometimes seems like a tedious treadmill. We find ourselves continually running but getting nowhere fast. Only faith in G-d can put the many twists and turns of life in their proper perspective to make life truly worth living.

As we begin to prepare ourselves for the High Holidays and to spiritually reconnect with G-d at that time, why not consider a new kind of check-up called a spiritual?

Rabbi Avrohom Litvin is the spiritual leader of Congregation Anshei S'fard in Louisville.

A Prayer for Healing

The following prayer for healing is taken from the Sabbath Prayer Book, published by the Jewish Reconstructionist Foundation in 1946. We have reworded the language to make it gender neutral.

Our God, You are the fountainhead of life, the health and vigor of bodies and minds. From Your wisdom derives the physician's skill to bind up our wounds and to restore our well-being.

Wherefore, like our ancestors before us, we hail You as the Great Physician of all humankind.

Give us wisdom to preserve the endowment of health which You have bestowed on us. May we never forget that our bodies and their faculties are Your gift entrusted to us for Your service.

Help us, O Life of all that live, so to comport ourselves that we may be fitting vessels for Your presence.

But if disease or pain be our allotted portion, then we pray to You, grant us the courage to bar our burdens.

May we, though limited in strength, still find the resources to serve You and our fellow human beings.

May we be untouched by bitterness and despair. May our pain open our hearts to the anguish and distress of others, so that, tested in the crucible of our own trials, we may emerge cleansed and purified in purpose.

We pray to You for the life and health of all of our fellow people. Humankind is bound together in one humanity.

May we perceive then that the ailments of others are our disease and their health our strength.

May we so order the skills and wisdoms of science, and so tend the welfare of one another that all humanity may become resplendent with vigor and joy.

May we see in You the common Healer and Physician of all who are created in Your image.

Amen

And then my father died

By Rabbi Wayne Dosick



This article was originally published in The Forward, Sept. 5, 2003 under the title, "For the Solitary Mourner: A Prayer of Godly Praise."

There, it was dedicated to the memory of my holy father, Hyman Dosick, zt'l on his second yahrzeit. In January 2004 it appeared in the San Diego Jewish Times.

All our Jewish lives, we have been told that when a close relative – parent, sibling, spouse, child – dies, we are to come to the synagogue to recite kaddish.

Kaddish is not a prayer about death, but a doxology, a prayer of praise to God. So, even in our grief, we are to stand up in the midst of our community – a minyan, a quorum of at least 10 Jews – to declare our continuing faith in God and the Divine plan.

Kaddish is no ordinary prayer. Its words and litany, rhyme and rhythm are part of the collective Jewish unconscious. It holds the mystery and the magic of existence that comes from before the beginning and that will ripple until the end of time.

Kaddish is not only a faithful affirmation of God, but also words of condolence spoken directly to God. One of God's children has left this temporal Earthly world, and God, GodSelf, is bereaved. So, in the words of the famed writer of our people, Shmuel Yosef Agnon, as we say kaddish, "we pray for us, and for Him [God]."

And, by coming to recite kaddish, we speak also to the soul of our loved one who has died. We say, "I will miss you, and I will always yearn for you, but in submission and humility, with love and blessing, I release you and give you back to God. I assure myself and you that

there is nothing to fear. Your precious soul will be safe and well in God's holy presence, for with God, all is good. And in case you or I have any doubts, I proclaim and affirm – for you and for me to hear – our ancient truth: 'Magnified and sanctified is the Great Name of God.'"

We come to recite kaddish for 11 months – from the time of the funeral until 1 month before the first yahrzeit, the first anniversary of the death.

Why 11 months and not the full year?

Tradition teaches that in the year following death, our loved one's soul is being judged. Enough good deeds earn eternal reward; too many evil deeds mean eternal punishment. So, we learn that each time we recite kaddish, we are adding to our loved one's "mitzvah points," earning additional merit for one who might be deficient.

Yet, no one could be so evil that it would take a full year of earning more merit to achieve Paradise. Eleven months should be sufficient for even the most needing soul. Thus, we recite kaddish for 11 months, confident that our Earthly assistance has been enough to assure that our loved one will enter eternal Eden.

Still, with all these worthy reasons for reciting kaddish – and even with all the compelling Jewish stories about the gathering of 10, and the waiting for the 10th so that a mourner can say kaddish – the reality is that most modern, liberal Jews do not regularly come to synagogue for the three daily services to recite kaddish, and many do not come even once a week on Shabbas.

My rabbinic colleagues and I have often lamented that the recitation of kaddish with a minyan, which only a generation ago was one of the most widely observed Jewish ritual obligations, has largely fallen – no pun intended – into the graveyard of contemporary indifference.

And, then, my father died. I was deeply committed to the idea of honoring my father through the daily recitation of kaddish. I am, after all, his "kaddish-el," his son, whose duty and blessing it is to say kaddish for him.

Yet, even though I am deeply committed to daily prayer and

meditation, I did not always go to synagogue for the thrice-a-day synagogue services, and I even found myself missing an occasional Shabbas service.

And since I was deeply imprinted with the Jewish mindset that kaddish may be recited only in a minyan, when I did not go to a synagogue to be part of a minyan, I did not say kaddish.

Yet, on the days when I did not recite kaddish, I felt an emptiness and a longing; there was something missing from my mourning.

So, eventually, I gave myself permission to say kaddish alone.

This may seem to be a rather radical departure from Jewish law and custom and, to some, may be in direct opposition to one of the most important reasons for saying kaddish. But this concept is not without precedent in the modern, liberal Jewish world.

When we moved out of the small villages and inner-city neighborhoods where the synagogues were close to our homes, we gave ourselves permission to drive to the synagogue on Shabbat and holidays. Even though traditional Jewish law prohibits riding on Shabbat, we declared it to be a greater good to come to the Synagogue to pray along with our community than to stay home alone.

Here, too, we declare that when circumstance or choice inhibit praying with a minyan, it is a greater good to say kaddish alone, than to not say kaddish at all.

Yet, my solitary, personal kaddish-saying needed a perspective, a context. It needed what our sages call a *haskamah*, an imprimatur, a *kavannah*, a clearly articulated spiritual intention.

So, I composed this Kavannah, this Spiritual Intention, which first asks Heavenly and Angelic Beings to be with me, to make a minyan of both Earth and Heaven.

Then, it speaks words of love and blessing directly to the soul of my beloved deceased, and finally, it speaks to God, bringing my humble yet heartfelt kaddish-words of gratitude and praise.

It is still best to say kaddish in community, for in community there is history and energy, and mutual responsibility, uni-

ty and friendship, and comfort, and love.

But, for those times when circumstance or choice keep you from being with a minyan to recite kaddish, this kavannah can serve as the prologue for saying kaddish by yourself.

This kavannah can also be a very powerful prelude to the recitation of kaddish at the dedication of the gravestone and at the yearly yahrzeit.

As well, it can bring focus and spiritual energy to the collective recitation of kaddish at the four-times-a-year Yiskor services, and every time the community gathers to say kaddish for those who died sanctifying God's holy Name.

I hope that this kavannah may be "the words of your mouth and the meditation of your heart," as you honor those who have gone to the Great Beyond.

With you, I pray that their memories will be an everlasting benediction and a continuing inspiration.

Rabbi Wayne Dosick, Ph.D., is the spiritual guide of The Elijah Minyan, an adjunct professor at the University of San Diego, and the director of The Soul Center for Spiritual Healing. He is the award-winning author of six critically acclaimed books, including "Golden Rules", "Living Judaism", and "Soul Judaism: Dancing with God into a New Era."

Kavannah Before Kaddish

particularly when saying kaddish alone

By Rabbi Wayne Dosick

In the Name of God, Source of All Being:

I call upon the Heavenly Hosts,
who surround the Place of Glory;
And I call upon the Archangels,
who fashion and shape the universe;
And I call upon the Angels,
who serve the Divine will;
And I call upon the Guides and the MasterGuides,
who watch over me and protect me;
And I ask you All:
Be with me now,
and give power to my words.

In the Name of God, Source of All Becoming:

I say to my (choose one or more) holy / revered / beloved /
devoted / sweet father, mother, brother, sister, son, daughter,
husband, wife (name)

In every place and in every space in this great cosmos,
it is known and revealed that you have left your Earthly body
and this physical world.

God has called you home.

I remain everglad and evergrateful for the Divine gift of your life,
and though my heart still yearns for your physical presence,
with love, with honor, and with blessing,

I give you back to God, and release you to eternity.

I celebrate your soul-journey to the Light –

to that awesome place of
revelation and knowing,
of redemption, and salvation,
of peace and harmony,
of grace, and compassion, and infinite love.

I am comforted and enheartened knowing that you dwell
in God's Sheltering Presence,
immersed in God's Holy Spirit.
For, with God,
it is safe, and sweet, and good.

To the Name of God, Source of All Blessing:

I come before You at that most sacred and wondrous place
Where Heaven and Earth touch.

I stand with all those of the Divine

Assembly,

and with all who desire to do holy work,
to speak these words that echo through there, and here, and
everywhere,

through then, and now, and forever;

these words of hope and promise,
transformation, and evolution,
faith and love.

To You, O God,

I speak these ancient and ageless words
of praise and glory,
to Your Great and Holy Name.

Yitgadal v'yitkadash s'may rabbah...

Yizkor — Enduring love

By Rabbi Roy A. Walter



Yizkor as you all know is a time to remember loved ones. Over the years I have read more accounts than I can remember of why Yizkor is observed at the times it is held. Most of them attempt to relate it somehow to the theme of the holiday: We have Yizkor on Yom Kippur because of forgiveness; we have it on Succot because of the harvest; we observe it on Pesach because of the theme of redemption; and on Shavuot again for its connection to harvesting.

But the more I have thought about Yizkor and why it falls when it does, the more I have realized that it probably has nothing to do at all with the theme of the individual holidays. It probably relates to a common theme...the fact that all these holidays are a time for gathering...times we get together as family. What more appropriate occasion for remembering deceased loved ones than when those we are here to remember also sat around the table with us.

Whether we're gathered around the Seder table for Pesach or sitting together in shul all day on Yom Kippur and then breaking fast together, at such times the memories can't help but flood our lives. How can we forget Aunt Sophie's recipe for kugel, even though she's not here to make it, or Uncle Dan's penchant for bad jokes, even though he's not here to tell them! Who could forget Grandpa's stories of the old country, which you attempt to pass on to your children, or the smell in Grandma's house when you walked in her door! We sit together and share the memories that bind us together as a family.

Yizkor is in essence the at-

tempt of Judaism to encourage us to hold on to those memories and share them, talk about them, pass them on to the next generation.

The Seder plate we use at our Seder is an old chipped piece of china. It's not a sleek, modern, contemporary plate with divisions for karpas and maror and egg. It's just an old chipped china plate. But it was my grandmother's grandmother's Seder plate. Even though I never met her and have no idea what she looked like, I think of her every time Pesach comes and the plate comes out.

The candlesticks Linda uses on Shabbat and yontif were her mother's wedding gift to us. Using them reminds us of her; I think what joy she would have seeing how the children have grown, if she were alive sitting at the table with us. I think of how my parents would kvell to see all they have accomplished in

physically but are truly part of every day in some way.

Those are the kinds of things Yizkor is about. The special memories we cherish and share with the next generation – the feeling inside when you think that a loved one would be happy to know you lit a candle for them, because they lit candles for their deceased loved ones.

The plate, the candlesticks, the bracelet, the watch, the memories – all the little things that remind us of the people we love, even though they are no longer there to love in person.

In the final analysis, that's really what Yizkor is all about – enduring love. Love that transcends death and the grave, love that lasts even longer than we do, as we pass that love on to our children and grandchildren. Enduring love, that special divine gift that binds families together through space and time,

The Seder plate we use at our Seder is an old chipped piece of china. It's not a sleek, modern, contemporary plate with divisions for karpas and maror and egg. It's just an old chipped china plate. But it was my grandmother's grandmother's Seder plate. Even though I never met her and have no idea what she looked like, I think of her every time Pesach comes and the plate comes out.

the years since their death. Yizkor time is family time, so family is vividly alive in my mind at yontif.

Each Yizkor, when we light a Yahrtzeit light, I think of all those whose lives were entwined with mine. Some are still part; some are no longer here to share life with me

around the world and down through the generations.

And what better time to celebrate that enduring love than when families are together, creating the memories that will be shared in future generations. Thus Yizkor on Pesach, and Shavuot and Sukkot and Yom Kippur, be-

Meditation before Yom Kippur for one who cannot fast

Rabbi Simkha Y. Weintraub,
LMSW © 2005/5765

Ribbono shel Olam / Master of the Universe;
Creator of All, Source of All Life,
Who Knows What Is Deep in Human Hearts,
Who Nurtures Every Living Being:

As You know, dear God,
Yom Kippur is fast approaching, and because of my condition,
I am not able to keep the traditional fast;
I cannot abstain totally from eating.

On this Day of Atonement, this Sabbath of Sabbaths,
this year and every year,
it is so central to join the people of Israel
in denying ourselves food and drink for one day
so that we focus on correcting our misdeeds,
on knowing our mortality,
on reaching for a life of Torah, *mitzvot*, and lovingkindness,
on You.

You know, dear God, that it is not my intent
to be apart from our people and our tradition.
My current state of health makes it unsuitable for me to fast

So, dear God, I turn to You now in sincerity and openness:
Help me in the coming year to do my best in guarding my health.
Help us, Your children, learn how to protect our bodies from harm.
Help us support others in caring for their *tzelem Elokim*,
their Image of God.
Teach us to help one another grow and thrive in Body, Mind,
and Spirit.

And if there is an opportunity for me to help others who suffer
by doing something they need or by being attentive company,
Grant me the ability to do this mitzvah with love and devotion.

Rofeh khol basar / Healer of all living creatures:
I thank You for the breath that is in me,
for the community of Israel that lives,
for the possibilities of today and tomorrow.

May my eating be as a fast;
May it be dedicated to You, to *T'shuvah*,
to the Renewal and Restoration of my Relationship
to You, to Others, and to Myself.

To access other Jewish spiritual resources visit the National Center
for Jewish Healing at <http://www.ncjh.org/>.

cause those are times when we are gathered together as families.

And why a service? Why not just let the memories flow around the table? Because we are so busy creating and sharing that we often forget to give thanks, to appreciate what we have. You see, Yizkor is a time not only to remember, but to give thanks to God for those who created the memories for us, whose love created us.

May this Yizkor be a powerful remembering for you. And may it be a time of thanksgiving for having in your life the people you love – those who are with you in person and those who are with you in memory. *Zichro-nam livracha* – may they all be with you as an abiding blessing. Amen.

Rabbi Walter has been the senior rabbi of Congregation Emanu El in Houston since 1978. This is from their May 2007 bulletin.

A Bedtime Meditation/Prayer

By Rabbi Michael Lerner

Every day I pray for peace, an end to the war in Iraq, reconciliation and peace between Israel and Palestine, an end to the occupation of Tibet by China, and an end to the genocide in Darfur. I spend my time trying to build a movement of spiritual progressives to contribute to this effort.

But sometimes, when I am about to go to sleep, I am filled with the troubles of the day. I worry that people who told me that they agreed with what they were reading in *Tikkun* or hearing me say in the Network of Spiritual Progressives (NSP) or in reading my book *The Left Hand of God* have not followed through financially to support our efforts to help spread our ideas.

Or they haven't followed through with time and energy that we so badly need – they tell me "keep up the good work, Michael," but they don't actually join me. Or I remember the terrible things being done by our government or the pain of so many on this planet who do not have enough food to eat because of the global economic system we've created and sustained. Or I remember the ways that our environment is being systematically destroyed.

And sometimes people intentionally try to hurt me or put me down, or hurt others whom I love, or our movement of spiritual progressives. All that sometimes makes me upset, angry or just filled with agitation. And then I remember the ways that I myself have not been the fullest embodiment of my own ideals, the ways I've been insensitive, or unnecessarily judgmental, or in other ways just didn't fully be the kind of spiritual leader I want to be. I know I have to forgive others and ask that they forgive me.

So I say the following prayer/meditation, based on the writings of the Jewish spiritual tradition and the wisdom of my teacher Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi and the wisdom of many other traditions as well. I invite you to try this for a week or two, and I think you'll find that it contributes to a more restful sleep and a more tranquil soul ready to engage in the necessary struggles and op-

portunities to build a world of love in the coming years. You don't have to believe in God or religion to use this meditation. Feel free to circulate it, post it, reprint it or even claim you wrote it (no private property

in ideas) or use it in whatever way it can help you or others.

Many blessings, Rabbi Michael Lerner, Editor, Tikkun, Chair, The Network of Spiritual Progressives (www.spiritualprogressives.org), RabbiLerner@tikkun.org

Bedtime Prayer of Forgiveness

YOU, my ETERNAL FRIEND, WITNESS now that I forgive anyone who hurt or upset me or who offended me – damaging my body, my property, my reputation or people that I love; whether by accident or purposely; with words, deeds, thoughts or attitudes.

I forgive every person who has hurt or upset me. May no one be punished because of me. May no one suffer from karmic consequences for hurting or upsetting me.

Help me, Eternal Friend, to keep from offending You and others. Help me to be thoughtful and not commit outrage by doing what is evil in Your eyes.

Whatever sins I have committed, blot out, please, in Your abundant kindness, and spare me suffering or harmful illnesses.

Help me become aware of the ways I may have unintentionally or intentionally hurt others, and please give me guidance and strength to rectify those hurts and to develop the sensitivity to not continue acting in a hurtful way. Let me forgive others, let me forgive myself, but also let me change in ways that make it easy for me to avoid paths of hurtfulness to others.

I seek peace; let me BE peace. I seek justice; let me be just. I seek a world of kindness; let me be kind. I seek a world of generosity; let me be generous with all that I have. I seek a world of sharing; let me share all that I have. I seek a world of giving; let me be giving to all around me. I seek a world of love; let me be loving beyond all reason, beyond all normal expectation, beyond all societal frameworks that tell me how much love is "normal," beyond all fear that giving too much love will leave me with too little. And let me be open and sensitive to all the love that is already coming to me, the love of people I know, the love of people who do join and work with me in my projects to heal and transform the world, the love that is part of the human condition, the accumulated love of past generations that flows through and is embodied in the language, music, recipes, technology, literature, religions, agriculture, and family heritages that have been passed on to me and to us. Let me pass that love on to the next generations in an even fuller and more explicit way.

Source of goodness and love in the universe, let me be alive to all the goodness that surrounds me. And let that awareness of the goodness and love of the universe be my shield and protector. And with that awareness, let me be energized to more fully contribute with my heart, my full dedication of time and money and energy, and my mind and soul, to the task of tikkun, healing the world, and finding the best ways that I can personally do that.

Hear the words of my mouth and may the meditations of my heart find acceptance before You, Eternal Friend, who protects and frees me.

Amen.

Bikkur cholim

Doing difficult mitzvot

Among the many mitzvot that we may be called upon to do, being a "friendly greeter" at Shabbat or Holiday Services is one of the easiest. While it is gratifying and not very difficult for the performer of the mitzvah, it is definitely important and meaningful to those who enter our doors – to be greeted and welcomed in this warm and friendly manner. Thus, both members and strangers can feel they've come to a place where they belong and are welcome. To those members who so willingly agree to be friendly greeters, we thank you for your hospitable gesture. Todah rabah!

There is another type of mitzvah that is required of us and is not so easy to do. It is called bikkur cholim, which means visiting those who are ill. Bikkur cholim is a positive commandment from the words of the rabbis (not directly spelled out in the Torah) – coming under the category of "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," (Leviticus 19:18).

Bikkur cholim is not simply a nice thing to do; it is a mitzvah of the highest caliber, considered the practice of *gemilut chasadim*, performing deeds of loving kindness. By doing an action that especially involves the human qualities of compassion and kindness, we are following in God's ways.

When a person is ill and in need of medical attention,

the help of others may also be needed. Emotional and spiritual support may be as vital as physical sustenance, perhaps even more so when the illness is severe.

When visiting someone who is ill, it may be difficult to talk, to think of the right thing to say. But verbal chit-chat may not be necessary; what you say to the patient is less significant than your presence. Just being there lets him or her know that you care. Our obligation is to care for each other, so that we are not left needy, lonely and isolated. The bikkur cholim visit should be intelligent, in terms of listening to the patient's need and being sensitive to the conditions, and knowing when to end the visit.

Healing is both physical and spiritual (a cure of both body and soul). Tangible acts on behalf of the patient including tzedakah for their well-being, and prayer such as a *Mi Sheberach* by the community, may lessen the sense of loneliness while ill and help the patient feel connected and remember a sense of being.

Some people have the notion that visiting the sick is the job of the clergy. But in Judaism we learn that bikkur cholim is everybody's mitzvah.

From the July 2005 bulletin of Congregation B'nai Tzedek, Fountain Valley, Calif., where Stephen J. Einstein and his daughter Rebecca Yael Schorr are rabbis.

Laughter is the best medicine

Stay safe in the world today – go to Shul

1. Avoid riding in automobiles because they are responsible for 20 percent of all fatal accidents.
2. Do not stay at home because 17 percent of all accidents occur in the home. (That's 37 percent already.)
3. Avoid walking on streets or sidewalks because 14 percent of all accidents occur to pedestrians. (Now that's 51 percent.)
4. Avoid traveling by air, rail, or water because 16 percent of all accidents involve these forms of transportation. (That's 67 percent.)
5. Of the remaining 33 percent, 32 percent of all deaths occur in hospitals. Above all else avoid hospitals.

You will be pleased to learn that only 0.01 percent of all deaths occur in a synagogue, and these are usually related to previous physical disorders.

Therefore logic tells us that the safest place for you to be at any given point in time is in Synagogue services. Torah Study is even safer. The number of deaths during Torah Study is too small to register.

For safety's sake, stay alive, go to Shul as often as possible, and attend Torah study. It could save your life.

Sent by Bonnie Perler