

Laws of Repentance, Chapter 10 (Auto Translated)

English

Auto Translated

Shiur Overview

Summary of the Lecture — Laws of Repentance Chapter 10 (Conclusion of Sefer HaMadda)

Introduction — The Place of Chapter 10 in the Overall Context

Chapter 10 is the last chapter in Hilchos Teshuva and in all of Sefer HaMadda. **Four connections** are presented for why the chapter on service from love comes specifically here:

1. **Connection with reward and punishment (Chapters 7–9):** After the Rambam explained what a tremendous reward there is, a person might think that the entire purpose is reward. The Rambam wants to explain that one cannot learn Torah with only half a focus — as a preparation for reward — because then one never acquires wisdom. **Innovation:** True service from love is when one understands that the work itself is the truth, and consequently one receives reward — not that the Almighty made a "deal" with people.

2. **Connection with the levels of understanding:** Earlier the Rambam explained that sages and prophets have true understanding (for example, regarding the Messianic era), but not everyone has it. The chapter shows that service from love is also not for everyone — for simple people and small children, one does tell them the simple meaning of blessings and curses in the Torah. **Innovation:** This is perhaps another answer to the question of shelo lishmah — that this is what one tells people as long as they don't yet understand.

3. **Conclusion to all of Hilchos Teshuva:** Teshuva means to ascend in levels — from a sinner to a complete tzaddik — and the final level is lishmah. **Innovation (according to a hint):** Hilchos Teshuva has ten chapters corresponding to the Ten Days of Repentance, and Yom Kippur — the tenth day — one arrives at the level of serving from love.

4. **Conclusion to all of Sefer HaMadda:** The Rambam will explain that love comes according to knowledge — "love according to knowledge, according to the love." Love has to do with what I know. He points back to Hilchos Yesodei HaTorah — one must learn knowledge in order to acquire the attribute of love. **Innovation:** The chapter is not only a conclusion to Sefer HaMadda, but also an introduction to Sefer Ahava — it connects knowledge with love.

Halacha 1 — "A person should not say, 'I will perform the commandments of the Torah...'"

The Rambam's Words

"A person should not say, 'I will perform the commandments of the Torah and engage in its wisdom in order to receive the blessings written in it, or in order to merit the World to Come, and I will separate from the transgressions that the Torah warned against in order to be saved from the curses written in the Torah, or so that I will not be cut off

from the World to Come.' It is not proper to serve God in this manner, for one who serves in this manner serves from fear, and this is not the level of the prophets nor the level of the sages. Only the ignorant, women, and children serve God in this manner, whom we train to serve from fear until their knowledge increases and they serve from love."

Simple Meaning

One should not serve the Almighty in order to receive blessings/reward or to escape from curses/punishment. This is service from fear, not the level of prophets/sages. For the ignorant, women, and children, we train them from fear until their knowledge grows and they can serve from love.

Innovations

- **"In order to merit the World to Come" — a person who doesn't understand the World to Come:** The person who thinks this way doesn't truly understand what the World to Come means. He thinks of the World to Come as the common people understand it — as a "goal" for work — not as the Rambam explained it in Chapter 8 (abstract wisdom without a body). The person who understands that the World to Come is abstract wisdom, for him wisdom is already now too — he doesn't need to "wait" for the World to Come.

- **"Fear" — broader than just fright:** The word "yirah" here means broader — service "for a reason" (for a reason external to the act itself). Even one who does it in order to receive blessings (not just one who fears curses) is in the category of serving from fear.

Halacha 1 (continued) "One who serves from love... does the truth because it is truth"

The Rambam's Words

"One who serves from love engages in Torah and commandments and walks in the paths of wisdom, not for any worldly reason, and not from fear of evil, and not in order to inherit the good, but does the truth because it is truth, and ultimately the good will come as a result."

Simple Meaning

One who serves from love does the truth because it is truth, without any external motivation. The good comes eventually but that is not the focus.

Innovations

- **"Does the truth because it is truth" — logical necessity:** Why is truth true? Because truth is not true "in order to" something — truth is true in itself. To say "truth is true in order to receive reward" is foolishness. The good is good in itself — one doesn't need to be a prophet to understand this, it's a simple thing.

- **Innovation — deep dispute between Rambam and Kabbalists:** The Rambam writes "does the truth because it is truth, and ultimately the good will come." Kabbalists would

have said the opposite: "does **the good** because it is good, and ultimately **the truth** will come." This is a deep dispute: whether truth (= wisdom) is above good, or good is above truth. The Rambam holds that wisdom is the real thing. The Baal HaTanya says that good is included in wisdom. **It's not just a play on words:** Good means something that is desirable, truth means something that is true even if it's not desirable. Everyone agrees that both go together, the question is only which comes first. **Practical difference:** If someone doesn't feel on the right path, one can say "does the good because it is good" — it's the same thing.

- **"And ultimately the good will come as a result" — reward comes automatically:** It must not be the main focus. A person who learns only because it's a preparation for the World to Come never acquires wisdom — because he doesn't give one hundred percent focus to the wisdom itself.

Halacha 1 (continued) — "And this level... is the level of our father Abraham"

The Rambam's Words

"And this level is a very great level, and not every sage merits it, and it is the level of our father Abraham whom the Holy One, blessed be He, called 'My beloved,' because he served only from love. And this is the level that the Holy One, blessed be He, commanded us through Moses our teacher, as it says, 'And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.'"

Simple Meaning

The level of serving from love is very high, not every sage merits it. This is the level of our father Abraham whom the Almighty calls "My beloved." This is also the level that the Almighty demands of every Jew through Moses our teacher.

Innovations

- **Love = doing the truth because it is truth:** "My beloved" by Abraham doesn't mean just a feeling of love, but that everything he did — recognizing the Creator, kindness with the world — was only about love of God, not about any other reason.

- **Abraham voluntary, Moses commandments:** The Rambam's approach is that what our father Abraham did voluntarily, Moses our teacher made into commandments. This is a principle that the Rambam brings many times — Moses makes commandments from what Abraham already achieved on his own.

- **"With all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might" — includes everything:** The verse means that even when one is busy with matters of the soul (life) or matters of money (livelihood), one should love the Almighty. It includes all aspects of life.

- **Love of God ≠ doing commandments from love:** Love of God itself means knowing the Almighty, thinking of Him all the time. Doing commandments from love is a result of that — commandments bring him to this, they are "preparatory actions" to the love. But the essence of love is the constant knowledge of God.

- **Contradiction within itself — "not every sage merits it":** Earlier the Rambam said that service from fear is "not the level of prophets nor the level of sages" — implying that sages

are already at the level of love. Now he says "not every sage merits it" — implying that even sages are not all at this level! On the other hand, he says that this is a commandment that the Almighty demands of every Jew ("And you shall love the Lord your God"). **Possible answers:** (a) Perhaps among sages themselves there are levels — a certain level of love all sages have, but the "truly authentic level" of serving from love is even higher. (b) Perhaps he means that certain sages he speaks of were not all at this level. The contradiction is not fully resolved.

Halacha 2 — What is the proper love

The Rambam's Words

"That one should love God with a very great, exceedingly strong love, until one's soul is bound up in the love of God, and one is constantly obsessed with it, like one lovesick, whose mind is never free from the love of that woman and he is constantly obsessed with her, whether sitting or standing, whether eating or drinking. Even more than this should be the love of God in the hearts of those who love Him, constantly obsessed with it, as He commanded us, 'with all your heart and with all your soul.' And this is what Solomon said by way of metaphor, 'for I am lovesick,' and all of Song of Songs is a metaphor for this matter."

Simple Meaning

The Rambam brings a metaphor of lovesickness — like someone who is sick from love for a woman and cannot stop thinking of her — so should one think of the Almighty all the time, even more strongly. King Solomon expressed this in Song of Songs, which is a metaphor for this matter.

Innovations

- **Proper love = constancy of thought, not feelings:** Most people think that proper love means a strong feeling — one goes out, sings, feels something in the blood. **The Rambam does not mean this.** The Rambam almost never speaks of feelings. The only time the Rambam speaks of a feeling is in Chapter 2 — "yearning to know" — but even there the feeling is directed toward knowledge. **Proper love means:** constancy of knowledge, constancy of attachment of thought — constantly thinking of the Almighty, contemplating, yearning for the knowledge. Everything begins and ends with the Rambam with knowledge of God.

- **The metaphor of lovesickness — constancy, not intensity:** It was suggested that the metaphor brings out how strong the power of love is. But the correct meaning is that the metaphor brings out specifically **the constancy of thought** — that just as one who loves a woman thinks of her all the time, so should one think of the Almighty. Not the "power" of the feeling, but the fact that one cannot get away from it.

- **Translation of "shogeh bah tamid":** The Raavad brings two interpretations: (1) "shiggayon l'David" — he sings to the Almighty all the time; (2) "shogeig" — he forgets his own matters, he becomes crazy in his own affairs. **The interpretation in this lecture:** "shogeh" by the Rambam means a recurring and repeated thought — an "obsessive" thought that keeps coming back all the time. One cannot get away from it even b'shogeig — not only when one is

consciously aware, but one simply cannot think of other things.

- **The metaphor answers a practical question:** People ask: How can one think of the Almighty all the time? One is busy with wife, children, work! **The metaphor answers:** When a person has a strong desire for a woman, he does have time in the middle of eating to think of her. "Yeteirah mizo tehei ahavas Hashem" — love of God should be even stronger, so it goes with him all the time.

- **Song of Songs as a metaphor:** King Solomon called himself "lovesick" — but for the Almighty it's not a sickness, for the Almighty it's correct. **All of Song of Songs** is a metaphor for love of God — the entire Song of Songs brings out how all the time he/she thinks of the other.

- **The Rambam's method — first reasoning, then proof:** The Rambam's method: first he explains what he means (the metaphor of lovesickness), then he brings that this is indeed stated in the verse. He doesn't say "it's stated in the verse therefore one can say this" — rather he states his reasoning, and then shows that King Solomon already said the same thing.

- **True love vs. good physicality:** It was suggested that one can have love of God by thinking that everything comes from the Almighty — wife, children, livelihood. **But:** The Rambam would say that this is a good preparation, a good service from love, but **true love** is already a thought of the Almighty Himself. The revelation of "everything comes from the Almighty" is "just good physicality." **True shogeh bah tamid** is when a person learns deep matters, unifies with the Almighty, and a yearning is created in him to know more — he wants to understand how one understands this.

- **The structure of Sefer HaMadda:** Sefer HaMadda begins with knowing the Almighty — without knowledge one doesn't have what to think about all the time. "Shogeh bah tamid" — about what? About what the Almighty is. To understand the Almighty one must understand **all of creation**, one must understand **wisdom**. Then comes **Talmud Torah**, because Torah is also part of the wisdom of the Almighty. Everything is an order that leads to the constant knowledge of God.

Halacha 3 — Sources from the Sages for service from love

The Rambam's Words

The Rambam brings sources from the Sages (Sifrei): **"Lest you say, 'I will study Torah in order to be rich... in order to be called Rabbi... in order to receive reward in the World to Come,' the Torah teaches, 'to love God' — everything you do, do only from love."** Then he brings the verse **"He greatly desires His commandments"** — the Sages interpret: **"His commandments and not the reward of His commandments"** — the desire should be in the commandments themselves, not in the reward.

Simple Meaning

The sources from the Sages confirm the Rambam's principle that one must do everything from love, not for any external reasons.

Innovations

- **Antigonus of Socho — "b'yichud" and the danger of public:** The Rambam brings that **"the great sages... would command their wise students and those who understood them b'yichud."** It is discussed what "b'yichud" means — whether it means "yichud Hashem" (students who engage in unification of God's name), or "b'yichudus" (privately, not in public). **Conclusion:** "B'yichud" means **privately** — they didn't say it in public, because this is something one doesn't say to everyone.

- **Antigonus of Socho's statement: "Do not be like servants who serve the master in order to receive a reward, but be like servants who serve the master not in order to receive anything."** The servant who serves not for money — he serves because he knows that this is how it should be, because "it comes this way, because this is truth." One can interpret "mipnei shetov l'ovdo" — "raui" is another word for "tov." But if someone means "al menas lekabel tovah" that he receives good for himself, he hasn't truly understood.

Halacha 4 — Lishmah and shelo lishmah

The Rambam's Words

"Anyone who engages in Torah in order to receive reward, or so that misfortune should not befall him, is engaging in it shelo lishmah." And **"Anyone who engages in it not from fear and not to receive reward, but from love of the Master of all the earth who commanded it, is engaging in it lishmah."**

Simple Meaning

Shelo lishmah is when one learns for reward or to escape punishment. Lishmah is when one learns from love of the Master of all the earth.

Innovations

- **Lishmah means comprehension of God:** "From love of the Master of all the earth" doesn't mean simply he loves to do commandments of the Almighty. The Rambam goes according to wisdom and comprehension — he engages in Torah because he wants to understand the Master of all the earth. Through Torah one understands Him. The servant sees that there is a "master" (adon), and consequently he will engage in Torah lishmah in order to comprehend the Master of all the earth.

Halacha 5 — Shelo lishmah leads to lishmah, the process of education

The Rambam's Words

The Rambam brings the principle from the Sages: **"A person should always engage in Torah even shelo lishmah, for from shelo lishmah one comes to lishmah."** And he explains: **"Therefore, when teaching children, women, and the ignorant in general, we teach them only to serve from fear and in order to receive reward, until their knowledge increases and they gain greater wisdom. Then we reveal to them this secret little by little, and accustom them to this matter gently, until they comprehend it, know it, and serve Him from love."**

Simple Meaning

One begins with shelo lishmah because most people cannot immediately begin with lishmah. One educates gradually, until they reach lishmah.

Innovations

- **Why shelo lishmah must exist:** Lishmah from love is not a small thing — most people need to begin with shelo lishmah. If they won't begin learning at all, they will never acquire wisdom. One cannot love wisdom before one tastes it — this is a contradiction. "One must taste something before one loves it." Therefore there must be shelo lishmah, because lishmah won't begin on its own.

- **The Rambam's parable in Commentary on the Mishnah, Sanhedrin:** One tells a boy "learn Torah so you'll get a candy." The boy thinks the candy is better than Torah. But when he begins learning, he begins to feel a taste in Torah, begins to enjoy the Torah, and consequently comes to lishmah — he sees that Torah is the only enjoyment.

- **"B'nachas" and the danger:** The "gentleness" is necessary because people don't understand spiritual reward, and things people aren't accustomed to are far from understanding. Also one can stumble — one might think that if so there is no reward at all. The Rambam brings (in Commentary on the Mishnah) from Avos d'Rabbi Nosson that "sages, be careful with your words" was said about what Antigonos of Socho said, and his students (Tzadok and Baitus) mistakenly thought there is no reward at all.

Halacha 6 — Love of God through knowledge

The Rambam's Words

"It is a known and clear matter that the love of the Holy One, blessed be He, is not bound in a person's heart until he constantly meditates on it as is proper, and abandons everything in the world except for it, as He commanded and said, 'And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul.'"

"One loves the Holy One, blessed be He, only through the knowledge with which one knows Him, and according to the knowledge will be the love — if little, little, and if much, much."

Simple Meaning

Love of God is only bound in the heart when one thinks of Him constantly. Love only goes according to knowledge — how much one knows, so much one loves.

Innovations

- **Against the approach of "singing and dancing":** The Rambam knows of an approach that one can simply sing and dance and thereby love the Almighty. He explicitly disagrees with this — he rules that love only goes according to knowledge. How much one understands, so much one loves. Little knowledge — little love; much knowledge — much love.

Halacha 6 (continued) — Therefore, back to knowledge

The Rambam's Words

"Therefore, a person must devote himself to understand and comprehend the wisdoms and insights that inform him of his Creator, according to the capacity that a person has to understand and comprehend, as we explained in Hilchos Yesodei HaTorah."

Simple Meaning

Therefore a person must devote himself to understand wisdoms that make him acquainted with the Almighty,

according to his capacity, as the Rambam already explained in Hilchos Yesodei HaTorah.

Innovations

- **The circle closes:** The Rambam ends Sefer HaMadda with knowledge — service lishmah must be according to love, love must be according to knowledge, and for this there is a commandment of "And you shall love the Lord your God." "With all your heart" means that one should devote time to knowing the Almighty according to one's capacity.

- **"According to capacity" answers an argument:** Someone can say "I don't understand the Almighty anyway, am I exempt?" The answer: a person cannot comprehend the Almighty as He is (as the Rambam said in Yesodei HaTorah that as long as a person is composed of body and soul he cannot fully comprehend), but "according to the capacity that a person has" he can comprehend, and he is obligated to use this capacity.

- **"Devote himself" means learning in solitude:** It is explained that "devote himself" means not only devoting time, but also — just as the Rambam said earlier that one learns from a sage privately — so must a person himself be secluded and understand the wisdom that informs of the Almighty. He must reach a level where he can learn on his own in knowledge of God.

- **Sifrei in Sefer HaMitzvos:** The Sifrei says "learn in order to know" — the Rambam brings this in Sefer HaMitzvos. This means that the commandment of love is actually learning — through learning one comes to know, through knowing one comes to love.

- **[Digression — practical application:]** In practice, every Jew must make a study session in wisdom that leads to knowledge of God — whether it's Rambam, Chassidus, or other wisdoms that inform of the Almighty.

Conclusion of Sefer HaMadda — The Rambam's closing

The Rambam's Words

"The first book of the foundations of the Torah is completed with the help of the Almighty. And the number of chapters of this book is forty-six: Hilchos Yesodei HaTorah — ten chapters, Hilchos Deos — seven chapters, Hilchos Talmud Torah — seven chapters, Hilchos Avodah Zarah — twelve chapters, Hilchos Teshuva — ten chapters."

Simple Meaning

The Rambam makes a closing on the first book of the Mishneh Torah — Sefer HaMadda — with a blessing "Blessed is the Merciful One who helped," and he counts all the parts: 46 chapters in 5 sections of laws.

Innovations

- **The concept of "madda" — knowledge of God:** The name "Sefer HaMadda" means that the essential "knowledge" (science/knowledge) for a person is to understand the Almighty. This is the foundation of everything.

- **The connection between Sefer HaMadda and Sefer Ahava:** Sefer HaMadda is the foundation — to understand the Almighty, and Sefer Ahava (the second book) is the continuation — once one has knowledge, one can achieve love, which means constantly thinking about the Almighty, unable to stop. This is "shogeh bah tamid" — the person thinks

about the Almighty so many times a day through learning, praying, blessings, and all the services that are in Sefer Ahava.

- **[Digression — practical message:]** Although a person might think "I can learn on my own in knowledge of God by

being secluded and understanding wisdom," the tradition is that every Jew must make a study session in Rambam, a study session in Chassidus, or other wisdom that leads to knowledge of God. Through this one comes to love and service.

| Full Transcript

Laws of Repentance Chapter 10: Service of God from Love

Introduction – Chapter 10 in the Context of Laws of Repentance and Book of Knowledge

Speaker 1:

Rabbosai, we are learning Laws of Repentance Chapter 10, the last chapter, the final chapter in Laws of Repentance, and also in the entire Book of Knowledge. And one must think about how this fits in. The topic of this chapter is service of God from love or lishmah, which the Rambam is going to explain what this means.

Connection 1: Reward and Punishment (Chapters 7-9)

Ostensibly it is certainly connected with the last three chapters of Laws of Repentance, because he explained... he begins right away like this. He has now so beautifully explained what a tremendous reward there is, a person will think that the entire purpose is reward, and whenever he does service of God, Torah and mitzvos, he will think only of reward.

Speaker 2:

Yes, okay, okay. I mean that needs to be understood a bit better. But in any case, why? Because his reward is with him, the goal that a person must be is not to do it for the goal. One must understand what he means to say.

Speaker 1:

But what he means to say is that one cannot when one is engaged in Torah think only of the reward. One must be engaged in Torah with full, full focus. Ostensibly this is his... let's think, one must think inwardly.

But it is certain that it has to do as you say, that he explained to him what the good is, what one arrives at, one must explain how one thinks about the good, how one learns the good.

I mean that the other way to truly understand is that the proper service from love is one who truly understands how it works, I would say perhaps. Not one who thinks, as was discussed earlier, not one who thinks that the Almighty made a deal with people, you work and I will give you reward. No, the work itself is the truth, and consequently one receives reward. I mean this is how one will see inwardly.

What he is going to say is this, when a person learns all the time, but he learns only halfway because it's only a preparation for some great kind of reward, he never acquires wisdom. So the Torah in this world is of the same kind of thing, it's the same kind of thing as wisdom. Very good.

Connection 2: Levels of Understanding – Shelo Lishmah and Lishmah

So but this is one thing, it's certainly one connection. Another thing is, we spoke earlier, explained that there is the true understanding that the sages and prophets have, for example regarding the days of Mashiach etc., perhaps not everyone has it. And one will see in this chapter, at the end of the chapter more, that it is true that the service from love, truly, one

speaks yes, this is the Rambam, everything that the Rambam explained earlier about the reward, that the Torah speaks of reward, doesn't mean that this is the goal.

It could be that this is not what one says to everyone. It could be for simple people, for small children, one says yes, learn, let yourself understand the simple peshat in the Chumash also, yes, in the Chumash it also says, yes, learn Torah, do mitzvos, so that you should receive money, you should receive peace, etc. etc. It could be that the Rambam wants here to answer another answer essentially to that question, that truly indeed, this is shelo lishmah, but this is what one says to people as long as they don't yet understand. It could be this is another connection.

Connection 3: Conclusion to All of Laws of Repentance – Ten Days of Repentance

And a third thing which is important to grasp is, and I mean in this sense it is a conclusion not only for the entire Laws of Repentance and for the specific topic of reward and punishment, ah, two more things I must say sorry.

First of all it is a conclusion to all of Laws of Repentance, not only to the topic of reward and punishment, because repentance means we arrive at the World to Come, as we said, and repentance also means to ascend in all the levels that you have here, a person, from a sinner to a complete tzaddik, and afterwards you must know that you still have another level which is lishmah.

It could be repentance one does already coming not yet thinking always according to hint, Laws of Repentance has ten chapters corresponding to the Ten Days of Repentance, and on Yom Kippur one arrives at the level of lishmah, serving from love.

Connection 4: Conclusion to Book of Knowledge – Knowledge and Love

A fourth thing is, that it is a conclusion to the entire Book of Knowledge, because the Rambam is going to explain here that if one wants to possess love, one must see love according to knowledge, according to love, so is the language of the Rambam at the end of the chapter, that love has to do with what I know. The result of love is itself the knowledge.

So in this sense, and the Rambam will say explicitly that the fulfillment of the laws of love of God is essentially that one must learn knowledge, because through this one acquires the attribute of love, and he points back to Foundations of Torah. So in this sense it is essentially a conclusion to the entire Book of Love, not only a conclusion, it brings us back to why one must learn knowledge, why one must learn Foundations of Torah, all these foundational things that the Rambam has taught here, and it is also an introduction to the Book of Love, which is called literally Book of Love, we will see there what it means precisely.

Speaker 2:

Ah, this connects knowledge with love. One has all the knowledge that one has until now, and one must however go graduate to love. One will see at the beginning of Love how he interprets love.

Law 1 – A Person Should Not Say: Service from Fear is Not the Level of Prophets and Sages

Speaker 1:

Says the Rambam, **a person should not say**, yes? Says the Rambam, one has now learned about the tremendous thing of reward, that reward is a tremendous thing, and this is the main thing, a person should not say **"I will perform the commandments of the Torah in order to receive the blessings written in the Torah..."**

Explanation: Blessings Written in the Torah

The blessings he means those that he said earlier that they don't mean, anyway, that this is simple. The simple blessings written in the Torah which are part of the preparation for the World to Come, **or even in order that I should merit the life of the World to Come. Or they say the opposite, "and if I don't listen and transgress the sins that are mentioned I will be saved from the curses written in the Torah, so that I won't be cut off from the life of the World to Come."**

Discussion: What Does "In Order for the Life of the World to Come" Mean?

Speaker 2:

Says the Rambam, **"and it is not fitting to serve God in this way."** I mean, one must understand the life of the World to Come, because I mean he thinks from the perspective of a person who thinks that one can even say "in order for all the blessings written in the Torah." Simply, simply, that person doesn't truly understand what the World to Come means.

I would perhaps say that the person must give full one hundred percent focus on the wisdom because he is doing the wisdom. What does this mean? That the wisdom that he is now acquiring, he should acquire it because now this is very important. What does the World to Come mean? Also the wisdom is truth? Yes, but it is wisdom when it's already abstract wisdom without a body and... it's even better wisdom. But when a person... I understand my question.

Speaker 1:

Yes, but he must enjoy the wisdom now fully. This is what I say, exactly as this is correct. Something one must... okay.

Speaker 2:

I mean interpret that simply that life of the World to Come means what the masses mean is life of the World to Come. Perhaps the ultimate purpose of the deed, not the *nimshal* of the *mashal*. But you also say that something true animal soul, but perhaps later one will see better.

Explanation: One Who Serves from Fear is Not the Level of Prophets and Sages

Speaker 1:

He says, **"and it is not fitting to serve God in this way."** It is not fitting, it is not appropriate. **"For one who serves in this way is serving from fear."** He serves the Almighty from fear, because he is afraid of the curses.

The word *yirah* and *ahavah* doesn't necessarily mean fear versus love, but it means for a reason. Because blessings also, that this is only a means. **"And this is not the level of the**

prophets nor the level of the sages." And this level is not the level of prophets and not the level of sages.

"And none serve God in this way except the ignorant and the women and the children." Who is not a prophet or a sage? The ignorant, women and children. **"For one trains them to serve from fear."** Them one indeed trains to serve from fear, but the purpose is not that they should remain at this, rather **"until their knowledge increases"** – until their understanding becomes clearer, **"and they will serve from love."** One should serve the Almighty from love.

Law 1 (Continued) – One Who Serves from Love: Does the Truth Because It Is Truth

Explanation: One Who Serves from Love

He explains, one who serves from love, one who serves the Almighty with love, **engages in Torah and mitzvos and walks in the paths of wisdom**, he goes in the ways of wisdom, **not for any thing in the world**, not for any thing, **not from fear of evil**, not from fear of bad, **and not in order to inherit the good**, not in order to inherit good, **but does the truth because it is truth**, he does it with purity, he does the truth because it is truth. He does, he wants to understand and he wants to do the truth because it is truth.

Innovation: Truth is Truth in Itself – A Logical Necessity

Ostensibly this means simply, because – why is truth truth? Let's understand. Why is truth truth? One says truth is truth in order that one should receive reward, this doesn't make any sense. Truth is not truth in order that one should receive reward, truth is truth because it is truth. Perhaps this itself is the reward, but this one must still understand.

It's a thought, you know, such a piece of Torah, such a thing, wisdom, yes? It's foolishness, one doesn't need to be a prophet, one doesn't need to be a sage to understand this, it's a simple thing. But the Rambam says that truth is good because it is truth.

Innovation: Now is Already Truth – Not Only the World to Come

And not as was said that the World to Come, that a person lives and he thinks, now is only preparation for the World to Come, in the World to Come I will understand that then there will be wisdom. No, the person should know that now is already also truth, it's already wisdom now. But one speaks more of the reasons, the motivation, the reasons. And the reason must be that the reason is obligated in itself. If one speaks of the truth, the good is good in itself. If one doesn't speak of the truth, the good is indeed a problem.

Speaker 2:

Sometimes even in the Torah there are parts of the Torah that are only preparations for truth, so that one shouldn't stumble on some sin. One speaks here presumably the part of the Torah that is truth because it is truth. But also, he does it so that he should arrive at the truth.

Explanation: And the Good Will Eventually Come in the Whole

Speaker 1:

He says, **and the good will eventually come in the whole**, in the whole of truth it also comes that with this it will bring good, it will bring life of the World to Come, it will bring all good. But this may not be the main focus.

Innovation: Dispute of Rambam with Kabbalists – Truth Above Good or Good Above Truth

I want to tell you a deep comment that no one will understand, not even me, but there is a dispute between the Rambam and the Kabbalists. And the Kabbalists would have said that one must write does the good because it is good and the truth will eventually come. The Rambam says does the truth because it is truth and the good will eventually come.

There is a deep dispute whether good is above truth or truth is above good. The Rambam, truth means wisdom. The Rambam held in the approach that wisdom is the real thing. The Baal HaTanya says that the good is included in wisdom, but others have said that truth is included in the good.

Okay, it makes a lot of differences. It's not just a play on words whether one calls this the Name truth or one calls it good. No, no, it's a real difference. Good means a thing that is good, that is desired, and truth means a thing that is true, even if it's not desired. No, it's obvious that it's also. Everyone agrees that it goes together. The question is only what is prior to what.

But I say this only as a hint, because the impression of this word truth can disturb people. If one doesn't feel on the right path, one should say "does the good because it is good". It's the same thing by Ivov.

Law 1 (Continued) – And This Level... Not Every Sage Merits It

Explanation: The Level of One Who Serves from Love is Very High

Speaker 1:

In any case, says the Rambam, now, this is what is fitting. The Rambam goes in the same structure as his entire time. First he tells you the truth. The truth is that one should not do from fear but from love, almost for small people. But, says the Rambam, it's not so simple. It's not so simple.

And this level, says the Rambam further, **and this level**, the level of doing the truth because it is truth, from love, and for no other reason, **it is a very great level**, it's a great level, it's a great virtue, **and not every sage merits it**, even a sage, not every sage merits this.

Contradiction Within Itself: Prophets and Sages vs. Not Every Sage Merits It

Earlier he said prophets and not sages, here he says even among the sages not all. There are levels, I think. Perhaps he means to hint that a sage among the sages, certain sages that he speaks of them in the words, not all of them were on this level.

Speaker 2:

No, he says very frightening, one must really understand it. It's a contradiction. Earlier he said very frightening, now he says even a sage. Perhaps in him himself there are levels. Perhaps this is the secret. The truly true level of one who serves from love, this is already even a sage doesn't merit. Could be interesting. It looks like a contradiction within itself.

Speaker 1:

I don't believe that the commentator will deal with this contradiction. You can be completely sure that he won't. It's not the intent of contradictions that one should become from them. One must see. Perhaps yes. He says here something, for example... No, no, no, he doesn't say.

I tell you, it's indeed a contradiction. The Rambam means something deeper. Something he means to say with this "not every sage merits it". I'm not the sage, that I should merit that

you should understand. No, for us to understand also... You should understand with us that there is here something a place to become better. For us to also consider ourselves sages, and for us to not yet consider ourselves completely on the level. And to understand that everything that has been done was only with a reversal.

Explanation: The Level of Avraham Avinu Who the Holy One Blessed Be He Called "My Beloved"

There is indeed a "and this stood for our fathers and for us". The "our fathers" is yes on the wisdom that they merited this. This is the "our fathers", **"whom the Holy One Blessed Be He called 'My beloved'."** What does the Almighty call "My beloved"? That everything they did was only with a reversal.

Law 3 (Continued) – Avraham Avinu as the Example of One Who Serves from Love

Speaker 1:

Perhaps there are in this itself levels, perhaps this is the secret. This speaks truly the level of one who serves from love, this is already even a sage doesn't merit.

Speaker 2:

Okay, this is interesting. It looks like a contradiction within itself.

Speaker 1:

Okay, I don't believe that the commentator will engage in this contradiction. I can be completely sure that he won't. It's not the point of contradictions that one can become from it. One must see, perhaps yes.

Speaker 2:

Does he say here something? For example?

Speaker 1:

No, no, no, okay, he doesn't say. I tell you, I see that he has contradictions. But he means I think something deeper. Something he means to say with this "not every sage merits this". It seems I'm not the sage who merits to understand this.

Speaker 2:

No, for us to understand also. We understand that there is here something a place to live better. We also consider ourselves sages, and we don't yet consider ourselves completely on the love. It's understandable to us what he says here.

Avraham Avinu – "My Beloved"

Speaker 1:

Says the Rambam, **"and this is the level of Avraham Avinu"**. Avraham Avinu is yes the sage who merited this. This is the level of Avraham Avinu, **whom the Holy One Blessed Be He called "My beloved"**. Why does the Almighty call him "My beloved"? That everything he did was only with love, **"because he served only from love"**.

He didn't serve the Almighty because he loved the Almighty. "And you shall love Hashem" doesn't mean love. Love means that he does everything he does only from love, not from fear, not for any thing in the world. Avraham Avinu was a lover. What does a lover mean? Avraham Avinu was a lover means that you are also... calm. A great level. A tremendous thing.

Avraham Avinu was recognition of the Creator, and he understood the error that everyone made, and he did kindness with the entire world, but he didn't do it for any thing, only for love of God.

Love = Doing the Truth Because It Is Truth

Speaker 1:

"**And this**", ah, this is the love. You will tell me that this is love, but says the Rambam, this is love. Love is doing the truth because it is truth. "**And this is the level that the Holy One Blessed Be He commanded us through Moshe Rabbeinu**". The level of Avraham Avinu the Almighty demands from every Jew. Every Jew should be a bit of Avraham Avinu.

As it is stated, "**And you shall love Hashem your God**", you should love the Almighty, "**with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might**". You should be an ohev Hashem, meaning you should do Torah and mitzvos and chochma out of ahavas ha'emes because it is emes.

And this is apparently the meaning of "with all your heart," because this is the reason for everything. Consequently, this includes all the meanings of all these words, but apparently you see that it includes everything. This is indeed the purpose of everything. It fits very well, because the Rambam says many times that what Avraham Avinu did voluntarily, Moshe Rabbeinu made into mitzvos. This is the whole thing, Moshe makes mitzvos.

Ahavas Hashem ≠ Doing Mitzvos Out of Love

Speaker 1:

Ah, "**and when ahavas Hashem will be proper**," he will love the Almighty because the Almighty is the emes and His essence is emes. Soon we will see what is ahava reuya. "**Then it will occur to him to do all the mitzvos out of love**," he will do all mitzvos out of love. Not only is the essence of ahavas Hashem his love. Very good.

So ahavas Hashem is not the same thing as doing mitzvos out of love. Ahavas Hashem means knowing the Almighty, we'll see. Knowing the Almighty, thinking of Him all the time. And consequently he does mitzvos because of this, because mitzvos bring him to this, and they are actions that stem from this, and so on and so forth.

Halacha 4 – What is the Proper Love

The Parable of Cholas Ahava

Speaker 1:

The Rambam says, "**What is the proper love?**" What is ahava reuya? The Rambam says, this is what is meant, here the Rambam brings a very simple parable. It's very interesting, because the love that we know is not yedias hachochma, it's a different kind of love, it's ahavas gashmiyus. So the Rambam brings ahavas gashmiyus as a parable.

Introduction: Ahava Reuya = Constancy of Thought, Not Feelings

Speaker 1:

I just want to say an introduction, because you may disagree with my interpretation afterwards, but I want to say an introduction, because I spoke about this in a shiur here, people said that the Rambam says differently than I explain. I want to say what the Rambam is seeking here.

What the Rambam is seeking here is as follows: What does ahava reuya mean? It's very important, because most people think, the Rambam himself speaks about this in the Moreh at the end of the sefer, most people think ahava reuya means he

has some very strong feeling, he goes out, he sings Ashira twice, and he feels something and his blood turns around.

The Rambam says that this has nothing to do with anything at all. One must remember, everything begins and ends by the Rambam with daas Hashem, knowing the Almighty, knowing all the creations of the Almighty, and so forth. So ahava reuya doesn't mean that he has a lot of feelings. Feelings are perhaps a nice thing, perhaps not, the Rambam almost never speaks of feelings.

I just want to emphasize, does the Rambam speak of feelings? Only when he says in Chapter 2, he yearns to know, but always the feeling is towards yediah. Either he knows or he doesn't know, but not the feeling. The Rambam doesn't let the feeling into the mitzva at all, the Rambam doesn't speak of it.

What Does "Shogeh Ba Tamid" Mean

Speaker 1:

If so, the Rambam asks, what do you mean when I say Avraham Avinu was an ohev Hashem? Okay, I know that he means he did everything out of love, but I say that to do everything out of love one must have ahavas Hashem. What does ahavas Hashem mean?

The Rambam says, I will tell you what he means, and I will explain to you the parable from Shir HaShirim. What he means is that he thinks of this all the time. He thinks of it all the time. Consequently he understands better, consequently he knows of this.

When he brings a parable, the parable that he gives of cholas ahava for a woman, he doesn't mean to bring the parable of how crazy the person is. He means to bring out that the parable brings out the constancy of knowledge, the constancy of attachment of thought.

Speaker 2:

Or he brings out how strong the power of love is. The power of love that a person should have for this.

Speaker 1:

That's what I'm saying, that could be, but I learn that what he learns from the parable of cholas ahava is specifically the topic of always thinking of it. Which is true, one who loves a certain woman very strongly thinks of her all the time, but he doesn't bring the power of the feeling, but rather the constancy, he thinks all the time, the constancy of thought.

The Rambam's Language

Speaker 1:

He says briefly, "**And you shall love Hashem with a great, exceeding, mighty, very strong love, until your soul is bound in the love of Hashem, and you are found thinking of it constantly**". That he thinks of it all the time, it's hard for him to think of other things. All the time he thinks of the Almighty.

He says, "**as if he is sick with love**," like people who are sick with love. There is such a thing, a person becomes sick with love, he becomes "obsessed," he falls "in love" as we call it, he falls into love for a certain woman, "**whose mind is never free from the love of that woman and he thinks of her constantly, when he sits and when he rises and when he eats and drinks**," he thinks all the time, his mind returns to her.

He says, ahavas Hashem means that all the time one is busy with the Almighty, all the time one thinks and contemplates

and yearns for the knowledge of the Almighty. **"Even more so should the love of Hashem be in the hearts of those who love Him,"** ahavas Hashem that is spoken of means that it should be even stronger than the lover who loves a woman and thinks of her all the time.

Ahavas Hashem means that all the time one is busy with the Almighty, "shogeh ba tamid." Only all the time, "shogeh ba" means that one cannot get away from this even inadvertently. Not only when one is consciously thinking of the Almighty, but one simply cannot think when one wants not to.

Discussion: What Does "Shogeh" Mean

Speaker 1:

The Raavad has a question here what "shogeh" means, he doesn't know what he means. But I think that the Rambam means to say... Yes, the Raavad brings two interpretations of what "shogeh" means. I think that the Rambam means simply, "shogeh" by the Rambam means thinking all the time. It's a special "verb" for a thought that is like "obsessive." "Obsessive" sounds wrong, but as if it's all the time, you understand? A thought that returns and repeats all the time.

The Raavad says two other interpretations, okay. Yes, the Raavad says he doesn't know what it means. If it means "shiggayon l'David," he sings to the Almighty all the time, or "shogeh" he thinks of Him. Or a second one, that as he says "shogeh," no, that he makes a mistake in his matters, he forgets his own things, he becomes crazy etc. It's like "im amcha eilecha evrach," it's when he is mistaken, when he forgets.

The Parable Answers a Practical Question

Speaker 1:

The parable is very good, why? Because people object, how can one think? About what is this called in Chassidic language, I think that when one speaks about thinking of the Almighty, if I may say, one says, but I'm busy with my wife and children, I'm busy with my work.

One says indeed, yes yes, when you have some great desire for some woman, you do indeed have time in the middle of eating to think of her. Yes, even more so should ahavas Hashem be. It's something that goes with him all the time, because this is what... even more so should ahavas Hashem be, "and you shall love, thinking of it constantly," as Moshe Rabbeinu told us "with all your heart" - with the whole heart, "and with all your soul and with all your might."

It means, even when one is busy. Perhaps he means when one is busy with matters of the soul and busy with matters of money, you should love the Almighty. So is the thought, because he thinks that he means the verse further, "when you sit in your house and when you walk on the way." Perhaps he means when one is busy...

Discussion: True Love vs. Good Physicality

Speaker 2:

Yes, one is busy, the Almighty gave them to you, they come from the Almighty, the Almighty gave them to you.

Speaker 1:

But we said a whole principle in one of the shiurim that we spoke about this, that the Rambam wouldn't say so, because the Rambam said that this is a very great preparation, it's very good, it's avoda out of love. But true love is already a thought of the Almighty.

The Rambam would say, the revelation of this is simply good physicality. A person who learns deep matters and unifies with the Almighty, a yearning develops in him, he wants to know how to understand this. This is a "shogeh ba tamid" situation.

Shir HaShirim as a Parable

Speaker 1:

The Rambam says, **"And this is what Shlomo said by way of parable 'for I am sick with love.'"** Shlomo HaMelech was indeed the one who made the parable. Shlomo already thought that there is indeed such a thing as being sick with love. There is indeed such a thing as becoming sick from love. He called himself sick with love. He wasn't sick with love. He says, this means sick with love for the Almighty. But no, no, the Rambam doesn't say it's sick with love for the Almighty. For the Almighty it's not a sickness, for the Almighty it's correct. Yes, certainly, certainly, but he won't be cured.

Speaker 2:

I'm saying, Shlomo says by way of parable, he's not saying about the Almighty.

Speaker 1:

Okay, he says, he's speaking of the parable of the man and woman there. But all of Shir HaShirim is indeed a parable to ahavas Hashem. Shir HaShirim speaks about the love of man and woman, it's indeed a parable that one thinks of the Almighty all the time. All of Shir HaShirim brings out how one thinks of her all the time or she thinks of him, whatever way. This is indeed what the Rambam means.

And he only explains one verse "sick with love," but there is indeed a place to explain the whole thing about this. No, he says, he brings the sick with love to show that his example that he said, his parable, is indeed Shlomo HaMelech's parable.

The Rambam's Order: First Reasoning, Then Proof

Speaker 1:

The Rambam makes an order. First the Rambam explains his way, first he explains what he says, then he says that this is indeed what it says in the verse. No, the Rambam doesn't say "it says in the verse and therefore one can say this." The Rambam says "I say," and this is what he said, I'm trying to replicate, I want to replicate. Then he says, ah, it's not, it indeed says in the Rambam.

The Rambam says, "the early sages said." I just want to think. I had something else to say about the sick with love, I don't know what. Okay.

The Structure of Sefer HaMada

Speaker 1:

Ah, until here the Rambam taught us that one must do so, and consequently one must have this strong love. He brings that this doesn't only say, he already also brought it, that one doesn't have to do out of love, no, he said. First he indeed said that it's a great level.

I would want to understand it this way, Sefer HaMada begins with knowing the Almighty. Without knowledge one doesn't have what to think about all the time. Shogeh ba tamid, think all the time about what? It begins with what the Almighty is. To understand the Almighty one must understand all of creation, and one must understand the wisdom to be able to understand the Almighty.

And then comes in everything that one must use in order to be able to understand. Wait, then comes in talmud Torah,

because the Torah is indeed also a part of the wisdom of the Almighty.

Sources from Chazal for Service Out of Love

One removes avoda zara with things that can distract, and teshuva in order to be able to return to the Almighty if one forgets. Here one returns to love, it's like the end of mada. Love, what is yedias Hashem? He will tell you at the end. Okay, but now he's just bringing sources from the sages that this is indeed true that one must do... that there is a distinction between love and fear, and one must do out of love, etc., yes?

The early sages said... With Chazal said in Sifrei, **"Lest you say I will learn Torah in order to become wealthy,"** so that I will receive reward and be wealthy, ah, **"in order that I be called rabbi,"** that people should call me a rabbi, **"or in order that I receive reward in the World to Come, therefore it says to love Hashem, all that you do, do not do except out of love."** Everything you do you should do out of love. Instead of thinking now about the Almighty from now, not thinking about the World to Come. Yes.

And the sages further said, "in His commandments he greatly desires," Chazal say on this, **"in His commandments,"** that the desire, the will, should be in the mitzvos themselves, **"and not in the reward of His commandments."** Very good.

Antignus Ish Socho — "In Private" and the Danger of Public

He continues, **"Therefore the great sages..."** There is indeed the rosh yeshiva among us, he will explain to us what he means by sages of the idol worshippers. **"who knew and understood, would command their wise students and teach them in private"**. This is something they warned the important students, the great students.

Discussion: What Does "In Private" Mean?

Speaker 1:

"In private," like something that cannot be said before everyone, like maaseh merkava, the righteous of the generations?

Speaker 2:

Ah, yes, presumably that's what he means. Very good. Because, yes.

Speaker 1:

Or perhaps their students who were engaged in the unification of Hashem?

Speaker 2:

No, no, in private he means here in privacy, that's what he means. They didn't do it in the unification of Hashem, they did it in privacy. They didn't say it in public. The Rambam, because the Rambam wants to bring this out, that this is not said in public. This is only for the... for the... means the righteous of the generations really didn't belong there. That's why they went to say it in public.

The Statement of Antignus Ish Socho

Speaker 2:

What did Antignus Ish Socho say? Tell the people, first what did they say, then we will explain.

Speaker 1:

They said, **"Do not be like servants who serve the master in order to receive reward"**. It says in Avos, but **"in order to receive benefit,"** that they should receive benefits. **"Rather be like servants who serve the master not in order to receive anything"**. Be like those who want to serve, a servant who loves his master so much, **"and it is proper to serve him"**.

Discussion: Understanding the Servant Who Doesn't Serve for Money

Speaker 2:

What does a servant who doesn't seek money do? Rather the servant knows that this is how it should be, that he serves his master because he wants to, because this is how it comes, because this is emes. One can say **"because it is good to serve him,"** this is proper, another word for good. If one thinks **"in order to receive benefit,"** means that he receives benefit, he hasn't truly understood. But this is what he will apparently mean.

Speaker 1:

Well, **"because the World to Come is good," "because attaining Hashem is good"**.

Speaker 2:

Very good.

Lishma and Shelo Lishma

The Rambam continues, **"Whoever engages in Torah..."** ah, this is what is called in the sages' language, **"out of love,"** or another language, **"that a person should not engage in order to receive reward"**. The Rambam translated, the Rambam brought the translation of the Mishna and translated "pras" for "pras," no one knows what "pras" means. The Rambam says, another word that it's called, **"lishma"**.

The Rambam says, **"Whoever engages in Torah in order to receive reward, or in order that punishment not come upon him, behold this one engages in it shelo lishma"**. He does Torah shelo lishma, not for the purpose of the Torah itself. **"Whoever engages in it not out of fear and not to receive reward, but rather because of love of the Master of all the earth who commanded it,"** one who engages in Torah and mitzvos not because of fear, not because of reward, but because he loves the Almighty, the Master of all the earth commanded so, **"behold this one engages in it lishma"**.

Innovation: Lishma Means Attaining Hashem

And what does the Torah have to do with the Master of all the earth? Because through the Torah one understands Him, true? Not simply because he loves to do mitzvos of the Almighty. This I want to emphasize. Because the Rambam goes exactly like this with wisdom and attainments, right? He engages in Torah because he loves, whoever loves the Master of all the earth wants to understand Him.

The Rambam says, he says in Chapter 10, he returns to the service with the master. The servant sees that there is a master. The servant sees that there is a master, and consequently he will engage in Torah lishma in order to attain the Master of all the earth.

Shelo Lishma Comes to Lishma — The Process of Education

But the sages said an interesting thing. **A person should always engage in Torah even shelo lishma.** It means, if a person thinks lishma is the most important thing, but the

other option is not to learn Torah at all? No. First learn Torah even if you're not yet worthy of the level of lishma. **Because from shelo lishma comes lishma**, because from shelo lishma you will come to lishma. The purpose is ultimately lishma. Very good.

Or the other words that the Rambam brings out here is that the lishma, it goes back to what you said earlier, the lishma out of love is not a small thing. Not I say every Jew lishma, it's a great service. So consequently, most people must indeed begin with shelo lishma, or many people will remain there.

Therefore, when teaching the young and the women and the common people, do you know who is an am ha'aretz? The one who learned a whole Sefer HaMada and hasn't yet learned the last chapter. Because now we're learning already, we've learned a whole sefer, and we're certainly no longer in the category of amei ha'aretz. The Rambam says that we are that type. One cannot see that we are the amei ha'aretz.

Translation

"And we teach them only to serve out of fear and in order to receive reward." We teach them, yes, to learn from fear and in order to receive reward. **"Until their knowledge increases and they become exceedingly wise,"** until they become wiser and they understand better, then **"we reveal to them this secret little by little,"** we teach them the secret gradually, **"and we accustom them to this matter gently,"** we accustom them to this matter with calmness, **"until they attain it and know it and serve Him out of love."** Until they will attain it and they will know Him and they will serve Him out of love. Perhaps he means "until they attain it" - the matter, the same thing anyway.

Innovation: Why "Gently"

But the gentleness is apparently about the thing we spoke about earlier, because people don't understand what spiritual reward means, and all things that people are not accustomed to, they are far from understanding. And also, one can stumble, one can think that if so there is no reward, as Tzadok and Baitus thought.

Therefore it says in the Gemara, and the Rambam brings it, not in the Gemara, in Avot d'Rabbi Natan, and the Rambam brings it there in Perush HaMishnayot, that it says **"Sages, be careful with your words,"** and this was about what Antigonus of Socho said **"Do not be like servants who serve the master in order to receive reward,"** and they thought that there is no reward. Very good.

Here we see further that this should only be said particularly or only to one who is worthy, so that he should not come to be confused.

Innovation: How Does "Not for Its Own Sake" Lead to "For Its Own Sake"

But if one must say here, how does Torah not for its own sake work? Where is Shmuel's Torah? It's a segulah, not a segulah. When one learns, what does Torah not for its own sake mean?

The Rambam explains this at length in, how is it called, in Perush HaMishnayot in Sanhedrin, that one tells a boy "learn Torah so that you should have a candy." The boy thinks that the candy is better than the Torah, he learns therefore in order to receive the candy. But he begins to learn, he begins to feel a taste in the Torah, he begins to savor the Torah. So naturally it

comes for its own sake, because he is already learning the Torah, he begins to see that the Torah is the only pleasure.

I think that here he also says it, perhaps not so clearly, but if they won't begin to learn at all, certainly they will never acquire any wisdom. One must be a sage in order to have wisdom, and to become a sage one cannot through loving wisdom, because it's a contradiction. One must taste something before one loves it. Yes, it's a tremendous thing. Therefore there must be not for its own sake, because for its own sake won't begin. But gradually one arrives.

Love of God Through Knowledge - The End of Madda

Now the Rambam says, you thought that love means further... What does **"until he becomes wise and knows Him"** mean? How does one acquire love of God?

"It is a known and clear matter that the love of the Holy One, blessed be He, is not bound in a person's heart until he contemplates it constantly as is proper." A person cannot merit such a level of love of God, that the love of God should be so strongly bound in his heart, until he comes to a level **"that he contemplates it constantly as is proper,"** he will always think of the Almighty, **"and he will abandon everything in the world except for it,"** he will leave aside all other things in the world except for the love of the Holy One, blessed be He, **"as He commanded and said 'And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul,'"** there should be no place in the heart and in the soul for other things.

All these things, one cannot come to such a level of love **"except through the knowledge by which he knows Him,"** only through knowing the Almighty, understanding the Almighty with knowledge. Very good.

The Rambam says further, **"and according to the knowledge will be the love,"** the love will come according to how much knowledge one has. **"If little, little,"** if one understands the Almighty very little, one will only have less love, **"and if much, much,"** if one has great knowledge, a great comprehension of the Almighty, one will merit a great attainment in love.

Innovation: Against the Approach of "Singing and Dancing"

Here we see that the Rambam is here according to the approach of other people who think that one can simply sing and dance and understand and love the Almighty. The Rambam knew that approach and he explicitly disagrees with it, and he says the halacha that it doesn't work that way, it's "a person doesn't know the measure of his knowledge," and naturally it comes out in practice.

Therefore - Back to Madda

"Therefore," yes, says the Rambam, but therefore, he concludes once again with madda, **"a person must devote himself to understand and contemplate the wisdoms and insights that inform him of his Creator,"** a person must devote himself to understand and remind himself of the wisdoms and insights that inform the Almighty, that help him understand the Almighty, **"according to the capacity that exists in a person to understand and attain, as we explained in Hilchot Yesodei HaTorah."** As the Rambam said, that as long as a person is composed of body and soul, he cannot completely comprehend the Almighty, but he can begin a little, he can begin to understand his own soul a little, and

according to that understand spirituality, and understand the Almighty a little.

Discussion: "As We Explained" and the Mitzvah of Love

Speaker 1:

Yes, I would translate "as we explained" - ah, understand, that there is a mitzvah. In Yesodei HaTorah it already said there the call of the Almighty, and here it says that the mitzvah of love is what? It is learning. **"Learn in order that you should know,"** this is brought by the Sifrei, I think in Sefer HaMitzvot he brings the Sifrei.

Speaker 2:

So he says that since love of God, here he brings back the whole thing, in other words, we have arrived here at a place which is called service for its own sake. Service for its own sake must be according to love, love must be according to knowledge, and for that there is a mitzvah of **"And you shall love the Lord your God,"** and what it says **"with all your heart"** means that one should devote time to know the Almighty **"according to his capacity."**

Innovation: "According to Capacity" Answers an Argument

Certainly, perhaps you're right, that a person cannot comprehend the Almighty as He is, but according to the capacity that exists in a person he can comprehend, and therefore one is not exempt. Someone can say, I don't understand the Almighty anyway, so am I exempt. The answer is, there is indeed a capacity that a person has to attain and understand, and that capacity he must exercise. And what must one do?

Discussion: What Does "Devote Himself" Mean

Speaker 1:

I think that "devote himself" means to devote time, yes, he should set aside.

Speaker 2:

I thought that it's like he said earlier that one learns to be a sage in private, and a person must learn by himself in private. A person must occupy himself that I, I mean I can already learn by myself to learn about knowledge of God. I must be secluded and understand the wisdom that informs a person of the Almighty.

Speaker 1:

Not so good, the idea is that every Jew must make a shiur in Rambam, but a person should make a shiur in Chassidus or some other wisdom that brings to a person, the Almighty that

brings is the Almighty, but the thing then, Rabbeinu the Ari works, Rabbeinu the Ari works.

Conclusion of Sefer HaMadda - The Connection Between Madda and Love

The Concept of "Madda" - Knowledge of God

A person must occupy himself that I, I mean I can already learn by myself to learn about knowledge of God. I must be secluded and understand the wisdom that is knowledge for a person, the Almighty.

But the tradition is that every Jew must make a shiur in Rambam, and he must make a shiur in Chassidus, or some other wisdom that is knowledge for a person, the Almighty. And through this he will have love, and through this he will have service.

The Rambam's Conclusion to Sefer HaMadda

And here is the end. We didn't say, it's not written in my... **"Blessed is the Merciful One who has helped us,"** the Rambam concludes, thank God who has made me finish the entire book.

And after that he says, **"The first book is completed, from the foundations of the Torah, with the help of the Almighty,"** with the help of the Almighty. **"And the number of chapters of this book is forty-six chapters. Hilchot Yesodei HaTorah - ten chapters. Hilchot Deot - seven chapters. Hilchot Talmud Torah - another seven chapters. Hilchot Avodah Zarah - twelve chapters. And Hilchot Teshuvah - ten chapters."**

Stop a moment.

The Connection Between Sefer HaMadda and Sefer Ahavah - Innovation

Well, one minute, I have a whole time, I know what you don't mean. Madda is to understand the Almighty, and love is to always think, not be able to stop thinking of the Almighty.

We have finished Sefer HaMadda, and the rest continues further, we are going to learn further Sefer Ahavah. But this is the... Once one has madda one can have love and always be occupied with the Almighty, learning, praying, and making so many blessings, all these things are contemplating Him constantly, the person thinks about the Almighty so many times a day.

Conclusion

Blessed be God we have merited to finish the entire book.