



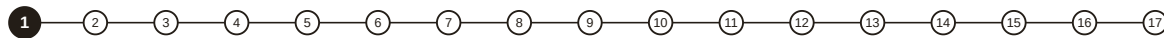
YOM KIPPUR LESSONS · RAV AVIGDOR MILLER

The Best Day of the Year

LECTURE 933



The Best Day of the Year



one of the two most joyous days

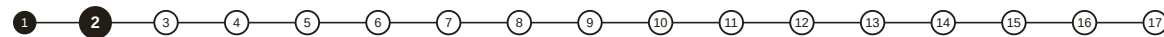
one of the two most joyous days

The Gemara tells us the best day of the year. It says, **לֹא הָיוּ יָמִים טוֹבִים לְיִשְׂרָאֵל בְּחֻמֶּשֶׁה עָשָׂר בְּאָב וּכְיוֹם הַכִּפּוּרִים** — “There were no joyous days for Yisrael like Yom Kippur and the 15th of Av” (Taanis 4:8).

We shall omit Chamishah Asar B’Av for now, but Yom Kippur was one of the two most joyous days in the year.

And the Gemara describes that on Yom Kippur, the Jewish girls went out into the vineyards, and young men came to pick their brides. This took place on Yom Kippur! Now, we understand that they came b’kedushah, with perfect purity of mind, like people come the week before Succos to choose esrogim. They stand for hours picking a more beautiful esrog. That’s how these young men chose their wives — to serve Hashem.

Why was Yom Kippur chosen for that? Because it was a happy day, a day when the mind was at its best. And when the mind is at its best, that’s the best day, as we shall soon see.



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Before we begin, let us listen to our great teacher, the Mesillas Yesharim (ch. 1). He tells us a fundamental principle of life. It’s worth listening to. First he says: **וְאִמָּנָם רְאוּי לוֹ שְׁתַּהֲיָה כָּל פְּנֵיתוֹ רַק לְבוֹרֵא יִתְבָּרַךְ** — “It is proper that all of man’s intentions and interests should be only for the Borei, the Creator,” **וְשֶׁלֹא יִהְיֶה לוֹ שׁוּם תַּכְלִית אַחֵר בְּכֹל מַעֲשֵׂה שִׁיעֲשֵׂה** — “and he should not have any other intention, any other purpose, in whatever he does,” **אִם קָטָן וְאִם גָּדוֹל** —

“whether he does something big or something little,” all of his intentions should be: **אֵלֶּא** **לְהִתְקַרֵּב אֵלָיו יִתְבַּרֵּךְ** — “only to come closer to Hashem. You hear that? Everything that one does should be for the purpose of coming closer to Hashem.

Now the following words are the most important. Up to now, he said that all of man’s intentions and purposes should be for Hashem, in whatever he does. But what should he think, what should be his intent? It seems he told us already. No. Now he tells us the secret: **וְלִשְׁבוֹר כָּל הַמַּפְסִיקוֹת בֵּינֵנוּ לְבֵין קוֹנֵנוּ** — “To break down all the walls and all the barriers,” **הַמַּחֲצִיאוֹת** — “that intervene between him and his Creator. Now that’s a very profound statement. Now listen to what I’m telling you.

Hakadosh Baruch Hu made this world in such a manner that people should not see Him. And He put up barriers, walls, between us and Him in this world. And our purpose in our lives is to break through these barriers, one after the other.

Now, how to do it is a different story. You can do it while eating supper. If you learn the art of eating supper b’iyun — like you learn b’iyun, you eat b’iyun — then you can learn how to break through the barriers. It states in Birchas Hamazon that He gives us food **בְּחֵן בְּחֶסֶד וּבְרַחֲמִים**. He doesn’t give us merely tasteless white pills to nourish us. It states in Birchas Hamazon that He gives us food **בְּחֵן בְּחֶסֶד וּבְרַחֲמִים**. He doesn’t give us merely tasteless white pills to nourish us. He gives us food that has a taste and a flavor, sometimes a color, too. It’s **בְּחֵן בְּחֶסֶד וּבְרַחֲמִים**. Why does He do that? **בְּעֵבוֹר שְׁמוֹ הַגָּדוֹל** — “For the sake of His great Name. He wants us to recognize His great Name. So as you sink your teeth into a delicious apple, know that the purpose why the apple was made red and sweet was in order that you should think of His great Name. He could have given you apples that are nourishing but have no taste at all, like a vitamin pill. They could keep you alive. But Hashem gives apples **בְּחֵן**, He colors the apple, and He flavors it. He gives you onions, and mustard, and mayonnaise, and garlic, and ketchup, and all the things that make your food more appetizing. Why does He do that? So He tells us why: **בְּעֵבוֹר שְׁמוֹ הַגָּדוֹל** — “For the sake of His great Name. And so now we know that the purpose of eating is to recognize Hashem’s great Name. And if you eat properly, b’iyun, like you learn the Tosafos b’iyun, then you break through the barriers. Otherwise, mayonnaise is a barrier; it makes you forget about Hashem. Or, a chocolate cake with icing on top can be a way of breaking through the mechitzos and to say, “Look what Hashem is doing for me; He’s giving **בְּחֵן בְּחֶסֶד וּבְרַחֲמִים**,” and you recognize Hashem as a result. So you’re breaking through the barriers by means of a chocolate cake.