

A Moment with Rabbi Avigdor Miller Zt"l



The summertime precedes the *Yom Hadin*. It precedes Rosh Hashanah.

Why wasn't Rosh Hashanah at **Pesach** time? Or at **Chanukah** time? Or in the middle of winter? Asara B'teves? In cold months? Oh, that's a wonderful time for *teshuvah*. Nobody's interested in the streets and traveling in the mountains. It's cold outside. Everybody's indoors. They come hear *droshos* in a warm building. That's the most suitable time, it seems, for repentance!

But Hakadosh Baruch Hu is the architect Who planned this universe according to the Torah. And therefore, He made Rosh Hashanah follow the summer. Just when you took in **all** of your crops, just at a time when everything is ripe. And you studied the greatness of Hashem. And **now** is the very best time to do *teshuvah*.

I'll repeat what I told you recently. You know, Elul, up till recently, was considered the month of *teshuvah*. Elul was the month which the Jewish nation utilized to prepare for Rosh Hashanah. Today, they prepare for Rosh Hashanah, Rosh Hashanah evening. A frum Jew is *me'harer b'teshuvah* when he has to go to *maariv* Rosh Hashanah. If he has good sense, before he leaves the house, he says to his wife, "Forgive me for everything." And she says to him, "Forgive me too for everything." By the way, it's a good idea. Only the wise people did it a little earlier. A little earlier.

Because the Alter of Slabodka, in the **middle** of the month of Av, he forsook his beloved yeshiva Slabodka, where he was the mentor, he was the teacher, and he went to his old alma mater, so to speak, in Kelm. Kelm was the source of the old *baalei mussar*. And he sat there as a disciple, he was an old man, but he sat there as a disciple for the half month of Av, preparing for Elul. Because Av is the glorious month of happiness, which is suited for *teshuvah*.

The highest *teshuvah* is *teshuvah* when people can see the hand of Hashem, when it's most **active**, when it's most **bounteous**, when the **cornucopia** of Hashem's blessings is **shedding** all of the happiness upon mankind. People may not think so, because they are accustomed to griping all the time and complaining, "It's hot," and they talk to each other about their sufferings, and the heat wave and so on. Each heat wave causes nature to make another **spurt**. The apples are baking on the trees. You don't have to bake the apples; they are baked already by the time you buy them. They are being baked by the summer heat.

You don't complain when your wife is baking a cake, "Look how hot it is." You can't bake a cake in the refrigerator. You can't bake apples in wintertime. You have to bake apples in summertime. Hakadosh Baruch Hu is baking the apples; He's baking everything else. We'll enjoy it.

And landlords don't have to pay for oil in the summertime. And most dentists have less business because there are fewer **toothaches** in the summertime. People don't go to the dentist because of good sense; they go when there is a **toothache**. And in the summertime, toothaches are more rare. Arthritis sufferers enjoy the summer sun. It bakes their old bones, makes them happy. And therefore, summer is a time for gratitude.

But the summer also is a time when all nature is alive. And therefore, that's the time to do *teshuvah*. That's a new idea. But it's an **old** idea, it's Hakadosh Baruch Hu's idea, and that was His purpose at the beginning of the world.

ומחה ה' את־שמו
(נצבים כט:יט) *AND HASHEM WILL ERASE HIS NAME
(Nitzavim 29:19)*

This is the most terrible fate: to be erased from the Book of Hashem (Shmos 32:32-33), worse than a thousand deaths.

But all these sinners have not chosen to be erased; then how infinitely more fearsome is the curse upon those that voluntarily erase themselves from the Book of Hashem by choosing to go over into one of the "religions" and to go lost entirely from their people forever!

So loathsome a person is not even mentioned among even the worst sinners.