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Sincerely,

Rabbi Yehoshua Werde  
Director

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ב"ה

# YOM KIPPUR

*What Makes Yom Kippur  
the Holiest Day of the Year?*



## Lesson Outline

- » Why Yom Kippur?
- » The Historic Significance of Yom Kippur
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# Yom Kippur

## Why Yom Kippur?

What is unique about Yom Kippur? What makes it the holiest day of the year?

We all know what we do on Yom Kippur; we fast, we spend almost the entire day in shul davening, beating our chest reciting ashamnu and al chet, and singing moving, soul-stirring songs. But what makes Yom Kippur different from any other time?

## The Historic Significance of Yom Kippur

Historically, Yom Kippur was the day of anointment for the chet ha'egel (sin of the golden calf). It was the day upon which Moshe descended from Har Sinai bearing the second luchos, a sign that Hashem had finally forgiven the Jewish people:

*Rashi, Shmos 32:1 and 33:11*

בעשרה בתשרי נתרצה הקב"ה לישראל בשמחה ובלב שלם, ואמר לו למשה סלחתי כדברך, ומסר לו לוחות אחרונות.

*On the tenth of Tishrei, Hashem restored His goodwill with the Jewish people gladly and wholeheartedly, saying to Moshe, "I have forgiven, as you ask," and gave him the second luchos.*

## What Are The Defining Features of Yom Kippur?

While there are many aspects to Yom Kippur, some are of more importance than others, the question remains, what is the essence of Yom Kippur? If you were to distill Yom Kippur

down to one idea or theme, what would it be?

This is how the Torah defines Yom Kippur:

*Vayikra 23:27-28*

אֶתְּ בַּעֲשׂוֹר לַחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי הַזֶּה יוֹם הַכִּפּוּרִים הוּא, מִקְרָא-קֹדֶשׁ יִהְיֶה  
לָכֶם, וְעֲנִיתֶם, אֶת-נַפְשֹׁתֵיכֶם; וְהִקְרַבְתֶּם אִשָּׁה, לַה'...כִּי יוֹם כִּפּוּרִים,  
הוּא, לְכַפֵּר עֲלֵיכֶם, לִפְנֵי ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם.

*On the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement; it shall be a holy ingathering for you; and you shall afflict your souls, and offer a fire offering to Hashem....For it is a day of atonement to atone for you before Hashem your G-d.*

As its name indicates, Yom Kippur, is a day of Kaparah, of atonement, and we achieve anotement by making it holy (i.e., by not performing melachah) and by “afflicting our souls” which means by fasting and refraining from the five enjoyments that are forbidden on Yom Kippur (that will be enumerated later).

## **The Day That Atones**

*Sefer HaChinuch, 185*

ומתחילת בריאת העולם יעדו וקדשו לכך, ואחר שיעדו הקל ברוך הוא אותו היום לכפרה, נתקדש היום וקיבל כח הזכות מאיתו יתעלה עד שהוא מסייע בכפרה. וזהו אמרם ז"ל בהרבה מקומות - ויום הכפורים מכפר, כלומר שיש כח ליום בעצמו לכפרה...

*From the beginning of Creation [Hashem] set aside*

*[the day of Yom Kippur] and made it holy for this purpose. After Hashem designated this day for atonement, it became holy and it acquired from Hashem the merit to assist in atonement. This is what our Sages refer to in many places when they say that Yom Kippur atones, meaning that there is a power imbued within the day itself.*

A power in the day itself!? What does that mean?

First let's understand, what is atonement? Why do we need it? And how does Yom Kippur provide it?

### **What's the Point of Having a Yearly Day of Atonement?**

*Ibid.*

משרשי המצוה שהיה מחסדי הקל על בריותיו לקבוע להן יום אחד בשנה לכפרה על החטאים עם התשובה שישובו, שאילו יתקבצו עוונות הבריות שנה שנה תתמלא סאתם לסוף שנתיים או שלוש או יותר ויתחייב העולם כליה. על כן ראה בחכמתו ברוך הוא, לקיום העולם, לקבוע יום אחד בשנה לכפרת חטאים לשבים...

*The basis of this mitzvah is that due to Hashem's kindness toward the Jewish people He established one day a year when they can atone for their sins by the teshuvah they do. If their sins would accumulate each year, their limit would be reached within a few years and the world would have to be destroyed. Therefore, in order for the world to exist, Hashem, in His wisdom, established one day a year*

*to enable those who repent to receive atonement for their sins.*

## **Bankruptcy**

There is an interesting analogy for this from modern bankruptcy law. It turns out that it is economically worthwhile for the general public to bear the cost of releasing an individual from his debt (when he will never be able to repay) in order for him to regain financial stability and become an asset to the economy.

By absolving him, you give him a chance to try again and succeed, and that success financially outweighs the losses of absolving him from his debt because he will contribute positively to the economy.

In Yiddishkeit, this concept exists with Shemita and Yovel, when slaves are given a fresh start and debts are absolved, and we have this concept every year on Yom Kippur when Hashem absolves us of our aveiros, giving us a clean slate and a fresh chance to give it another shot at trying to fulfill our mission.

## **Isn't Every Day "A Day of Atonement?"**

Every day of the year we are required to do Teshuvah and seek atonement for our sins. What makes Yom Kippur different in this regard? And if we must do Teshuvah on our own, what does it mean that there is "a power imbued within the day itself?"

As we will soon learn, Yom Kippur isn't just a day when we free ourselves from sin. The effect of Yom Kippur is much deeper and more powerful than just erasing sin. Even the way



in which it erases sin, does not follow the normal methods.

## **Teshuvah Pending**

Even when we do Teshuvah, it doesn't mean that we necessarily achieve "atonement." For some aveiros, even after we've done teshuvah, we still need to wait until Yom Kippur comes for atonement to kick in.

*Talmud Bavli, Yoma 86a*

עבר על עשה ושב אינו זז משם עד שמוחלין לו...עבר על לא תעשה ועשה תשובה תשובה תולה ויזה"כ מכפר שנאמר כי ביום הזה יכפר עליכם מכל חטאתיכם

*If one transgressed a positive commandment and repented, he does not move from there until he is forgiven...If one transgressed a negative commandment and repented, the repentance suspends and Yom Kippur atones, as it is stated: For on this day He shall atone for you...from all your sins*

From here it is clear that teshuvah and atonement aren't necessarily the same thing. You can do teshuvah and still have to wait for the atonement of Yom Kippur.

Hmmm. If the atonement of Yom Kippur isn't the same thing as Teshuvah, what is it? And how does it work?

## **How Does Yom Kippur Atone?**

The Alter Rebbe bases his explanation of above Gemarah (about Teshuvah on negative commandments pending

until Yom Kippur) using an example from the requirement continually to add fire to the mizbeiach (even though it already had a constant flame burning on it that was originally ignited by a heavenly flame that descended upon the mizbeach when the beis hamikdash was first inaugurated). The Gemarah teaches:

*Talmud Bavli, Eiruvim 63a*

אף על פי שהאש יורדת מן השמים מצוה להביא מן ההדיוט

*Even though fire comes down from heaven, there is a mitzvah to bring from ordinary fire*

The Alter Rebbe explains what this means spiritually in the life of each individual person:

*Likutei Torah, Derushim L'Yom Hakippurim 68c-d*

אש שלמעלה היא אהבה הטבעית אהבה רבה שבנפש האלהית...אשר איננה מתלבשת כלל בלבושי הנפש החיונית...ומצוה להביא מן ההדיוט אש שלמטה ע"י התבוננות בגדולת ה' כל חד לפום שיעורא דיליה ולהלהיב לבו ונפשו לעבודת ה'...וכאשר מבטל מ"ע הוא עושה חסרון ומניעה שאינו מאיר עליו אור...בחינת אש שלמטה...וכאשר עובר על מל"ת הנה הוא מונע ומחסר אור העליון שלא יוכל האש שלמעלה שהוא אהבה הטבעית להתחזק בנפשו ולהוסיף אומץ אהבתו בסיוע של מעלה על אהבה דלתתא...וע"כ אם עבר על מ"ע ושב לא זי משם עד שמוחלין לו כי בעשותו תשובה התעוררות התשובה מועיל להלהיב אל נפשו...שאבד בעונו...משא"כ כשעבר על ל"ת שפגם ומנע את אור העליון...שאף אם יעורר...לא תוסיף תת כח האהבה עליונה כי מנע אורה

*The heavenly fire from above represents the natural*

*love—the great love—that exists within the G-dly soul...that does not manifest itself in the garments of the living soul [i.e., it remains in the spiritual realm and is not felt by the body]...*

*The Mitzvah is to add ordinary fire—the fire from below—by contemplating Hashem’s greatness, every person according to his ability, to excite his heart and soul in the service of Hashem...*

*When a person transgresses a positive commandment, he creates a blockage, stopping the fire from below from shining...and when he transgresses a negative commandment, he blocks and diminishes the light from above [to the extent] that the fire from above—i.e., the natural love—is unable to take hold of his soul to add vigor to his love [i.e., to add to the love born of contemplation] to increase the love from below with help from above...*

*Therefore, if one transgresses a positive Mitzvah and does Teshuvah, he doesn’t move from there until he is forgiven, because when he does teshuvah, the arousal of his heart helps him excite his soul... [replacing the excitement and love] that was lost because of his sin...*

*Whereas, when one transgresses a negative commandment that defects and blocks the higher*

*light...even if he does become aroused [to the love of Hashem through contemplation]...the higher love [i.e., the hidden love that every Jew has] will not increase [his revealed love “from below” that was born of contemplation as it would ordinarily] since he blocked its light.*

Every person is a miniature mishkan.

The love of Hashem represents the fire on the mizbeiach.

There are two types of loves that a Jew has for Hashem:

- 1) The hidden, inborn love (sometimes called “ahava mesuteret”) that exists naturally. And
- 2) The love of Hashem that comes from hisbonenus, from thinking about Hashem’s greatness.

These are represented by the heavenly “fire from above” and the ordinary “fire from below.”

The Alter Rebbe explains that when a person does an aveira, the love he feels for Hashem is diminished. When he transgresses a positive commandment, he diminishes the “lower,” conscious love he has for Hashem which can be reignited by consciously regretting the sin and thus rekindling the love. Whereas, when a person transgresses a negative commandment, the higher, hidden love (that fuels the lower, conscious love) is diminished so that regretting the sin and rekindling the conscious love of Hashem through thinking about Hashem’s greatness is not enough. To rekindle the “fire from above” you need something extra, and that is what Yom Kippur achieves:

*Ibid.*

ולזאת תשובה תולה ויום הכפורים מכפר...שמתעורר בחינת פנימיות רצונו ית'...שאז נושא עון ועובר על פשע ונקה שאין העון תופס מקום כלל...כי אין העונות מבדילים אלא ביניכם לבין אלהיכם דהיינו בבחי' אלקים שלכם אבל בבחי' פנימי' רצונו ית' הרי לפניו כחשיכה כאורה

*This is why the Teshuvah is suspended and Yom Kippur atones...because the level of Hashem's innermost will is aroused...and then He forgives sin and overlooks transgression and pardons because the sin is completely immaterial [there]...since sin only separates "between you and your G-d," i.e., only at the [lower] level of "your G-d," but at the level of Hashem's innermost will, there, darkness is the same as light to Him.*

Yom Kippur is not something we can achieve or accomplish, it's something that happens. It is a time when Hashem preordained that our deepest connection with Hisis revealed, and then, "the fire from above" is automatically reignited.

### **What Level of Connection is Revealed on Yom Kippur?**

The Rebbe's explanation of the following opinions in Gemara, will help provide a clearer understanding of the impact of Yom Kippur.

There is a dispute in the Gemarah whether the atonement of Yom Kippur is automatic or whether it requires Teshuvah:

רבי אומר על כל עבירות שבתורה בין עשה תשובה בין לא עשה תשובה יום הכפורים מכפר...ורבנן...יזה"כ אין מכפר אלא על השבים

*Rebbi [Rabbi Yehudah Hanassi] says, for all aveiros in the Torah, whether a person did Teshivah or not, Yom Kippur atones...and the Rabbis [say]... Yom Kippur only atones for those who do Teshuvah.*

Although the Halachah does not follow Rabbi Yehudah, and one is in fact required to do Teshuvah in order to benefit from Yom Kippur's atonement, we must still understand his logic, how can Yom Kippur provide atonement without the person having to do Teshuvah?

### **How Teshuvah Repairs the Damage**

To further understand the difficulty this presents (how, according to Rebbi Yom Kippur circumvents the need for teshuvah, we must first have a good understanding of the dynamic that takes place when a person sins (the damage the aveirah does to his soul) and how Teshuvah works to undo this damage:

הקליפות יש להם ג"כ אור וכלי נפש וגוף והתהוותם ע"י הטא הוא כי ע"י התאווה מתהווה הנפש הרעה ר"ל וע"י המעשה מתהווה הגוף...והנה כששב אזי צריך להמית את הקליפות הנ"ל להעבירם מן העולם...וזהו ע"י החרטה עם הוידוי כי הנה ע"י החרטה שהוא עקירת הרצון מן החטא בזה מוציא הנפש מן הקליפה שתולדתה הי' מן התאווה שבלב ועתה בעקירת רצונו ותאוותו הרי מוציא נפשה...אך כדי למחות גופה

הוא ע"י וידוי דברים דעקימת שפתיו הוי מעשה ובוה הוא ממחה גופה  
והי" כלא הי"

*The kelipos are also comprised of light and vessel, soul and body, and their creation comes about through sin, for through the desire [to sin], the soul of evil is created, and through the act [of sinning], the body [of evil] is created...*

*When a person does Teshuvah, he must kill the aforementioned kelipos to eradicate them from the world...*

*and this is through regret (charatah) together with confession (viduy), because regret—which removes the will (ratzon) from the sin—through this he removes the soul of the kelipah, since it was born from the desire of the heart, therefore now, by removing his will and desire [from the sin], he removes its soul...*

*However in order to destroy the body, this is accomplished through a verbal confession since the movement of one's lips is considered an action and by way of it he wipes out the body [of the kelipah] to be as if it never existed before.*

When the person sins, he creates a body (through the act of sinning) and a soul (through the evil intent he had) for evil. By doing Teshuvah, by regretting what he did wrong, he removes the soul of the sin, and by verbally reciting viduy,

confessing to his sins the action of moving the lips works to counteract the act/body of the sin, and thus he undoes the original effects of the sin.

So now we really need to understand, according to Rebbi who maintains that Yom Kippur atones even without Teshuvah, how does Yom Kippur accomplish this without having to take the necessary steps to actively reverse the effects of the aveirah?

### **Three Levels of Connection to Hashem**

To answer this question, the Rebbe describes three levels of connection that a Jew has with Hashem:

1. A connection based on Kabolas Ol, on the Jew performing all of the mitzvos and doing exactly what Hashem wants of him.
2. A connection that runs deeper than the one a Jew has when he observes the mitzvos. This is what causes even a Jew who transgressed Hashem's wishes to regret what he did and be aroused to do Teshuvah. However, even this deeper connection is limited and can therefore be expressed in specific, limited ways, as it does through Teshuvah.
3. The essential connection of the essence of one's soul with Hashem's essence. This bond knows no bounds and transcends the ability to be expressed in any form of expression, not even through the expression of Teshuvah. No act can possibly sever this connection, because any act that a person could do is limited, whereas every Jew has this connection by nature, because of the essence of his soul that is "an actual part of Hashem on high" and even



now (in the body) it is “hugging and attached to You...”. Just as no deed can create this connection, similarly, no deed can weaken or defect it by not serving Hashem or by doing aveiros.

## Why Yom Kippur Doesn't Require Teshuvah

*Likutei Sichos, Vol. 4 Pg 1152*

און דערפאר איז “עיצומו של יום מכפר”, ווייל יום כיפור ווערט נתגלה ביי יעדער אידן דער עצמית'דיקער פארבונד פון זיין עצם הנשמה מיט דעם אויבערשטן, און בשעת עס ווערט נתגלה די מדריגה, פאלן במילא אפ אלע פגמים

*This is why “the essence of the day atones” since on Yom Kipur, this essential connection of the essence of his soul with Hashem is revealed; and when this level is revealed, all defects fall away automatically.*

While this explains why Rebbe doesn't require Teshuvah for Yom Kippur to achieve the same thing as teshuvah, the Halachah is not like Rebbe, and we must still do Teshuvah for the atonement of Yom Kippur to take effect.

However, the Teshuvah is not the essence of what Yom Kippur is about. It only serves as a necessary prerequisite for Yom Kippur to do its thing. Once a person meets the basic requirements, the effect of Yom Kippur happens completely on its own.

Yom Kippur is essentially the day when the connection of our essence with Hashem's essence—at a level that transcends Teshuvah—is revealed. This rekindles our connection with Hashem from above, replenishing our relationship with

Hashem and the hidden natural love we have for Him.

This then explains many of the things we do on Yom Kippur:

*Mishnah Yoma 8:1*

יום הכפורים אסור באכילה ובשתיה וברחיצה ובסיכה ובנעילת הסנדל  
ובתשמיש המטה.

*On Yom Kippur it is forbidden to eat, drink, wash,  
anoint, wear leather shoes, and have marital  
relations.*

## **Eliminating Distractions**

*Sefer HaChinuch, 313*

משרשי המצוה, שהיה מחסדי השם על כל בריותיו לקבוע להם יום  
אחד בשנה לכפר על החטאים עם התשובה...ולכן נצטוינו להתענות  
בו, לפי שהמאכל והמשתה ויתר הנאות חוש המישוש יעוררו החומר  
להמשך אחר התאוה והחטא, ויבטלו צורת הנפש החכמה מחפש אחר  
האמת שהוא עבודת האל...ואין ראוי לעבד ביום בואו לדין לפני אדוניו  
לבוא בנפש השוכה ומעורבבת מתוך המאכל והמשתה, במחשבות  
החומר אשר היא בתוכו, שאין דנין את האדם אלא לפי מעשיו  
שבאותה שעה, על כן טוב לו להגביר נפשו החכמה ולהכניע החומר  
לפניה באותו היום הנכבד, למען תהיה ראויה ונכונה לקבל כפרתה  
ולא ימנעה מסך התאוות...

*A reason for the mitzvah [of Yom Kippur], is that  
as a result of Hashem's kindness for His creations  
He established one day each year for them to atone  
for their sins through Teshuvah ... Therefore, we  
are commanded to fast on this day, since food*

*and drink, as well as the other physical pleasures, awaken the materialistic side of man and tempt him to desire and sin, and can distract a person from seeking the truth, namely, serving Hashem... It is not fitting for a person who will be judged by Hashem to come to his judgment in a state of distraction by the physical world and by food and drink. For a person is judged according to his actions at that very time. Therefore, it is beneficial for man to elevate his spirituality and reduce his connection to the physical world on that honorable day, in order that he should be worthy and able to receive forgiveness without his [physical] desires preventing him from doing so.*

Since the day is about our essence connecting to Hashem's essence, it makes sense that we are forbidden from engaging in any worldly delights that would distract us from this connection.

## **Five Restrictions for the Five Souls**

*Maharal, Drashah L'Shabbos Teshuvah*

וכן כל המצוות שצוה השם יתעלה ביום הגדול והקדוש הכל לסלק הגופניות שבאדם עד שהוא כמו מלאך לגמרי. ולפיכך צוה לענות נפשו, הכל כדי לסלק ולמעט את הגוף עד שיהיה האדם קדוש כמו מלאך... וביום הכפורים צוה השם יתעלה למעט הגוף ולענות הנפש בחמשה ענויים, ואז אין הנפש מיושבת בגוף, והיא נבדלת לבדה לעצמה מסולק מן הגופניות והוא כמו מלאך. ומפני כי יש לנפש חמשה שמות נפש רוח ונשמה יחידה חיה, נמצא שיש חמשה דברים בנפש...

וכנגד זה חמשה עניינים למעט ולסלק הגופניות.

*All of the mitzvos that Hashem has commanded us to do on this great and holy day are intended to remove physicality from a person until he reaches the level of an angel. Therefore, we are commanded to afflict ourselves, in order to remove or lessen our physicality so that we can become as holy as the angels ... Hashem commanded the five afflictions of Yom Kippur so that the soul will not be constricted by the body ... and since the soul has five names: nefesh, ruach, neshamah, yechidah, and chayah, this is an indication that there are five aspects to the soul ... Corresponding to this we have the five afflictions, to remove physicality [on all five levels].*

The reason for refraining from these five things is so as not to be limited by each level of the soul, but rather to transcend and connect to Hashem on the most essential of levels. This is why we try to do things the way angels do...

## **White Clothes (Kittel)**

*Rema, Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim, 610:4*

...יש שכ' שנהגו ללבוש בגדים לבנים נקיים ב"כ דוגמת מלאכי השרת.

*Some write that they are accustomed to wear clean white clothing on Yom Kippur, symbolic of the Ministering Angels.*

## Five Prayers for the Five Souls

This also explains why we daven five tefilos on Yom Kippur (Maariv, Shacharis, Mussaf, Mincha, and Neilah) instead of the regular three (like on weekdays) or four (like Rosh Chodesh, Shabbos, or Yomtov).

*Likutei Sichos Vol. 4 pg. 1154*

יום כיפור איז די איינציקער טאג פון יאר ווען מען איז מחוייב דאוונען חמש תפילות. די פינף תפלות זיינען כנגד די פינף מדריגות פון נשמה-נפש רוח נשמה חי' יחידה. די פינפטע תפלה, וואס מען איז מתפלל נאר יום כיפור, די תפילת נעילה, ווערט אין איר נתגלה בחינת היחידה שבנשמה, ווי זי איז פאראייניקט מיטן אויברשטן, וואס דארטן האבן ניט קיין ארט קיין זאך אויסער דעם אויבערשטער מיט אידן.

*Yom Kippur is the only day of the year when we are obligated to pray five prayers. The five prayers correspond to the five levels of the neshamah-Nefesh, Ruach, Neshamah, Chayah, and Yechidah. In the Neilah prayer, the fifth prayer that we only recite on Yom Kippur, the neshama's level of yechidah is revealed--as it is one with Hashem, because at that level there is no room for anything but Hashem and Yidden.*

## Another Meaning of Neilah

With regards to the kohen gadol's service in the kodesh hakodashim on Yom Kippur, the Torah prohibits anyone to be in there together with the Kohel Gadol. The Yerushalmi explains just how far that goes:

*Talmud Yerushalmi, Yoma 1:5*

וכל אדם לא יהיה באהל מועד (ויקרא טז יז), אפילו אותן שכתוב בהן דמות פניהם פני אדם (יחזקאל א י): לא היו באוהל מועד

*“And no man shall be in the tent of meeting” (Vayikra 16:17), even those [angels] about whom it is stated: “The appearance of their faces is in the likeness of man” (Yechezkel 1:10) were not found in the tent of meeting.*

Thus the Rebbe explains another meaning of the word Neilah:

*Likutei Sichos, ibid.*

איז דער טייטש פון “נעילה” – מען פארשליסט אלע טויערן, און מען לאזט אהין קיינעם נישט אריין, דארט געפינען זיך בלויז אידן מיט עצמותו יתברך

*The translation of “Neilah” is that all the doors are locked and nobody is allowed in, only Yidden can be found there with Atzmus alone.*

## **It’s All About The Fifth Soul**

*Ibid.*

און הגם אז בעיקר ווערט אט די בחינה אנטפלעקט אין תפילת נעילה, איז אבער בכללות די בחינה פאראן אויך דעם גאנצן טאג פון יום כיפור. ווי דער לשון איז: “יום שנתחייב בחמש תפלות,” אז דער טאג, אלס גאנצער, איז מחויב אין חמש תפילות... ווייל בכללות איז עס א יום ווען ס'איז מאיר בחינת “חמש” - בחינת יחידה.

*While this level is primarily expressed in the Neilah*

*prayer, it is generally present throughout the entire day of Yom Kippur. As the expression: “A day that is obligated in five prayers,” that the day, in its entirety, is obligated in five prayers...because generally it is a day when the “fifth” level, the Yechidah, is revealed.*

Now we can understand why Yom Kippur is also the happiest day of the year.

## **The Happiest Day of the Year**

*Talmud Bavli, Ta’anit 26b*

לא היו ימים טובים לישראל בחמשה עשר באב וכיום הכפורים.

*There were no happier days for the Jews than Tu B’Av and Yom Kippur.*

If we think of Yom Kippur (as many do) as an antidote to aveiros, it hardly makes for a happy day at all. However, when we understand that Yom Kippur is really the revealing of our most essential connection with Hashem, the fact that we rectify what we’ve done wrong is only a side benefit of Yom Kippur, not its essence.

In this way, the English word “atonement” really does justice to Yom Kippur, as Yom Kippur is a day of “at-one-ment” of revealing the level at which we are one with Hashem. It’s not about sin and Teshuvah (while there is that aspect as well).

Okay, so it’s solemn day, not a sad day. But what makes it the happiest day of the year?

כי השמחה לאדם מצד השלימות שנמצא בו ולכך הוא שמח. והאדם אינו בעל שלימות בעצמו,

*A person is happy from the completion that is found within him, this is what makes him happy. However, a person is not complete on his own.*

What do the two days of Tu B'Av and Yom Kippur have in common?

Tu B'Av is the day when many shidduchim were made. Man was not made to be alone, he needs a spouse to complete him. This is why a wedding is such a joyous occasion as it brings completion to two “half souls.”

Similarly, Yom Kippur is the happiest day of the year, because the most essential connection we have with Hashem, the place of our utmost completion, is revealed.

So let's approach this Yom Kippur with a chassidishe attitude, that it's about connecting to Hashem, and let's utilize it to forget about all of the worldly distractions that hold us back, so that we may be sealed for a good and sweet year, an animated year full of true life that comes from connectedness to Hashem, the Source of all life.



## Take-aways

- Yom Kippur is the day Hashem forgave Yidden for the chet ha'egel
- Yom Kippur is defined in the Torah first and foremost as a day of atonement.
- The atonement of Yom Kippur is different to the Teshuvah of the rest of the year. Therefore, for someone who transgressed a negative commandment, it is not enough to do teshuva, but must wait until Yom Kippur to receive atonement.
- Teshuvah counteracts the damage to the soul brought about by the aveirah, however some damage runs so deep that it cannot be fixed.
- The atonement of Yom Kippur is not a specific response to aveiros, but the revaluation of the essential connection of the essence of the Jew to Hashem's essence.
- The five restrictions of Yom Kippur free the five levels of the souls from bodily constrictions. Whereas the five prayers of the day uplift the soul to the state of its essential connection to Hashem's Essence.
- Ultimately, Yom Kippur is the time of "at-one-ment" when it is revealed that in essence nothing exists other than the essence of the Jew and the essence of G-d (and when this is revealed, it repairs any damage done to any of the lower levels of connection).
- Yom Kippur is therefore the happiest day of the year, because happiness is found in completion, and on no other day are we more complete.