



LILLY'S PURPLE PLASTIC PURSE

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Lilly loves her purse – but when she disrupts class with it, her teacher has to take it away for a while. Lilly doesn't react so well...and soon she's going to have to learn how to say two of the most important words: "I'm sorry."

JEWISH CONCEPTS

Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, is part of the *Yamim Noraim*, the fall High Holiday period in the Hebrew calendar. It occurs ten days after Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year. The central focus of *Yom Kippur* is *teshuvah*, which literally means "to turn" in Hebrew. It is a process of reflection on one's mistakes of the past year, confession and a request for forgiveness from God and others who have been wronged, and a decision to turn away from that act and to make a sincere effort not to repeat it.

In *Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse*, Lilly becomes angry with her teacher, Mr. Slinger, and in her frustration does something hurtful to him. Shortly afterward, she recognizes her need for *teshuvah*. She feels terrible about what she has done, thinks it over, and then goes about making things right with him. Surely Lilly would agree that *teshuvah* is not an easy process; no one likes to think about her/his personal faults and mistakes. Likewise, *Yom Kippur* is a solemn day of difficult soul-searching; however, it is also considered an ultimately joyful day, as it results in forgiveness and a clean slate. After receiving Mr. Slinger's forgiveness, Lilly feels on top of the world. The unique and powerful day of *Yom Kippur* has the same effect; there is nothing like the joy of being forgiven and the feeling of inspiration that comes from a brand new start.

USING THIS BOOK AT HOME

The words "I'm sorry" are often the most difficult ones to say, for both children and adults. Owning up to our mistakes and asking for forgiveness takes humility, vulnerability, and courage. You can help your children understand the process of making *teshuvah* when necessary, and set an important example for them by doing so yourself. (Parents make mistakes too!)

Help your children design a poster that outlines the steps of *teshuvah*: recognizing and thinking about one's mistake, asking forgiveness and making it right with the other person whenever possible, and resolving not to repeat the mistake. Hang the poster in a prominent place in your home to show that your family values and strives to practice *teshuvah*.

Ask your children to think about a time when they made a mistake or hurt someone. How did they feel afterward? What steps did they take to make the situation right? How did it feel to know they were forgiven? They may have also experienced the other side, when someone asked for their forgiveness. Was it easy or difficult to forgive? Hopefully, reflecting together on these often complicated moments in life will help your children bring extra care and understanding to all of their relationships.