

Laws of Repentance, Chapter 1 (Auto Translated)

English

Auto Translated

Shiur Overview

Summary of Lecture on Laws of Repentance Chapter 1 (Rambam)

Introduction: The Place of Laws of Repentance in Sefer HaMada

The Rambam places Laws of Repentance as the final laws in Sefer HaMada, which he describes as "commandments that are the foundation of the religion of Moshe Rabbeinu and one must know them first of all."

Simple Meaning

Laws of Repentance are either among the fundamental principles of the religion (a basic thing without which Judaism cannot exist), or among the things one must **know** (not just do).

Novelties and Explanations

1) Why teshuva is a fundamental principle of the religion — according to Moreh Nevuchim Part 3, Chapter 36: The Rambam himself says in Moreh Nevuchim that teshuva is a commandment that "the religion cannot live without" — because every person (or at least most people) sins, and if one thinks one cannot do teshuva, one will never observe the rest of the Torah. Teshuva is thus a **precondition** for all of Judaism.

2) Teshuva as a general principle relevant to all commandments: Teshuva is comprehensive regarding the entire Torah. With every commandment one can fail and needs to do teshuva. Without Laws of Repentance, the Rambam would have had to write by **every single commandment** separately how one does teshuva. This makes it a foundation for all other laws in the Rambam. It is compared to Laws of Sanhedrin and Punishments, where lashes are discussed — but there it is the law of the court (how **they** must administer lashes), not general rules of commandments. Teshuva, however, is a **comprehensive foundation** without which Judaism cannot live.

3) A point about human nature: A person is not the type of creation that one commands once and it's finished. A person must do teshuva all his days — this is part of the reality of being human with commandments.

The Rambam's Introduction — "One Positive Commandment"

"Laws of Repentance — one positive commandment, which is that the sinner should repent from his sin before Hashem and confess."

Simple Meaning

One positive commandment: that the sinner should do teshuva and confess.

Novelties and Explanations

4) The special language "and fundamental principles that are drawn along with it because of it": The

Rambam doesn't write as in other laws merely "and the explanation of this commandment in these chapters," but rather: **"And I will bring this commandment and fundamental principles that are drawn along with it because of it in these chapters."** In Laws of Repentance there is not only the commandment of teshuva, but also **fundamental principles** (foundations of faith/knowledge) that are "dragged along" with the commandment of teshuva.

5) Which fundamental principles are in Sefer HaMada: In all of Sefer HaMada there are only **two laws** where the Rambam includes fundamental principles of knowledge: **Laws of Foundations of Torah** (existence of Hashem and prophecy) and **Laws of Repentance** (reward and punishment, free will, and related principles). Other laws in Sefer HaMada, like idolatry, have almost no fundamental principles.

6) Which fundamental principles are missing from Sefer HaMada: The coming of Mashiach and resurrection of the dead are **not** directly discussed in Sefer HaMada. The Rambam in his Commentary on the Mishna Sanhedrin chapter Chelek explains that the coming of Mashiach and resurrection of the dead are details of reward and punishment — the general principles thereof are in Laws of Repentance.

7) Two layers in Laws of Repentance — rectification of deeds and rectification of the soul:

- **Rectification of deeds** — the simple commandment of teshuva: how one does teshuva, which things require more work, what prevents the paths of repentance. This is primarily **until chapter 4**.

- **Rectification of the soul** — the deeper level: how one becomes a better person, what is the purpose of being human. This includes: free will, reward and punishment, righteous/intermediate/wicked, who has a portion in the World to Come, heresy (chapter 3), and serving from love/fear (last chapter).

8) Free will is only an introduction to reward and punishment: Free will is **not** the main topic in itself, but rather an **introduction** to reward and punishment. "People like to talk about free will, but the foundations of reward and punishment are what is truly important."

9) Reward and punishment — not abstract, but relevant to service: The Rambam's entire formulation of reward and punishment is: how this should **influence a person's service of Hashem**. Therefore Laws of Repentance ends with serving from love and fear and education to Torah for its own sake — this is the practical purpose of understanding reward. One can say "reward" instead of "purpose": what is the goal of being a person? The goal **is** the reward.

10) From the worst person to the best person: Laws of Repentance gives a spectrum of **all levels of a person:** from

the worst (heretics, who has no portion in the World to Come — chapter 3) to the best (serving from love — last chapter).

11) Why the Rambam places fundamental principles specifically here — two explanations:

- (a) Because it is **inherently connected** to teshuva (one cannot speak about teshuva without free will/reward and punishment).

- (b) Because the Rambam **must place somewhere** the fundamental principles, and Laws of Repentance is the best place where it fits.

Both are true — the Rambam has a program in Sefer HaMada to include fundamental principles, and he places them where they fit best.

12) Precision in "drawn along with it because of it": "Drawn along with it" would have been enough — what does "because of it" add? Perhaps doubling of language for clarity, or perhaps two layers: "drawn along with it" = things that come naturally with teshuva, "because of it" = because of the commandment of teshuva come also broader fundamental principles. It remains open.

General Discussion: What is the Commandment of Teshuva?

The Dispute Whether Teshuva Itself is a Biblical Commandment

Opinion A (Sefer HaChinuch and others): The commandment is not teshuva itself, but rather the **manner** of how one does teshuva — that is, when one does teshuva one should do it with confession. Teshuva itself is not a separate positive commandment, because the obligation to rectify a sin stems from the original commandment itself (for example, the obligation of tzitzit itself tells you that you should put on tzitzit tomorrow).

Question on this understanding: If someone does teshuva but doesn't say confession, has he not fulfilled the commandment of teshuva? This is very difficult — teshuva primarily means that one should become better!

Opinion B (the Rambam's approach apparently): Teshuva itself is a positive commandment. This is a new commandment because teshuva requires new powers of the soul — a certain "courage," contemplation, humility — which goes beyond simply returning to the commandment.

Why Do Others Say That Teshuva is Not a Commandment?

- **Teshuva is a condition for all commandments**, like faith — and there are those who say that faith is also not a commandment (as is known the Behag's opinion).

- **It is a moral matter**, not really an obligation — because if one hasn't sinned, one doesn't need to do teshuva.

- **Question:** If it's a commandment, does that mean that the second day after the transgression there is no longer the commandment? One becomes exempt because one sinned once?

The Rambam's Verses — Why "and he shall confess" and Not "and you shall return to Hashem"

The Rambam doesn't bring the verse "and you shall return to Hashem your God" as the source for the commandment, because:

- The Rambam understands (somewhat like the Ramban) that "and you shall return to Hashem your God" is a **promise** (a

prophecy that at the end of exile one will return), not a command. The Rambam himself brings that verse later regarding the promises.

- The Rambam's source for the commandment is **"and he shall confess"** — because this is a **concrete action**, a tangible deed. The Rambam likes verses that say something physical, action-oriented.

- But "and he shall confess" doesn't mean simply saying "I have sinned" without stopping the sin — **the essence of the commandment is the subject of confession, but the meaning of confession is doing teshuva** — it's essentially the same thing.

An Interesting Explanation: Teshuva as Faith

Perhaps the commandment of teshuva is connected to **faith that Hashem forgives**, that one can return close, return to being a person — the concept of "rectification of the soul." Teshuva is not just that you put on tzitzit again, but **you have become a different kind of person**. Question: If so, would even someone who doesn't do teshuva but believes in teshuva already fulfill it? Answer: Someone who believes in the power of teshuva and doesn't do teshuva — what does he believe in? Faith means conducting oneself like one who believes.

Confession — Indispensable or Advice?

- **Explanation that confession is advice:** Just as a sacrifice is advice. If someone forgot or didn't know that one must say confession, his teshuva also helps.

- **Explanation that confession is necessary:** When a person doesn't say confession, the simple meaning is that he is not ready and not truly humble. But if we find a person who has such power of soul that he doesn't need confession for teshuva, it's not such a great deficiency.

- On Yom Kippur there are conditions that are not indispensable, and also with sacrifices — leaning is not indispensable for the sacrifice.

- **Confession without intention:** If someone says confession without seriousness, it becomes a "great mockery" — as the Gemara says "it becomes like permission."

The Language "Teshuva" — What Does "and he shall return from his sin" Mean?

- The Rambam writes "and he shall return **from** his sin" — going back **from** the sin, not "and he shall return **to** his righteousness."

- But the concept of teshuva also contains the idea that a person returns — the soul is a portion of God from above, and one returns to one's original state.

- Someone who has never done any commandments, one wouldn't call him "teshuva" — because he has nowhere to return to.

- The Rambam's understanding is that "and he shall return from his sin" means having regret — he retracts from what he was, returning to his previous state.

Law 1: Obligation of Confession in Teshuva

"All commandments in the Torah, whether positive or negative, if a person transgressed one of them, whether intentionally or unintentionally, when he does teshuva and returns from his sin he is obligated to confess before the blessed God, as it says 'a man or woman when they commit any human sin to commit a

trespass against Hashem and that soul becomes guilty, they shall confess their sin which they have done' — this is verbal confession, and this confession is a positive commandment."

Simple Meaning

When a person does teshuva from his transgression — whether positive or negative, whether intentional or unintentional — he is obligated to confess before Hashem. The verse in Numbers 5 speaks of trespass, but the Sages include that it applies to every transgression. Verbal confession is a positive commandment in itself.

Novelties and Explanations

1) Confession makes teshuva into an action: Teshuva itself has no specific action — when someone starts putting on tefillin again after two weeks of not putting them on, he is fulfilling the commandment of tefillin, not the commandment of teshuva. But confession gives teshuva an action — when he says confession, he is engaged in a commandment that is unique to teshuva itself. This is what the Rambam means by "positive commandment" — it gives teshuva a fulfillment through action.

2) Confession is not only a law in sacrifices: The Rambam establishes that one should not think ("lest it enter one's mind") that confession is only a part of the laws of sacrifices (like leaning), but rather it is a separate positive commandment. The Rambam in Sefer HaMitzvot brings from the Sages that the verse "from any human sin" includes every type of transgression, not just trespass.

3) "Before God" — confession must be before Hashem: When someone confesses to a spiritual guide or a "healer" but doesn't speak to Hashem — this is not confession. One should not think that confession is merely a practical psychological thing — that a person should be "open with himself." A transgression is a transgression before Hashem, and the confession must be to Him. Even between man and his fellow — the truth is that Hashem cries, and the confession goes to Hashem.

4) Unintentional — what does it mean? For an adult there is almost no unintentional — usually unintentional is somewhat more of a "neglect," a kind of disregard. One could have known, and therefore one must also do teshuva for unintentional. Unintentional is also somewhat of a wrong.

The Text of Confession

"How does one confess? One says: Please Hashem, I have sinned, I have been iniquitous, I have transgressed before You, and I have done such and such, and now I regret and am ashamed of my deed, and I will never return to this thing again. And this is the essence of confession, and whoever elaborates in confession and lengthens this matter is praiseworthy."

Simple Meaning

The Rambam gives the text of confession with three elements: (a) admission of the sin, (b) regret, (c) acceptance for the future. Elaborating more is praiseworthy.

Novelties and Explanations

1) "I have sinned, I have been iniquitous, I have transgressed" — three expressions: The three

expressions come from the verse itself which has three expressions of sin. One doesn't necessarily have to say all three expressions — the Rambam gives the general principle.

2) "The essence of confession" — what is indispensable: "Essence" here means what is indispensable — that confession must contain: (a) I have sinned, (b) I am ashamed / have regret, (c) I will not do it again. Without this there is no confession. "Whoever elaborates... is praiseworthy" means that more is better, though it is not indispensable.

3) "Praiseworthy" — not the essence but not indifferent: "Praiseworthy" means it is a good thing, but not the essence. One can elaborate on each point — in "Hashem" (understanding who Hashem is), in the expressions of sin, in "and I am Your servant, son of Your maidservant" — but all this is not the definition of confession.

4) "I have sinned" alone fulfills: From the Gemara it emerges that when someone says only "I have sinned" he has already fulfilled confession. Because in the word "I have sinned" is already included regret and acceptance for the future — because "I have sinned" with joy and pride is not confession. The meaning of "I have sinned" already is "I regret, I will never return."

5) "I will never return to this thing" — missing in the siddur: In almost no confession text in the siddur does it say "I will never return to this thing." But the Rambam doesn't mean that one must specifically say this language — one must express the concept. The Rambam gives the definition of confession, not a precise text. "I will never return" is already more of a prayer — I ask the Creator that He should help that I should not return again.

6) [Digression: confession vs. prayer] The "extra" — everything that is more than the essential confession — is actually prayer, not teshuva at all. Confession is "I have sinned" — that is the essence. The additions are prayer.

Law 1 (Continuation) — Confession with Sacrifices

"And likewise those who bring sin offerings and guilt offerings, at the time they bring their sacrifices for their unintentional or intentional acts, they are not atoned for by their sacrifice until they do teshuva and confess verbally, as it says 'and he shall confess that which he sinned upon it'."

Simple Meaning

Even when one brings a sin offering or guilt offering, one is not atoned for without teshuva and verbal confession.

Novelties and Explanations

1) Confession is fundamental, not a substitute for sacrifices: One might have thought that verbal confession is only necessary when we don't have the Temple — that confession is a substitute. The Rambam says the opposite: even when one does bring a sacrifice, one must do teshuva and say confession. Confession is fundamentally required.

2) When the Temple existed — confession with the sacrifice: When the Temple stood, the time to fulfill the commandment of teshuva/confession was when bringing the sacrifice. Perhaps both — sacrifice and confession — went together as one atonement process.

Law 1 (Continuation) — Confession for Those Liable to Death Penalties and Lashes

"And likewise all those liable to death penalties of the court and those liable to lashes, they are not atoned for by their death and their lashes until they do teshuva and confess."

Simple Meaning

Even when one receives the greatest punishment — death penalty of the court or lashes — one still needs teshuva and confession.

Novelties and Explanations

1) Question on death penalty with confession: With death penalty of the court, the person dies — he says "I won't sin again," but he's going to die, it's hard to sin when one is dead! What does the confession accomplish?

2) Answer — atonement for the soul: Atonement after he dies means that his soul should not go to Gehinnom. Without confession, even with death penalty of the court, the punishment is not enough for the soul.

3) A deeper understanding — confession shows true regret: The person can die against his will and still hold onto his transgressions. He has no choice — he is being killed. The confession shows that he truly wants to become better, he truly holds that he made a mistake. Without this the death is only a physical punishment without spiritual atonement.

4) General principle: Atonement comes from teshuva and confession. Sacrifices, death, lashes — these are only parts of the atonement, not a replacement for teshuva.

5) Source from Mishna Sanhedrin: "All those who are executed confess." The Gemara says that the confession is "may my death be atonement for all my sins."

Law 1 (Continuation) — Between Man and His Fellow

"And likewise transgressions between man and his fellow, such as one who injures his fellow or damages his property, even though he paid him what he owes him, he is not atoned for until he confesses and returns from doing such a thing ever again, as it says 'from any human sin'."

Simple Meaning

Even when one has already paid the damage, one is not atoned for until one says confession and accepts upon oneself not to do such a thing again.

Novelties

"Human sin" is interpreted as sins between man and man — "man's sin to man" — as Midrash Tehillim says. This is the source that confession also applies to between man and his fellow.

Law 1 (Continuation) — Teshuva Atones for Everything, and the Essence of Yom Kippur

"And even a wicked person all his days who does teshuva at the end, one does not mention to him any of his wickedness, as it says 'and the wickedness of the wicked shall not cause him to stumble on the day he returns from his wickedness.' And the essence of Yom Kippur atones for those who repent, as it says 'for on this day He shall atone for you'."

Simple Meaning

Even a person who was wicked his entire life, if he does teshuva at the end, one does not remind him of his wickedness. The very day of Yom Kippur atones for those who do teshuva.

Novelties and Explanations

1) "One does not mention to him any of his wickedness" — sharp language of complete erasure: The Rambam doesn't just say that one calls him a penitent — he says that one does **not mention him at all** as a wicked person. Ninety years he sinned, one day he did teshuva — "Welcome, righteous one of the generation." It's a total erasure of the wickedness-identity.

2) Meaning of "shall not cause him to stumble": The Rambam interprets the verse that normally a person stumbles with his wickedness — the wickedness keeps him in constant transgression. But once he has done teshuva, he will not stumble again. **The Rambam interprets "shall not stumble" as a practical thing — he will not stumble again** — not as a matter of shame or reminder.

3) Great novelty/dispute: whether the essence of Yom Kippur atones without teshuva for minor transgressions:

The Rambam says "atones **for those who repent**" — only for those who do teshuva. But if teshuva itself already atones, what is the addition of the essence of Yom Kippur?

The **source of "the essence of Yom Kippur"** comes from the **Sifra** which learns from "for on this day He shall atone" that **the day itself atones even without intentions/teshuva**. The Rambam actually means that Yom Kippur atones for **minor transgressions even without teshuva**, and what he writes "for those who repent" means only **ideally one should do teshuva**, but after the fact the day itself atones for minor ones.

4) Question — the scapegoat: The scapegoat atoned for minor transgressions without teshuva. If teshuva itself already atones for minor ones, and Yom Kippur also atones for minor ones — what is the difference? Answer: When a person is occupied with his **serious transgressions**, he has no strength to think about his **minor transgressions**. For this the day itself (or the scapegoat) removes the minor ones without specific teshuva for them.

5) Two ways to learn "for on this day He shall atone for you":

- **Way A:** "For on this day" — the day itself atones, without teshuva (like the Sifra).

- **Way B:** The entire verse reads "for on this day He shall atone for you **to purify you from all your sins before Hashem you shall be purified**" — "before Hashem you shall be purified" means that one should do teshuva, and therefore "for on this day He shall atone" is only for those who do teshuva.

6) "For those who repent" means "for Jews" — alternative interpretation: "Return" can mean "for Jews" (Jews who are part of Yom Kippur), not necessarily that one must actively do teshuva for each specific transgression. Yom Kippur is a "reset" — a day when transgressions are forgiven.

7) Practical effect of Yom Kippur — not just "magic in heaven": A person who has done teshuva still feels "dirty."

Yom Kippur tells him: "You're already clean, you can become righteous." Every year people become better **because they believe that Yom Kippur helps**. This itself is already a form of teshuva.

8) Yerushalmi — Yom Kippur atones for a whole year: A Yerushalmi says that the essence of Yom Kippur atones for a whole year. Question: If the day has such power, why only once a year? (Remains open.)

Law 2 — The Scapegoat

"The scapegoat, since it is atonement for all Israel, the High Priest confesses upon it in the language of all Israel."

Simple Meaning

Because the scapegoat is atonement for all of Israel collectively, the High Priest must confess on behalf of all Israel.

Novelties

1) Question — how does teshuva work on behalf of all Israel? Teshuva is a personal thing — the person himself must have regret. How can the High Priest do teshuva in the name of everyone?

2) Explanation — the scapegoat's psychological/spiritual effect: The scapegoat works through "the power of imagination" (as the Rambam himself says in other places). The main effect is: one awakens the person to see that **there is no despair**. A major reason why people remain bad is because they feel fallen — "I've already sinned, I'm a hopeless case." The scapegoat, which atones "for all transgressions in the house of Israel," is very powerfully convincing to the person to believe in atonement. This is like the verse "return to Me for I have redeemed you" — Hashem says: "Come back, because I have already redeemed you from your sin." A person doesn't want to return to Hashem because he feels stained from sin, and the scapegoat helps him believe that atonement is possible.

Divisions of Atonement — The Scapegoat With and Without Teshuva

The scapegoat atones for all transgressions in the Torah, the minor and the serious, with a distinction:

Minor ones (prohibitions without excision): Without teshuva — the scapegoat atones even without teshuva.

Serious ones (excision and death penalties of the court): With teshuva — for serious ones the scapegoat only atones together with teshuva.

Exception — false and vain oaths: False and vain oaths are serious even without excision. **Vain oath** = an oath on something obvious (swearing that gold is gold). **False oath** = swearing that he will do something and he doesn't do it. Why is this serious without excision? Because the verse says "Hashem will not hold him guiltless" — it's using Hashem's name for falsehood, this is desecration of the Name, the worst thing.

General rule for minor/serious: Essentially one knows that something is serious through receiving excision — except false oaths which are serious without excision.

Current Times Without the Temple

"And regarding transgressions that don't have excision, if a person does teshuva, his teshuva is not complete until he confesses on Yom Kippur."

Simple Meaning

Today, without the scapegoat, our teshuva is not complete until we confess on Yom Kippur.

Novelties

The Rambam's novelty — one should not think that without the Temple it's a weak deed: People would have thought that because there are no sacrifices, no Temple service, no High Priest — Yom Kippur today is a weak thing. The Rambam brings out that the essence of atonement is teshuva and confession, not the sacrifices. Today Yom Kippur is each person's own service, which in a certain sense is the essence.

Question — what did we lose with the scapegoat? If teshuva atones for all transgressions, what is the novelty? The answer: The scapegoat accomplished for **minor ones without teshuva** — this is the unique power of the scapegoat that we don't have today.

Law 1 (End) / Law 2 (Beginning) — Introduction to Divisions of Atonement

"Even though teshuva atones for everything and the essence of Yom Kippur atones, there are transgressions that are atoned for immediately and there are transgressions that are only atoned for after time."

Simple Meaning

Although teshuva atones for everything, there are transgressions that are atoned for immediately, and there are transgressions that are only atoned for after time.

Novelties

1) Meaning of "atonement" — wiping away: "Atonement" is interpreted as **wiping away** (like Rashi). "Are only atoned for after time" means that the transgression is not completely wiped away — there is still an "aftereffect," a presence of it.

2) Meiri's approach — atonement is a practical refinement: The Meiri, who goes in the Rambam's way to explain with intellect, says that all these stages of atonement (teshuva, Yom Kippur, suffering) make the person **truly more refined**. It's not just "magic in heaven." After teshuva he is still close to the transgression. It goes through time, Yom Kippur, suffering — and he truly becomes more refined.

Four Divisions of Atonement

Level 1: Positive Commandments

"How so? If a person transgressed a positive commandment that doesn't have excision and did teshuva — he doesn't move from there until he is forgiven immediately, and regarding these it says 'Return wayward children, I will heal your waywardness'."

Simple Meaning

Whoever transgresses a positive commandment without excision and does teshuva, is immediately forgiven.

Novelties

1) "He doesn't move from there" — interesting language: "He doesn't move from there" — he doesn't budge from there — until he is forgiven. This means that **immediately at the time of teshuva** comes the forgiveness/atonement.

2) "I will heal your waywardness" = atonement: The verse "Return wayward children **I will heal** your waywardness" — "I will heal" is interpreted as the atonement. The moment of teshuva — immediately "I will heal."

Level 2: Negative Commandment Without Excision

"If he transgressed a negative commandment that doesn't have excision or death penalty of the court, and did teshuva — teshuva suspends and Yom Kippur atones, and regarding these it says 'for on this day He shall atone for you to purify you from all your sins before Hashem you shall be purified'."

Simple Meaning

For a negative commandment without excision/death penalty of the court, teshuva alone is not enough — teshuva "suspends" (holds), and Yom Kippur atones.

Novelties

1) Explanation of "suspends" — between earth and heaven: "Suspends" means like a person who hangs between earth (sin) and heaven (atonement) — he is "lacking atonement", he is left hanging in an intermediate state. The Pnei Menachem says that "hanging and standing" means that one hangs on the rope — the teshuva is not lost, it lies there, but it is not yet finished.

2) Two levels within "minor ones" — a new distinction: Even within "minor ones" there are two levels: positive commandments (where teshuva alone atones) and negative commandments (where one must wait for Yom Kippur). This is a finer division than the beginning of the topic.

3) The verse "for on this day" — atonement and purification: The verse is precise: "to purify you from all your sins" — after one has done teshuva, the day itself (the essence of the day) does something — it atones and purifies. The transgressions that one has already done still need further purification, and the day makes the purification.

Level 3: Excisions and Death Penalties of the Court

"If he transgressed excisions and death penalties of the court and did teshuva — teshuva and Yom Kippur suspend, and suffering that comes upon him completes the atonement for him, as it says 'and I will visit their transgression with a rod and their iniquity with plagues'."

Simple Meaning

For excisions and death penalties of the court, even teshuva with Yom Kippur together are only "suspending" — they hold. Only suffering that comes upon the person completes the atonement.

Novelties

1) What does "suffering" mean? — Dispute in interpretation:

- **A Chassidic interpretation:** The suffering from having sinned — the pain and regret itself.

- **Simple interpretation:** Suffering in the world — afflictions that come upon a person.

- **Maharal-type interpretation:** Suffering breaks a person, removes from his pride, which helps him become better and do more teshuva — "it changes him."

2) Suffering from Yom Kippur itself — the five afflictions: A novel suggestion

2) Suffering from Yom Kippur itself — the five afflictions: A novel suggestion: the five afflictions of Yom Kippur itself (not eating, not drinking, not washing, not anointing, not wearing shoes, standing on one's feet) are perhaps already the "suffering" that completes the atonement. One doesn't need to wait for further suffering — one already puts oneself into suffering on Yom Kippur itself.

3) The Baal HaTanya's approach (Iggeret HaTeshuva) — fasts as suffering: The Baal HaTanya answers a question: the early authorities say that after teshuva one must fast, but in Shulchan Aruch such a law is not written. His answer: the fasting is not a part of teshuva itself, but rather in order to make "suffering" that completes the atonement for transgressions that require suffering. A person can himself fast an ordinary fast in order to bring upon himself suffering. This is also the foundation of self-afflictions — one makes oneself into suffering.

4) Question: Does suffering help without teshuva? Hashem brings suffering upon a person who sins — but if he doesn't do teshuva, the suffering doesn't help. Why does Hashem then bring suffering? Perhaps suffering itself helps a bit even without teshuva? Or perhaps suffering brings to teshuva — a kind of regret that comes from affliction.

5) Question: The order of atonement — is it indispensable? What happens when it's "not in order"? For example: he had Yom Kippur, then teshuva, then suffering. Or he had suffering first, then teshuva. It doesn't have to be that there's a certain order — suffering can itself bring to teshuva.

6) Explanation of "suspends" for excisions — not a loss, but a process: "Suspends" doesn't mean that it does nothing. It means that the teshuva lies there, it doesn't go away, it doesn't get lost — but it only finishes with suffering. It's a process that is not yet complete.

7) Explanation of "and I will visit their transgression with a rod": The Rambam brings this verse as proof. "Visit" means: even after they have already done teshuva, Hashem will still visit them — brings upon them rod and plagues (suffering), which removes the remaining bit of "their transgression." One could have learned that the verse speaks of without teshuva, but the Rambam doesn't go with the approach that without teshuva nothing helps — even death penalty of the court doesn't help without teshuva.

Level 4: Desecration of the Name

"But one who desecrates the Name, even though he did teshuva and Yom Kippur arrived and he stands in his teshuva and suffering came upon him — he is not atoned for with complete atonement until he dies. Rather teshuva and Yom Kippur and suffering, the three of them suspend, and death atones, as it says 'and it was revealed in my ears by Hashem of Hosts: if this iniquity shall be atoned for you until you die'."

Simple Meaning

For desecration of the Name, even all three — teshuva, Yom Kippur, and suffering — are only "suspending." Only death atones. The verse "if this iniquity shall be atoned for you until you die" is the proof.

Novelties and Explanations

1) "Stands in his teshuva" — interesting language: The Rambam says "he stands in his teshuva" — he still stands in his teshuva. This means that he hasn't just done teshuva once, but he is still standing in teshuva, and still he is not atoned for.

2) What does "death atones" mean — different interpretations:

- **Simple interpretation:** Death means that he will die because of this — earlier, or an unusual death. It's a punishment.

- **Death as greater suffering:** Perhaps death is a kind of greater form of suffering — the suffering of death itself brings the atonement.

- **Death as an obligation:** Death means that the person owes Hashem — he must remember that he is not yet finished with this sin.

3) Question: All people die — what is the novelty? All people die eventually — what does "until you die" mean? Answered with a joke: "Adam the first made a desecration of the Name, because of which all people die." But seriously: Perhaps he means that he will die earlier, or an unusual death, or that the death itself — the fact of dying — is what completes the atonement.

4) How does death atone for desecration of the Name? When a person dies, one sees only his commandments — "after death, holy ones." For desecration of the Name: the desecration of the Name is that other people saw his transgression and learned from it. When he dies, and one says a eulogy, one will remember him again — but perhaps specifically then the desecration of the Name is rectified.

5) Hashem is not limited — an important note: All these laws don't mean that Hashem is limited. If Hashem wants to forgive someone without death, without suffering — He can. It means an obligation on the person: the person must know that he is not yet finished with this sin.

6) Meiri's way — desecration of the Name as "in his soul": According to the Meiri's approach, one can say that desecration of the Name means something that is "in his soul" — a person should know that if he was once in such a situation, he can always fall back. He should always have a "broken heart" of a penitent — a certain brokenness that never completely goes away until death.

7) "And it was revealed in my ears by Hashem of Hosts" — explanation of the verse: The verse means: Hashem knows and sees, and He says "I will not forgive you until you die." It brings out the severity of the matter — a person should not be calm, he should always remember the transgression.

8) In practice — what can a person do? What can a person do if he must wait until death? He must still do teshuva, still pray, still say Tehillim — but he should know that it's not finished. [Note in a humorous way: "Tehillim itself can be a great transgression" — if one thinks that through Tehillim alone one already has a portion in the World to Come.]

Conclusion

The lecture went through the first chapter of Laws of Repentance — from the introduction (the place of Laws of Repentance in Sefer HaMada, the commandment of teshuva/confession, the text of confession), through the foundations of confession with sacrifices, death penalties of the court, between man and his fellow, the essence of Yom Kippur, the scapegoat, until the four divisions of atonement (positive commandment, negative commandment, excisions/death penalties of the court, desecration of the Name) with their different levels of atonement.

Full Transcript

Introduction to Hilchos Teshuva — The Place of Teshuva in Sefer HaMada

Hilchos Teshuva as a Foundation of the Faith

Speaker 1:

Okay, so let's begin today Hilchos Teshuva from the Rambam. In Sefer HaMada this is the last halacha, the last halachos of Sefer HaMada is Hilchos Teshuva.

Seemingly, we learned that Sefer HaMada is, as the Rambam said, **mitzvos she'hen ikar das Moshe Rabbeinu v'tzarich leidah osam t'chilas hakol** (commandments that are the foundation of the religion of Moshe Rabbeinu and one must know them first of all). And it appears that Hilchos Teshuva is one of the mitzvos that are both of these things in a certain way. Both is it from the fundamentals of the faith, one must understand a bit why teshuva is from the fundamentals of the faith. Ikar (fundamental) means that it's a very basic thing, and if it doesn't exist, the rest of Judaism cannot exist. And it means it's one of the things that one must know. There are things that one must know in this? Perhaps things that one

must perhaps do, but primarily know, and these are the most important things to know.

It's also important for all the other sections of the Rambam. Sections of the Torah, you mean? For all the other halachos, all these things are important.

Why Teshuva is a Foundation of the Faith — According to Moreh Nevuchim

So the reason why it's from the fundamentals of the faith, the Rambam himself says in Moreh Nevuchim in Part 3 Chapter 36, where he speaks about the reasons for the mitzvos, he says that teshuva is one of the mitzvos that the religion cannot live without, because everyone sins, most people at least, and if one would think that one cannot do teshuva, one would never keep the rest of the Torah. So this is a precondition, in order that Judaism, the Torah should be able to sustain itself, one must know that one can do teshuva. That's one thing.

The Rambam's Introduction to Hilchos Teshuva — "One Positive Commandment"

The second thing I think is that the Rambam says here, let's learn the introduction, yes? Hilchos Teshuva, let me have his

chapter here. Yes, Hilchos Teshuva. It is **mitzvas aseh achas** (one positive commandment), there is one mitzvah. Which mitzvah is it? The mitzvah of teshuva. Yes, **v'hi she'yashuv hachoteh mei'cheto lifnei Hashem v'yisvadeh** (and it is that the sinner should return from his sin before God and confess).

Okay, we'll talk about this in a second.

The Special Language "V'Ikarim HaNigrarim Imah Biglalah"

And then the Rambam says, **u'vi'ur mitzvah zo** (and the explanation of this mitzvah), that is, this is the mitzvah, and just as he says about every halacha there is an explanation, the explanation of the mitzvah, the halachos of the mitzvah, are in the chapters. But here he says differently, **"va'avi mitzvah zo v'ikarim hanigrarim imah biglalah bifrakim eilu"** (and I will bring this mitzvah and the fundamentals that are dragged along with it because of it in these chapters). That means that here there isn't only the mitzvah of teshuva, there are also fundamentals that aren't necessarily an explanation of the mitzvah of teshuva. These are fundamentals that come in, the Rambam inserted various fundamental beliefs, fundamental foundations of knowledge that are connected, that get dragged along with the mitzvah of teshuva.

Which Fundamentals Stand in Sefer HaMada

And seemingly if one looks in Sefer HaMada, there are indeed things like Yesodei HaTorah, fundamental beliefs, where the Rambam made a list of the 13 principles in his work Perush HaMishnayos in Tractate Sanhedrin, one can see that in Sefer HaMada there are only two halachos where fundamentals stand. That is, the entire Sefer HaMada is seemingly fundamental beliefs, but Avodah Zarah for example, in Avodah Zarah the Rambam almost doesn't explain fundamentals, only the historical development that we learned in Chapter 1, right? But fundamental beliefs more or less stand in these two halachos. In Hilchos Yesodei HaTorah it speaks about the existence of God and about prophecy, these are the two things that Hilchos Yesodei HaTorah includes as foundations. And also all the fundamentals that have to do with, one can say, reward and punishment, stand in Hilchos Teshuva. This is the last group of fundamentals in the 13 principles, it's more or less the last group. So all these stand in Hilchos Teshuva. Not all the fundamentals are explained in Sefer HaMada, only a portion of them.

Speaker 2:

Which ones aren't? The coming of Mashiach doesn't stand in Sefer HaMada.

Speaker 1:

The coming of Mashiach and the resurrection of the dead. The coming of Mashiach and the resurrection of the dead, to the extent that they are part of the reward, that is mentioned. The Rambam, he doesn't say the words coming of Mashiach, but at the end of Hilchos Teshuva it does speak about how the goal of the reward and punishment of the Torah, the physical reward. The coming of Mashiach is indeed part of the physical reward of the Torah. So he speaks about wars, wars, he stands more about the resurrection of the dead and the coming of Mashiach.

Speaker 2:

Not about the resurrection of the dead it doesn't stand nearly, not about the coming of Mashiach, yes.

Speaker 1:

Because there he speaks more about the practical matter. The prophecy of Moshe, that thing he already said in prophecy, in Hilchos Yesodei HaTorah. But one can indeed understand that all these things, the Rambam in the chapter on Chelek explains this, that the coming of Mashiach, the resurrection of the dead, all these things are details of reward and punishment later. The general principles of this stand in Hilchos Teshuva. It could be that the details that stand in these things.

Speaker 2:

What is the language? "V'nigrarim imah biglalah". "V'nigrarim imah" would have been enough.

Speaker 1:

One must understand his language. I think it means the same thing. The Rambam writes more than a lot with two things.

The Structure of Hilchos Teshuva – Fixing Actions and Fixing the Soul

Let's understand, in Hilchos Teshuva he explains the essential thing of teshuva. And once one speaks about teshuva, there are things that come naturally with it, like how one does teshuva, which things one must work harder to do teshuva, things that prevent one from the paths of teshuva. But when it comes to the greater questions of what teshuva means in general, one comes to the question of knowledge and free will, which the Rambam goes into at length about free will.

Speaker 2:

I would say something like this. I would think, and together with knowledge and free will comes reward and punishment. Right.

Speaker 1:

I would think a bit more. I would think, as you say, the ideal details of Hilchos Teshuva will basically until Chapter 4 in a certain sense everything is details of Hilchos Teshuva. That's not yet the fundamentals. The fundamentals when he speaks about free will, when he speaks about reward and punishment, these are things that are fundamentals, but they're connected with teshuva, as the Rambam connects it, if there is free will, automatically one can do teshuva, and such sorts of things. Not actually necessary, because one could have had the entire Hilchos Teshuva without this. It's only because the Rambam wants one to learn the fundamentals, which he needs to insert somewhere.

Speaker 2:

It's not simple that one can't say one should do teshuva without speaking about teshuva.

Speaker 1:

I'm saying that one of his points of Sefer HaMada is to say the fundamentals, and he needs to insert somewhere a thing in some place where it fits in. The place where the fundamentals of reward and punishment, of the service of man, fit in best is in Hilchos Teshuva. If it weren't for the reason that he needs to write fundamentals, one could say Hilchos Teshuva without this.

Reward and Punishment as a Description of Human Perfection

The perfection of the person is the character traits of the person. But there's also a broader question of what is a good person. For example, a tzaddik, beinoni, rasha, such a great

rasha who has no portion in the World to Come. Reward, the reward that one receives also has a part, what happens to a person when he is in perfection etc. So reward is another way of evaluating a person. Right, just as many times we say, a tzaddik, he receives the most reward, it's a sign or a cause.

So I think that in Hilchos Teshuva in a certain sense he brings out all the details of who is the proper person, how does one become it, what kind of person doesn't begin, one must do teshuva. Then in Chapter 3 he speaks about the laws of heresy, yes, who is the worst person? From the worst person to the best person. From the... perhaps you'll say, all these levels of a person.

Speaker 2:

I think perhaps a formulation, one can say teshuva is fixing actions, but it's also fixing the soul. The depth of teshuva is fixing the soul. So the Rambam essentially in this book speaks about fixing actions, doesn't begin, this is the mitzvah of doing teshuva, the simple meaning of teshuva. And then there is the deeper meaning of teshuva, which is fixing the soul, how one becomes a better person, and what is the purpose, what is the end of this better person.

Speaker 1:

And free will has to do with this? Free will is just a prerequisite for reward and punishment.

Speaker 2:

Yes, free will is just a prerequisite for reward and punishment. People like to talk about free will, and the foundations aren't so important. And about this is the last chapter about serving from love and fear, and one should educate toward Torah for its own sake. Right, that's also a part of fixing the soul.

Speaker 1:

That's reward, that's the end of the reward.

Speaker 2:

Yes. Let's say, a part of reward as it relates to service, not reward abstractly what reward is, but how this should influence a person's service of God. The entire formulation of reward and punishment, certainly according to the Rambam, is this, not to estimate how many mansions there are in the Garden of Eden.

Speaker 1:

Yes, there are side things, the end is directly. He says what reward is, but to say what reward is, what we want to do, how the service of God should be different after taking into account the matter of reward. Right, right. So it's explaining, he says reward is a prerequisite for this. One can say another way of saying reward, would have been to say the purpose. What is the goal, what is the end, what is the purpose of being a person? The purpose is the reward. And the soul means it's a circle, we are properly the goal. Understand, what is the goal of everything? Yes.

Okay, we'll see inside more, but this is my introduction for the strength.

Teshuva as a General Principle Relevant to All Mitzvos

But teshuva itself is also a condition, because teshuva is relevant to every mitzvah. It means, because just as in every mitzvah one says, by the mitzvah one can give lashes. If the Rambam hadn't made Hilchos Teshuva, the Rambam would have had to say by every mitzvah, and if one wants to do

teshuva for this mitzvah one should fast so much and so much and do such and such. Hilchos Teshuva is very general for the entire Torah. Every mitzvah one sometimes fails at, and one must do teshuva for it. And in this respect it's a foundation.

Speaker 2:

But other authors don't go this way. Other authors for example make general principles of the mitzvos, such as for example, principles of all punishments, principles of I know, women, slaves and minors all their obligations. The Rambam threw it in here and there, but I say, teshuva is also a general principle in all mitzvos.

Speaker 1:

Yes, true. I say, in this respect it's another foundation. Then it would have fit in more like Hilchos Onashin.

Speaker 2:

Yes, you have Hilchos Sanhedrin V'Onashin, where one receives lashes.

Speaker 1:

Those other principles stand in his work in other places. He doesn't look at that as general principles of mitzvos. General principles by the Rambam means things... He lists everywhere where one receives lashes.

Speaker 2:

Yes, but that's the law of each mitzvah.

Speaker 1:

That's the law of each mitzvah, not simply general principles. General principles of mitzvos. He doesn't say a general principle, every negative commandment receives lashes. Each mitzvah he says what is the law of the mitzvah.

Speaker 2:

Okay, perhaps it's different. Hilchos Sanhedrin is like the law on the court that they must give lashes, how that works.

Speaker 1:

Yes, it's true. But even so it's also more general than teshuva... Judaism cannot live without teshuva. It's one of the basic things of Judaism. And it's, one can even say about people. A person with mitzvos, yes? A person isn't the type of person, you can tell him once and it's finished. A person is the type of thing that one tells him, and then one tells him he should do teshuva, and all his days.

Okay. Fine.

Discussion: "Nigrarim Mimenah Biglalah" – Double Language or Two Layers?

So there is one mitzvah, and ah, we already spoke about the topic of vidui (confession), we already struggled about this. There are other formulations about this. Perhaps we'll come to learn a precision in the word "nigrarim mimenah biglalah"? "Nigrarim mimenah" means the essential things that have like let's say reward and punishment, and because of this comes free will. I don't know, I thought, it's a bit of an extra language, a bit of a rabbinic language.

Speaker 2:

Yes, okay.

Speaker 1:

True, but I don't know, sometimes one says...

Speaker 2:

The Gemara has enough.

Speaker 1:

True, true. Sometimes one says in cheder, one says twice the same word so people should be clear and simple.

Speaker 2:

Yes, okay, very good.

The Mitzvah of Teshuva: What is the Essential Element?

Dispute Among the Early Authorities: Whether Teshuva Itself is a Biblical Commandment

Speaker 1: The Rambam says that the mitzvah is that one should do teshuva and one should confess, yes? There were other righteous ones, the Sefer HaChinuch, who said what? There were those who said that the Rambam means to say that teshuva itself, there's a dispute whether teshuva is a mitzvah that stands in the Torah, yes? Seemingly the Rambam learns that yes. Which mitzvah does he count? The Rambam counts a great mitzvah, when he brings the verse.

There are those who say that the Rambam learns perhaps that the mitzvah is that the manner how one does teshuva, it's teshuva, not necessarily a positive commandment. It's a bit greater, it's like for example the mitzvah of faith. There are those who say that the Rambam learns that faith is also a mitzvah. Okay, those who learn that faith isn't a mitzvah, would perhaps have said that teshuva isn't a mitzvah, because this is a condition for all mitzvos. And in general, it's such a moral thing, it's not really an obligation that one should do teshuva. Because if one hasn't sinned, one doesn't need to do teshuva. One can indeed transgress a sin.

One thing, one can also ask conversely, if there is a mitzvah, doesn't one need to do teshuva? I mean, the mitzvah isn't, the second day there's already no mitzvah? One becomes exempt because one sinned once?

The Position of Sefer HaChinuch: The Mitzvah is the Manner of Teshuva with Vidui

So there are those who want to say that the mitzvah is that when one does teshuva, one should do it in that manner with vidui. That teshuva should have a certain way. Because when teshuva would have been, as you say, when the mitzvah of teshuva would have been automatic, one understands that a person is always obligated in all mitzvos. If he neglected a mitzvah, he must do teshuva, and that's a part of the mitzvah. The original, for example, one must wear tzitzis, and a person didn't wear tzitzis, there's no new mitzvah of doing teshuva, rather the obligation of tzitzis tells him, Sunday, Monday when you didn't wear tzitzis, the obligation of tzitzis tells you Tuesday that you should do teshuva and yes wear tzitzis.

According to this position they would have said, so how does the mitzvah of teshuva come in? That when you do teshuva Tuesday and you begin to put on tzitzis, before you put on tzitzis you should say "I am doing teshuva for not having put on tzitzis the last few days", and one should say vidui, and then put on tzitzis. So there are those who learn this way.

The Rambam's Position: Teshuva Itself is a Mitzvah

But I think it's not so, it's not necessarily, because the Rambam simply holds that the entire teshuva is a mitzvah, that every time when a person has sinned and he does teshuva. One can understand it precisely, because teshuva is another thing. After a person has sinned, simply let's say in tzitzis, it's a

mitzvah to put on tzitzis, which means, it's a burden and one must put on tzitzis. But the thing that one didn't do for a few days, demands more than this. It demands a certain courage from the person, it demands a certain contemplation, it demands a certain vulnerability, it demands new powers of the soul that one should indeed do teshuva. From this perspective it's a new mitzvah. Seemingly the Rambam holds that the mitzvah of teshuva is a mitzvah, and how is vidui, is another condition in the mitzvos. It's a manner of fulfilling a mitzvah.

Reasoning: Teshuva as Faith

Speaker 2: I would say, that is, relative to what you said before, I think it could be the main thing, that the Rambam has no problem that faith should be a mitzvah. It could be that teshuva, the mitzvah of teshuva is the faith that the Almighty forgives, or that one can, as you said a few times, that one can return to be close, return to be a person. It indeed came to the formulation of fixing the soul. Teshuva isn't only that you put on tzitzis again, but you've become a different kind of person who wears tzitzis, and I've emerged from that person. So teshuva says that one can return to be that person. But then you would say that even one who doesn't do teshuva, but he believes in teshuva, has already fulfilled the mitzvah of teshuva. The mitzvah of teshuva is "to believe that it's possible to do teshuva".

Speaker 1: But that's already faith. The essential faith can be.

Speaker 2: I believe, but I... One believes in the power of teshuva and he doesn't do teshuva, in what does he believe?

English Translation

Speaker 1: I think very well. Okay, yes, I know, emunah (faith) is also that one believes. You mean that a Jew, emunah means to conduct oneself like one who believes. Okay, I didn't say so far that the mitzvah is only to believe. I'm saying you're asking the question, what is the novelty of the mitzvah of teshuva (repentance)? Why shouldn't we say that the mitzvah of teshuva is a positive commandment? On the contrary, that's what other Rishonim said, that's what other enumerators of mitzvot said. And this has already been answered.

The Rambam's Verses: Why "Vehitvadah" and Not "Veshavta Ad Hashem"

I also think that the reason why the other Rishonim, other enumerators of mitzvot, didn't count the mitzvah of teshuva as a mitzvah at all, was different from the Ramban. They had different verses than the Rambam. Let's see which verses the Rambam brings. The Rambam learned, the Rambam loves verses that are physical, that say something. The Rambam himself answers that it's a fulfillment of a mitzvah, just like "veshinnantam levanecha" (and you shall teach them to your children). Yes, it says "veshavta ad Hashem Elokecha" (and you shall return to Hashem your God) etc. But the Rambam doesn't bring those verses.

And I think the reason is because the Rambam understands like the Ramban, somewhat in different ways, that "veshavta" - the Rambam brings it later that it's a promise. "Veshavta ad Hashem Elokecha" is a very general expression. It doesn't mean the mitzvah of teshuva, it means returning to the Almighty. The Rambam himself also brings that verse by the promises. He says that in the end they will return with teshuva, at the end of the exile etc. It's not exactly a mitzvah.

Where is there a mitzvah? A mitzvah is what it says "**vehitvadah**" (and he shall confess). Because that's a

concrete action. But the Rambam understood, as he will say in chapter 1, what does "vehitvadah" mean? "Vehitvadah" doesn't mean that one should just say "I have sinned" and not stop sinning. It's part of regret. The Torah says "vehitvadah," and it implies that the Torah says one should do teshuva. But since the Torah says "vehitvadah," it means that the essence of the mitzvah of teshuva is the matter of vidui (confession), but the meaning of vidui is to do teshuva. So, it's essentially the same thing.

Discussion: Whether Vidui Prevents the Teshuva

Speaker 2: Isn't it simple that one must even ask the other answer like according to the Mechaber Sefer HaChinuch, according to the other interpretation, if someone does teshuva and he doesn't say vidui, is he not fulfilling the mitzvah of teshuva at all.

Speaker 1: I don't believe so. Originally, the vidui that the verse speaks of there is part of a korban (sacrifice), no? It's "ish o isha" (a man or woman).

Speaker 2: Yes, with intent.

Speaker 1: But a person who brings a korban because he sinned, he has done much more teshuva. He has done something, he has given away something of himself, he has regret and he brings a korban. The Rambam is going to try to prove from this that it means to do teshuva in a general way, even without a korban. But I'm saying, you're saying that according to me one fulfills the Rambam's mitzvah of teshuva even if one doesn't do teshuva. And according to the other interpretation, according to the Sefer HaChinuch, I think he says such an interpretation, if someone does teshuva and he doesn't say vidui, he hasn't fulfilled the mitzvah of teshuva. That's also very strange. Teshuva mainly means that one should become better. It's true that there's a law that one should say vidui, but he hasn't done teshuva according to the principles of teshuva.

Speaker 2: I don't think that's correct. I mean, I would have thought that if someone doesn't say any vidui and he becomes better... vidui is apparently an advice, and how does one become better?

Speaker 1: I actually have a problem, a person hasn't been humbled, he actually becomes a bit... how does it say "na'aseh keheter" (it becomes like something permitted). Vidui is apparently an advice, just as a korban is an advice. I'm sure that if someone forgot, he doesn't know that one must say vidui, that his teshuva also helps. I can say that meanwhile, when a person doesn't say vidui, it's simple that he's not ready and not truly humble. If you'll find a type of person who has such a spiritual strength that he doesn't need vidui for teshuva, it's not such a strong thing.

And we'll see Yom Kippur, and it's a kind of condition, and there must be things that are not preventing. Before bringing a korban, one must do semicha (laying of hands), and if one didn't do semicha, I don't know, I don't remember that law, but even not according to the Sefer HaChinuch.

Speaker 2: But that's because "chatati aviti pashati lefanecha" (I have sinned, I have transgressed, I have rebelled before You) in oral vidui. One said vidui and sins. Afterwards, one says vidui on that, and what means not that seriously becomes a big plan.

Speaker 1: Okay, fine. Let's learn. This is the... one brings in the mitzvot.

Halacha 1: The Mitzvah of Vidui

But very good, the first law of the laws of teshuva, the essence of the mitzvah of teshuva, the main mitzvah of teshuva, says the Rambam, **"All the mitzvot in the Torah, whether positive or negative commandments. If a person transgressed one of them, whether intentionally or unintentionally, when he does teshuva and returns from his sin, he is obligated to confess before God, blessed be He."**

Discussion: What Does "Shegaga" Mean

Speaker 2: What does shegaga (unintentional) mean here, is on shegaga there one must do teshuva. What does it mean? He didn't know that it's Shabbat, or he didn't remember that it's a mitzvah, and he has an unintentional disregard.

Speaker 1: Ah, they're categories of the korban. He's not speaking here of oness (compulsion), he doesn't say here oness.

Speaker 2: Right, shegaga means that I didn't... he didn't know a kind of negligence. And this shows what we could yes, know. Making a mistake is a bit of a wrong.

Speaker 1: Yes. Here, is still actually, so, when... see, by small children one can take shegaga. And by an adult there's almost no shegaga. It was, it's forgetting that it's not to be a wild animal, and he forgot to light Shabbat candles. Shegaga is as we say in the laws of Shabbat, we see the laws of shegaga is until the grave. Usually shegaga is a bit more of a negligence. It's not there, but in practice it's a kind of...

Speaker 2: Okay.

The Expression "Veyashuv Mecheto"

Speaker 1: So, says the Rambam, **"How does one do teshuva? Veyashuv mecheto"** (and he returns from his sin). When he does teshuva, and he returns from his sin. The Rambam, the expression "teshuva" means that he has in this the idea that a person is by nature, the soul is a part of God from above, returns. Or as if here one can say that a person originally did mitzvot, and now one returns to the mitzvot. It's interesting, someone who never did any mitzvot we wouldn't call him "teshuva." One must think. Anyway, why is this the expression teshuva? Ah, it comes from the expression of the verse, "veyashuv mecheto." It comes from the expression of the verse.

Speaker 2: But perhaps "veyashuv" means something else. No, perhaps in general "veyashuv" means going back from what one did, not going back to where one was. Understand? Perhaps it means from the expression... it looks like three times the same expression. It's certainly one interpretation. Having regret. Regret can be teshuva, but you go back. He is chozer bo mimah shehaya (retracts from what he was). Going back to his previous state. Remember, we had something in the previous chapter, some expression "vechozer"? Remember? "Chozer le...", "chozer me...". You said some comment. I don't remember where anymore. Remember what I mean? "Chozer ve...".

Speaker 1: I don't remember. In any case, one doesn't have to say that teshuva comes from the Torah. It's a matter according to the way, here comes the Torah. But teshuva means this, to abandon the sin.

Speaker 2: No, he says, "veyashuv mecheto." He doesn't say "veyashuv letzidkato" (and he returns to his righteousness). "Veyashuv mecheto." He says, "How does one do teshuva?"

Veyashuv mecheto." That's the expression that one should do teshuva. What does "oseh teshuva" mean? "Veyashuv mecheto." I think that's the meaning. For example, when the Gemara says that Adam HaRishon did the first teshuva, he was born and he was recognizing his Creator, followed, and he messed up somewhere and he went back to his... but there it also means the same thing, and a sin, and he had regret on his sin, and he accepted upon himself that he won't do the sin anymore, teshuva is effective apparently. Although there is, yes, Shulchan Aruch HaRav in the laws of Talmud Torah section 5, okay, one must know. Here is the law that one is obligated to confess, the teshuva should be in a manner, so let's learn it, yes.

Halacha 1 (Continued): The Obligation of Vidui in Teshuva

Speaker 1:

No, but that there means that he also has the same thing, he did a sin, he went back from his sin, he didn't go back to his sin. Teshuva is "from," not "to." That's apparently. Although there is, yes, "shuva eleinu letoratecha" (return us to Your Torah), okay, one must know.

Here is the law that one is obligated to confess, the teshuva should be in a manner, so let's learn it now, the piece is the proof of that answer. Right, this is how the Rambam learns it. When one does teshuva, one should do it in a manner that one should confess on the sin before the Almighty. Shene'emar (as it says), where does a verse say? **"Ish o isha ki ya'asu mikol chatat ha'adam"** (a man or woman when they commit any of the sins of man), when a person, a man or a woman, will do any sin, **"lim'ol ma'al baHashem"** (to commit a trespass against Hashem), to trespass against Hashem, simply we mean there the prohibition of me'ila (misappropriation), but the Rambam says it here as a general thing, when one is mo'el it means an expression of a betrayal, yes, a kind of betrayal of the Almighty. **"Ve'ashma hanefesh hahi"** (and that soul is guilty), and the person is guilty of the sin that he did, the mitzvah is **"vehitvadu et chatatam asher asu"** (and they shall confess their sin which they did), his mitzvah is he should confess. **"Vehitvadu et chatatam asher asu,"** he should confess. **"Vehitvadu devarim"** (and they shall confess words), what does the word "devarim" mean? Is there a vidui of not words? Yes, apparently bringing the korban itself. Because simply it means... ah, the korban brings a korban, and simply that this is an admission that this was my sin. Simply there the verse means that one should bring a korban, so what does "vehitvadu" mean? That he brings a korban. But the Sifrei, he brings the expression of Chazal, they learned that vidui is itself a mitzvah, that's what "vehitvadu" means, and he should confess, say vidui of words. He's going to bring, and he's going to explain better.

Vidui is a Positive Commandment in Itself

The Rambam, **"This vidui is a positive commandment,"** the vidui is a positive commandment. Okay, good. That's... the Rambam has absorbed in what is the expression "positive commandment"? It could be that the word of the vidui is a bit different than we spoke earlier, that it makes it into an action, because as you said, when is teshuva? When he starts again laying tefillin. You said that it's not any positive commandment that one can catch, because when he lays tefillin again after not laying for two weeks, he's now doing the mitzvah of tefillin, he's not now doing the mitzvah of teshuva,

yes? But when he does vidui, it says that now is a special time for only teshuva itself. The Rambam in Sefer HaMitzvot brings from Chazal that he learns that the verse means on every sin, lim'ol lerabot (to include), in short, somehow he includes, although the verse speaks of certain things, he includes everything. The verse includes, the verse said "mikol chatat ha'adam," lim'ol asham, "o nefesh," every kind he includes, that everyone must afterwards do teshuva.

But what I'm saying is a good interpretation, because it's not necessarily relevant, because by a negative commandment one should know that it was with an action. But to know, when did the person fulfill the mitzvah? When he again started laying tefillin, did he do tefillin? He's not now doing the mitzvah of teshuva, he's doing the mitzvah of tefillin. But when he's engaged in this, when he has regret, the vidui, then he knows what he's doing. Then it's a mitzvah. When he does the mitzvah, the main point is, that actually, says the Rambam, "shelo ya'aleh al hada'at" (it shouldn't enter one's mind) that vidui is not a mitzvah in itself, rather it's part of the laws of sacrifices. One could think, as he says semicha, there are laws in sacrifices, one of the laws is that one says vidui. No, he learns, he brings from Chazal, that no, vidui is an extra mitzvah, a positive commandment, that when one does a sin one should do teshuva. Exactly, when one brings a korban... exactly, yes. Interesting, I'll say, that when there was a Beit HaMikdash standing, the time to do the mitzvah of teshuva was by the korban. I don't know if necessarily both can be one thing. He's going to say in the next piece, but first he brings the mitzvah is vidui, it means first here there must be vidui. Perhaps when one brings the sacrifices one says vidui again. I don't know if it's the same vidui that he brings.

Halacha 2: The Text of the Vidui

Okay. He says, **"This vidui is a positive commandment,"** says the Rambam. **"How does one confess? One says."** But also, he placed an emphasis here, that one says it before the Almighty. And here again, **"Ana Hashem"** (Please, Hashem). When someone doesn't say it before the Almighty, when someone has a spiritual guide and he confesses to him, and he didn't see that he's now speaking to the Almighty, it's not vidui. One shouldn't think that vidui is just a practical thing that the teshuva must be that a person should be open with himself. If a person wouldn't have learned the Rambam, he would say why is vidui important? A person should be clear that he sinned. If one goes to just anyone who goes to any "healing," they'll say that you need to be open with your sin that you did, you need to even speak what you did.

A sin is only a sin before the Almighty, I mean between man and his fellow and the like, but the truth cries the Almighty. Yes, still, I have no quarrel with you, I'm just saying a comment. The Rambam says that the teshuva, the vidui must be before the Almighty. It could even be that the word vidui is meaningful. But I thought that vidui is a practical thing. When a person thinks, you have a child that you're trying to educate, tell me very clearly what you did, because a person will excuse it. Between man and his fellow is part of between man and God, but in between man and his fellow there is a kind of vidui. Okay, a kind of moral tools they are. But it's very possible that it's an important step that a person should be able to do teshuva, he should be open with himself that he did a sin, and he didn't do well. But the Rambam doesn't necessarily speak of this, he says something like a matter of I

must say before the Almighty, and the opposite is the Almighty.

The Expression of Vidui

At least in this chapter one must learn, he says in the laws. It's a good question, how does he begin the laws of teshuva? He says so, "**Ana Hashem.**" What is the law? It's already the order of vidui. Laws of vidui, yes. Says the Rambam, he must say "**Ana Hashem chatati aviti pashati lefanecha**" (Please, Hashem, I have sinned, I have transgressed, I have rebelled before You). The three is against the three, chatat me'ila and asham perhaps. I think it's not such expressions, I think one doesn't have to say all these expressions, he just gives you out. I think, perhaps it's connected with the... when the verse says three expressions of sin. Yes, okay, the verse also brought the expressions. Okay, people learn the interpretation. What is chatati aviti pashati? He means that one must bring out, and later the Rambam will say that one must say out the sins that one did.

"**Ve'ata nichanti uvoshti bema'asai**" (and now I regret and am ashamed of my deeds), I have regret and I'm ashamed of my deeds. It doesn't mean that you must be very ashamed, the word is that he doesn't hold of it anymore, it's a way to bring it out. Ah, these are all expressions from verses, the "nichanti" says "ki nichanti," and yes, these are all expressions from verses. And further what must he say? "**Ule'olam eini chozer ledavar zeh**" (and forever I will not return to this thing), I will never again do the sin.

The Essence of Vidui

Says the Rambam, "**Vezev ikaro shel vidui**" (and this is the essence of vidui). This is the essence? Must one say all these expressions, and if you don't say it's not vidui? This is the meaning of the word vidui. He tells you what is the meaning. Vidui means that you did? No, the essence of vidui must be either that I did it, either that I'm ashamed of it or I don't want anymore, and I won't do it anymore. Three things are in the vidui.

Says the Rambam, "**Kol hamarbeh lehitvadot uma'arich be'inyan zeh harei zeh meshubach**" (whoever increases in confessing and lengthens in this matter, behold this is praiseworthy). Marbeh lehitvadot means what? Bringing out more the details of the sins that one did? Or focusing on the other words?

What does he bring out? One looks in the siddur, one sees that there are all kinds of expressions of vidui, here longer ones on Yom Kippur, the whole "Al Chet."

Discussion: What Does "Kol HaMarbeh" Mean?

Speaker 2:

There's the thing of not too much... does the Rambam mean the Gemara of not saying too much sin?

English Translation

Speaker 1:

No, how is there such a thing? No, the Gemara is against... No, no, no. The details of the sin (prati hacheta) is a question that the Rambam speaks about. The Rambam doesn't speak about that now. What he's talking about is, meforat (detailed) means to say, I feel so bad, and I regret so strongly that I... In other words, with the words "aviti, pashati" (I sinned, I transgressed), whatever, all the words. I don't see... The question is about everything, whether one should focus on the

"asiti kach v'kach" (I did such and such). No difference. The point is just... But the "asiti kach v'kach" is there so that one shouldn't. You can see, this is in Hilchot Teshuva there, if I remember, he rules that yes, one should detail the sin. One must look inside.

But his point is apparently, just as it is by the Exodus from Egypt, right? His point is apparently just, you shouldn't think that if it's enough by itself to say vidui (confession) in the siddur, that that is what's essential. The essential vidui, what is essential? The essence of vidui is just, "I have sinned, I don't want to do it anymore." Basically, that's what vidui means. But he does bring out that being more elaborate in this is better. It's praiseworthy (meshubach). It's not indifferent, it's worth more and more.

Speaker 2:

Yes, yes, but the point, I mean that the point of the halacha is not to say that one should do that. The point is more to bring out what is the essence of teshuva. The Rambam wants very strongly to make clear what is the essential meaning of vidui. I mean that's what I read. "Harei zeh meshubach" (this is praiseworthy) - are you saying it's reprehensible (megunah)?

Speaker 1:

Yes, it's meshubach. But meshubach means to say, "This is a nice thing, but it's not the essence." I'm saying that the essence that he says is that this is not the essence. And the benefit, sometimes, as we touched upon that vidui can help, okay, if someone is more elaborate, he goes more into it. You can also, by the way, one can also elaborate on the word "Hashem." What does the word "Hashem" mean? Yes, you can do the Chassidic things, one must understand who the Almighty is that one sins to Him, etc. One can elaborate on every point of the vidui, on the expressions of vidui that we have. Yes, "va'ani avdecha ben amatecha" (and I am Your servant, son of Your maidservant), he elaborates about how great the Almighty is and how small people are. There are all kinds of things that one can elaborate on, but it's not the essence, it's not the mitzvah, it's not the definition of it.

Apparently the rest is tefilla (prayer), it's not teshuva at all. Vidui is "chatati" (I have sinned) - prayer, that's all. What is vidui? I mean that there's a famous difficulty here, that in no vidui that appears in our siddur, almost, except in one or two versions, does the text of "le'olam eini chozer l'davar zeh" (I will never return to this thing) appear. But I mean that the Rambam doesn't mean to say that one must say this language, one must express it. What I mean is, it's simple that if someone says vidui "chatati," and he means to say "woe is me," that's not vidui. The point is, he gives the definition, which has no other source for teshuva except from this. It must be that in the definition of vidui lies the essential thing, precisely the text. I already have a different text.

Speaker 2:

Exactly, just as "le'olam eini chozer l'davar zeh" is already more of a prayer, I'm asking the Creator, help make it so that there should no longer be any "chozer" (returning).

Speaker 1:

Exactly, so strong is the language, "v'lo yashuv l'cheto od" (and he shall not return to his sin again).

Speaker 2:

"V'lo yashuv l'cheto od," yes. But the point is that this is really incidental. Even when someone says "chatati," just the word "chatati," it says in the Gemara that if one says "chatati" one has already fulfilled vidui. Because in this you have included that. What does "chatati" mean? "Chatati" and I'm happy and I'm proud? That's not the meaning. That's the meaning, "nichamti, le'olam eini chozer" (I regret, I will never return). That's the meaning. When someone says, what, I did it because I had a great yetzer hara (evil inclination)? That's the sin.

Halacha 3: Vidui by Sacrifices

The Rambam continues further, "v'chen..." (and so...)

Speaker 2:

Ah, so that's the...

Speaker 1:

That's the essential vidui. That's the Rambam. On this he goes into details of sin, what there is vidui on, and how the Rambam... He will mainly bring out, "**v'chen ba'alei chataot v'ashamot b'sha'ah shemevi'in korbenoteihen al shigagatan o al zedonan, ein mitkaper lahen b'korbanan ad she'ya'asu teshuva v'yitvadu vidui devarim**" (and so those who bring sin offerings and guilt offerings when they bring their sacrifices for their inadvertent or intentional sins, they are not atoned for by their sacrifice until they do teshuva and confess a verbal confession).

Speaker 2:

Ah, so that's teshuva and vidui devarim go together with teshuva.

Speaker 1:

Ah, "**ad she'ya'asu teshuva v'yitvadu vidui devarim,**" I mean that...

Speaker 2:

So that's further, he must have both the korban (sacrifice) and also teshuva vidui devarim.

Speaker 1:

One would see that part of the kapara (atonement) is the korban.

"**She'ne'emar v'hitvada asher chata aleha**" (as it says "and he shall confess what he sinned upon it"), that's a verse in Parshat...

Speaker 2:

He should say a vidui on what he sinned.

Speaker 1:

That's a verse in Parshat Vayikra he brings about an asham (guilt offering), I think. "V'hitvada," it says. One learns from this that not only... Ah, another way one could have thought that this is just saying vidui devarim. Ah, this week is Vayikra.

I haven't learned yet, I don't know, I haven't done it yet.

Others could have thought that what one must say vidui devarim, that's when there's no Beit Hamikdash (Temple), no sacrifices, but the transgression makes me do vidui. He says no, on the contrary, vidui is essential, even when one does bring a korban one must do teshuva and say vidui.

Halacha 4: Vidui by Those Liable to Death Penalties

The same thing is not only a korban, but other death penalties as well. "**V'chen kol chayavei mitot beit din**" (and so all those liable to court-imposed death penalties)...

Halacha 1 (continued): Vidui is Essential Even by Sacrifices and Punishments

Speaker 1:

I haven't learned yet, I don't know what was discussed today. A second person might think that the requirement to say vidui devarim, that's when there's no Beit Hamikdash, there are no sacrifices, so the service is done with vidui. He says no, on the contrary, vidui is essential even when one does bring a korban, one must do teshuva and say vidui.

The same thing, not only a korban, but other punishments as well. "**V'chen kol chayavei mitot beit din v'chayavei malkot**" (and so all those liable to court-imposed death penalties and those liable to lashes). He means to tell you, by the way, one is doing another great thing, one is doing the thing of the korban, or one receives the punishment for teshuva. So what's still missing - vidui? No, the korban or the punishment is not enough. Rather **chayavei mitot beit din v'chayavei malkot, einan mitkaper lahem b'mitatan u'v'malkutan** (those liable to court-imposed death penalties and lashes, they are not atoned for by their death or their lashes), they don't receive atonement, **ad she'ya'asu teshuva v'yitvadu** (until they do teshuva and confess), until he does teshuva and vidui. This is also the Mishna.

Question: What Does Vidui Accomplish by Death Penalty?

Yes, but what you have is a Mishna in Sanhedrin that says there, kol ha'mumatin mitvadin (all those being executed confess). And apparently the point is the same thing. I want you to understand this a bit, because apparently, the Torah says that one commits a transgression, one receives a punishment. The simple meaning is the punishment, that is, with this one completes the transgression, no? What's the simple meaning that one must also say vidui? What does the vidui accomplish? For example, a person facing court-imposed death, he dies, he's dead now. I mean, he receives the greatest punishment. What's the meaning that he must still say vidui as well?

One must understand what kapara means in this case. Kapara after he has died is... Yes, on the contrary, his soul doesn't go to Gehinnom (purgatory), whatever, what a difference, he doesn't go to... I understand that. But what does it mean that he must confess? What does it mean at all, when before he's dying, he says "I will never sin again"? Okay, he won't sin when he's going to be dead. Yes, it's hard to sin when one is dead. One can't know.

Answer: Vidui Shows True Regret

Apparently, perhaps the point is that... He could be deciding against his will, he still holds by doing the transgressions. Unfortunately, he has no other choice. The vidui says that he truly wants to become better, he truly holds that he made a mistake. It's like this, it's not clear. So one must think as if, you could say that... One receives kapara for vidui, for teshuva. There are types of transgressions where part of the teshuva is also a korban, or also death, or also punishment. So one will see apparently in the laws of Yom Kippur in the next second half of the chapter. But it's different words.

Okay, that's the essence that comes out here. I don't understand so well what the Gemara says that the vidui that the one being executed says is that he says "tehi mitati kapara al kol avonoti" (may my death be atonement for all my sins). But what then is the hidden part, I don't understand. But apparently what the Rambam wants to bring out is that one

shouldn't think that one can get away without teshuva, without vidui. Even death requires vidui, even a korban requires vidui. That's apparently the essence.

Halacha 1 (continued): Between Man and His Fellow

The Rambam says further, "v'chen," but now we're speaking regarding between man and his fellow (bein adam l'chavero), there's also vidui. Not only to the Almighty, but also to the person against whom he sinned. **V'chen aveirot she'bein adam l'chavero, k'gon hachovel b'chavero o hamazik mamono, af al pi sheshilam lo ma shehu chayav lo** (and so transgressions between man and his fellow, such as one who injures his fellow or damages his property, even though he paid him what he owes him), he has already fixed it, he has already done teshuva to that person, **eino mitkaper lo ad sheyitvadeh** (he is not atoned for until he confesses), until he says vidui, **v'yashuv me'asot kazeh le'olam** (and returns from doing such a thing forever), and he goes to have regret, do teshuva, from doing again such a wrong, such injury or damage. **She'ne'emar, 'mikol chatot ha'adam'** (as it says, "from all the sins of man"), which means sins between man and his fellow. I mean that "chatot ha'adam" means like human, yes, sin to man. Like the Midrash Tehillim says "chata adam l'adam" (man's sin to man).

Halacha 2 — The Scapegoat

Very good. The Rambam says further, **"se'ir hamishtalei'ach"** (the scapegoat), there's another type of korban, which is a kind of kapara. He says, **"se'ir hamishtalei'ach l'fi shehu kapara l'chol Yisrael"** (the scapegoat since it is atonement for all Israel), he brings here another way how one sees that when there's kapara, it's not such a thing that a kapara works instead of vidui, but kapara must work with vidui. He says, "se'ir hamishtalei'ach" is an atonement for all of Israel collectively, therefore there must also be a vidui collectively. **Kohen gadol mitvadeh alav al leshon kol Yisrael** (the High Priest confesses upon it in the language of all Israel), he uses the language "all Israel," he confesses on behalf of all Israel.

Question: How Does Teshuva Work on Behalf of All Israel?

And we're speaking besides the fact that each person must do teshuva himself, there's certainly a thing which is a service that all Israel does. One must think how this works, because again, I understand that it's not part of teshuva, how does the teshuva work on behalf of all Israel? Apparently when one will understand how kapara works for all Israel collectively, one will understand how the se'ir hamishtalei'ach works.

The Scapegoat's Psychological Effect — There is No Despair

Now we're going to learn, and the next thing will perhaps answer the question, the Rambam goes in the rest of the chapter, yes, this is the rest of the chapter, more or less to say how exactly the kapara works, meaning the divisions of kapara (chilukei kapara), and he's going to start with se'ir hamishtalei'ach.

It could be, I think, perhaps for example se'ir hamishtalei'ach, the Rambam is going to say that there are things that se'ir hamishtalei'ach atones for without teshuva, for minor transgressions. It could be that he means that by itself it's a difficult thing. It could be that he means, I think to say my interpretation, perhaps we'll see in a minute in the next section, but what I think he means, that sometimes, there's a person who has done a transgression v'lo noda (and it wasn't

known), he still doesn't know that he sinned. He was innocent and he went to the Beit Hamikdash, or such kinds of things. He says, the person himself can't do teshuva, he can rely presumably on this flaw, on the sin that the person did. And how does it help? First of all, it helps because one believes that it helps, that's already something that helps. If one wants to say specifically psychologically, it's that one says to people on Yom Kippur, the se'ir hamishtalei'ach atones for everyone, he feels better and he begins to become better. A great thing why people are not good is because he has a sin, because he sinned yesterday, he already has despair (ye'ush), he's fallen, he's a despairer. And the faith in se'ir hamishtalei'ach can help. I mean that the Rambam himself is not exactly this language, he's more Chassidic than I'm saying it, but I'm afraid that he goes a whole chapter about se'ir hamishtalei'ach and makes the whole question, one throws it down, and what the Rambam's point here, the Rambam says that it's like a power of imagination (ko'ach hadimyon), and what does one show? One arouses the person to see that there is no despair, all the transgressions in the house of Israel, it's very strongly convincing the person to believe in the kapara. Like the language of the verse is "shuvu elai ki ge'altichem" (return to Me for I have redeemed you), because a person doesn't want to return to the Almighty because he feels so smeared with sin, there's despair, the Almighty says, "Come back, because I have already redeemed you from your sin, I have already forgiven you."

Halacha 6 — Divisions of Kapara: The Scapegoat With and Without Teshuva

Now we're going to learn, se'ir hamishtalei'ach, the Rambam says, the goat that one throws down from what one leads into the desert, there are two goats there, the goat that is sent away is known that it says in the Torah that it atones, and it says in the Mishna, **mechaper al kol aveirot shebaTorah, hakalot v'hachamurot** (it atones for all transgressions in the Torah, the light and the severe), it atones for light and severe ones. One must understand, because essentially we're speaking besides the fact that each person must do teshuva himself, and do himself for Purim. If apparently one will see, he goes also the Rambam, the Rambam is going to say, he's going to say, we're not going to see, let's arrive until the next gathering we'll arrive. First let's go learn Hilchot Teshuva. Teshuva atones for all transgressions, whether a small transgression, whether a large transgression. Between man and his fellow what must one do? Between man and his fellow, yes, ad sheyirtzeh et chavero (until he appeases his fellow), the person has become aware of the sin, between man and his fellow, he's not over it. Sins are atoned for by teshuva. The Rambam says, what do you know what this means light and severe? I mean that the Rambam is going to say himself, right? And I mean the light ones. They go okay, goes. Okay, how? Without teshuva? But if he didn't do teshuva? If he didn't do teshuva? **Ein se'ir mechaper lo klal ela kalot** (the goat doesn't atone for him at all except for light ones). He is... without teshuva, the goat only atones for light ones. The Rambam is going to explain. And I mean light ones, and I mean severe ones... One must know, yes, until now he wasn't clear, because one light ones because severe ones, all, but now there is still a difference, on. They are light ones because I mean severe ones. Severe ones, these are transgressions that have upon them death penalties or karet (spiritual excision)... That's there one must do teshuva as was said earlier that the

death itself, or the karet doesn't help without teshuva. Ad shevuot sha, false oaths. Shevuot sha means an oath that is to him, for example when someone says he on something, he makes an oath on something that is gold, and it's obviously gold, it's not found out, and false (sheker) means that he swears he's going to do something and he doesn't do it, such a thing. So even though there's no karet on severe ones. Also, oaths are a very severe thing, even though there's no karet on it. So what comes out from this a rule, what essentially how does one know that something is severe? One knows that one receives karet. Except for false oaths. Sometimes, yes, until you know for certain. Thank God, it's a verse. What indeed we say no karet? I know I know how ashamed so minute. One action? Something like that. Karet doesn't say action on lashes. No, he says that an oath is just speech, perhaps because of that it's unique... Why is it hard on oaths? It's lo tisa Hashem (do not take God's name in vain), it's using God's name, desecrating God's name. One uses the Almighty's name for falsehood. That's the worst thing. Very uses the Almighty for his falsehood. But those without mitzvot, **lo ta'aseh she'ein bahem karet, zeh harei kalot** (negative commandments that don't have karet, these are the light ones), these are the lighter transgressions. For this the se'ir hamishtalei'ach does help. So basically, someone didn't put on tefillin one day, or he, I know which transgression, he ate something that doesn't have karet, not forbidden fat (chelev), but he ate something else. So, Yom Kippur comes, the se'ir hamishtalei'ach, done, even if he didn't do teshuva, yes? So very good. If he did a karet, he made on a roll a vow, he ate chelev, such a thing, then he must do teshuva. Then the se'ir hamishtalei'ach also helps to atone, but then he must do teshuva.

Halacha 8 — In Our Time Without the Temple

Yes, today when there's no Beit Hamikdash is a problem. So the Rambam says, **"u'mah she'aveirot she'ein bahem karet, im asa adam teshuva, ein teshuvato gemura ad sheyitvadeh b'Yom Hakippurim"** (and what about transgressions that don't have karet, if a person does teshuva, his teshuva is not complete until he confesses on Yom Kippur). So today, when we don't have the se'ir hamishtalei'ach, our teshuva is not complete until we confess on Yom Kippur.

So the Rambam says, **"But sins that carry karet or death penalties from beit din, and likewise the scapegoat, only atone with teshuva."** So all these things atoned for all sins. So what did you accomplish with the se'ir hamishtalach back then? It was without teshuva. For minor sins, does one need to do teshuva? For minor sins it helped even without teshuva, the se'ir hamishtalach.

The Rambam's Chiddush — Teshuva is the Essence

Very good. I ask you, so this is the Rambam, that teshuva atones for all sins. This is obvious, what chiddush was there? I mean even without a se'ir hamishtalach, back then one also needed teshuva. And what happens nowadays on Yom Kippur, if one needs to do teshuva anyway? Let's say, even voluntarily. Okay.

The point is, first of all to know, I mean that the Rambam wants to bring out, because people don't know this. People would have thought that you see there's all this seder ha'avodah, there are korbanot, etc. etc. etc. A person thinks that today when there's no Beit Hamikdash it's a weak situation, it's very difficult, one can't bring korbanot. A bit

different, that today there are no korbanot, what is Yom Kippur? Yom Kippur is each person on their own avodah. But back then it was, everyone looked at the Kohen Gadol. What was Yom Kippur? A day of korbanot, of the Kohen Gadol.

One looks at the differences. The Rambam says a chiddush, you shouldn't think that because it's only an avodah that the non-Jew is not

Halacha 1 (continued): Teshuva Atones for Everything, and the Essence of Yom Kippur Itself

"And even a wicked person all his days who does teshuva at the end, they don't mention any of his wickedness"

Speaker 1:

People would have thought that you see there's all these orders, and I came, there are korbanot, etc. etc. etc. A person thinks that today when there's no Beit Hamikdash, it's a weak situation, it's very difficult. One can't, the Almighty isn't there, no korbanot. I would say it a bit differently, that today there are no korbanot, what is Yom Kippur? Yom Kippur is each person on their own avodah. But back then it was, everyone looked at the Kohen Gadol. What was Yom Kippur? A day of korbanot, of the Kohen Gadol, one stands there by the offerings.

The Rambam says a chiddush, you shouldn't think that because there's no Beit Hamikdash, it's completely not a matter that a person should do avodah themselves, the avodah of teshuva. The language "teshuva atones" doesn't speak of Yom Kippur yet, he speaks generally. So he goes on to explain, even a wicked person. Teshuva speaks of everything. But you would have thought one needs to have the avodot, what are you tearing here? Actually not, one doesn't need. Teshuva alone already helps for everything.

The Rambam says further, **"And even a wicked person all his days who does teshuva at the end"**, this is what he's saying now, that teshuva atones for all sins. He says, so far does the work go, so powerful is teshuva, that even if a person was a wicked person all his days, but he did teshuva at the end, at the end he did teshuva, **"they don't mention to him the name of his wickedness"**. They don't remind him of the name, they don't remind him of his wickedness. Yes, they don't call him a wicked person.

You see that he has the name wicked? It still means, yes. Or perhaps "shum," "they don't mention to him any" means in beit din? There are variant texts about this. "The name of his wickedness." It means they don't remind him. No, the truth is, "mention" is apparently a sharp language. It doesn't say that they say he's a ba'al teshuva, they don't mention him at all as a wicked person. He comes to heaven, whatever it is, they don't speak of him at all that he was once a sinner. Ninety years he sinned, one day he did teshuva? No problem, welcome, the tzaddik of the generation. Yes.

As it says in a verse, **"And the wickedness of the wicked person will not cause him to stumble on the day he returns from his wickedness."** Normally, a person stumbles with his wickedness, his wickedness holds him back from overcoming his wickedness. But once a person has done teshuva for his wickedness, he won't stumble again in his wickedness. Here the Rambam explains that he won't stumble, and it's a mistake to translate that they won't embarrass him, they won't remind him of his wickedness. Ahh.

Nu, good.

Speaker 2:

When?

"And the Essence of Yom Kippur Itself Atones for Those Who Return"

Speaker 1:

So the Rambam says further, **"And the essence of Yom Kippur itself atones for those who return."** The essence, the power, the essential power of Yom Kippur, Yom Kippur itself...

Speaker 2:

The day itself.

Speaker 1:

The day itself, ah, the etzumo shel yom, the day itself of Yom Kippur, atones, it atones for those who are already doing teshuva, as it says **"For on this day He will atone for you."**

Discussion: Does the Essence of Yom Kippur Itself Atones Without Teshuva for Minor Sins?

Speaker 2:

Apparently one needs to understand, I would say that teshuva itself already helps. I mean, he's going to explain this in the next thing, why is Yom Kippur still needed in addition to teshuva? Because there are certain sins that teshuva won't help for, and I still need to have Yom Kippur?

Speaker 1:

I mean that truly etzumo shel Yom Hakippurim, because the entire source of etzumo shel Yom Hakippurim is that Yom Kippur atones even without teshuva, as it says, he brings the language of the Sifra, **"For on this day it will atone,"** we learn that "for on this day" even without intention the day itself atones. If it's not so that the day itself atones like the shor hamu'ad, I don't know, I don't work the drashot. I mean that truly, I say differently than what it says in the language of the Rambam, I make a kula, but I hold that truly etzumo shel Yom Hakippurim atones for minor sins even without teshuva. So it's implied, so it comes out from the Rambam.

Speaker 2:

But the Rambam says "for those who return."

Speaker 1:

He means to say one should do teshuva, lechatchila one shouldn't not do teshuva, lechatchila one should do teshuva. But what does "atones for those who return" mean? "For those who return" is teshuva atones anyway.

Speaker 2:

But he means to say further that it atones for those things that teshuva alone wouldn't have helped, like he's going to say karet and death penalties from beit din.

Speaker 1:

There it's all the same halacha, that's the way he thinks, karet and death penalties from beit din... But it doesn't make sense. Karet and death penalties from beit din are severe sins that one always needed to do teshuva for, right? The entire advantage of the se'ir hamishtalach was for minor sins. You say for minor sins clearly teshuva helps before Yom Kippur, right? It doesn't make sense. I already said, I have a click-four, I'm not going to answer the question.

Right? Let's see, let's see. Let's see how he comes out. I'm only looking at halacha 1.

I could be that the answer is, that when a person has major sins, he doesn't remember the minor ones. When a person has on his head severe death penalties from beit din and karet, he's now going to remember that he also on the side didn't wash mayim acharonim. Okay, I mean to say, so therefore one says that when he's busy with his severe sins, the minor ones Yom Kippur itself takes away, or the se'ir hamishtalach itself takes away.

Speaker 2:

But again, the se'ir hamishtalach atones for minor sins even if he doesn't do teshuva for anything. He learns, he goes through Yom Kippur and he does nothing. He's then not contemplating the severe sins. Yes, you're saying the simple explanation, I agree, I don't disagree with you. But he doesn't have the strength to come to think about the minor ones. Therefore, it doesn't say that we need to do teshuva for the severe ones, actually to work on the teshuva for the minor ones.

Speaker 1:

Okay, so I mean that etzumo shel Yom Kippur, the Rambam when he says "for those who return," he only means, because there's someone who argues with him, Rebbi, he said so. He means to say that one should do teshuva, but he doesn't mean that it doesn't atone for minor sins without teshuva. I mean that it actually comes out from the Rambam's calculation, that Yom Kippur atones for minor sins even without teshuva. I know it doesn't fit so well with the other halachic rulings, but I mean it must be so. If not, there's no point to etzumo shel Yom Kippur, it only goes for severe sins. So I mean it turns out that way.

Two Ways to Learn "For on This Day He Will Atone for You"

Speaker 2:

The question comes, how does one learn it out from the words **"For on this day He will atone for you"**? As you say it makes sense. "For on this day He will atone for you" means that the day atones. But the one who learns a different explanation in the Rambam, that "For on this day He will atone for you" is only with teshuva, how does one bring a proof?

Speaker 1:

He says, **"For on this day He will atone for you to purify you from all your sins before Hashem you shall be purified."** A segulah for those who have overcome before the Almighty, for those who have done teshuva. "Before Hashem you shall be purified" means one should do teshuva. In the beginning of the verse it says "For on this day He will atone for you" for those who are going to do teshuva. These are the two ways how to learn the piece of Rambam, if one wants specifically to find a source that one needs to do teshuva.

"For Those Who Return" Means "For Jews" – Etzumo Shel Yom Kippur is a Reset

Speaker 1:

But the truth is actually simple. The truth is as we said earlier, that the entire point of all this Yom Kippur, of all these things, is in order to awaken people that one can do teshuva. And this itself is already a certain teshuva. We're not talking about minor sins, it's obvious. We're not talking about that. I say it atones without teshuva, it's obvious we're not talking about

someone who doesn't hold at all by becoming better. Ah, so this is that *etzumo shel Yom Kippur* is also only for someone who is a part of Yom Kippur, who tries a Yom Kippur.

But apparently this isn't the word "*etzumo shel Yom Kippur*." "*Etzumo shel Yom Kippur*" means the day itself. When he says it atones "for those who return," that's what the Rambam says. Which doesn't mean that he does teshuva for the sin, but for someone who is a part of Yom Kippur.

Speaker 2:

Yes, every Jew is a part. Yes, fine, whatever. It doesn't make so much sense, because a part of teshuva is also a practical thing, because when he doesn't do teshuva he doesn't begin... Right. He doesn't let go of his sins.

Speaker 1:

It stands further. On Kippur is a time that even if he doesn't let go of the specific sin to do teshuva for it, but it's a reset. It's a day, a restart where one forgives the sins. It's another word... There's a word that *shuvu* can mean return for Jews. That means one, for example, because it makes itself do teshuva. It's the same influence on the soul as saying teshuva. Truly. Anyway, yes, teshuva, one has already done teshuva. Let's understand there, one has already done teshuva. Let's not leave the name. But what. But still a person feels, he feels dirty. He still feels weird. What Yom Kippur says, you know what, you're already clean, you can become truly a *tzaddik*.

I see, I mean it's work. I mean every year on Yom Kippur people become better. But why do they believe that Yom Kippur helps. Oy, now I stand I only need to do teshuva. He hasn't done teshuva. It's not a point. I don't catch teshuva. Yes, it's simple. I want once a *mitzvah*.

Etzumo Shel Yom Kippur – The Mitzvah of Not Working

It's also not a bad explanation, that this means coming out for a person to have the time of not working any worldly work, that there's no work that here on Kippur one does, that the Kohen Gadol does. I have here *tefillah*, there's a person contemplating, it's a part of the day being busy with oneself. But this helped the... Most people don't do this. Most people, one goes to shul, one fasts, one does rabbis. Ah, what is for. One passes, one says so much, and one says so much, and one says so many silent prayers. Yes, very good.

But I want to guide them, okay, this isn't shul, Yom Kippur rabbi, but it's the *mitzvah* therefore that one is commanded not to do. One shouldn't make any work at all. Now something about atonement, I catch, and I catch, and one not returning means for Jews. It's simple, so... Yom Kippur is here. But, for one who doesn't believe in it, the day doesn't catch. So it says once, he brings in kingdom of lies. If someone says, it's not catching, one doesn't need Jews, and then it actually doesn't help. Or why it doesn't help also for the same reason, because his explanation is that he doesn't take it seriously. Your group needs to take it seriously. Name, say at home further.

Yerushalmi – Yom Kippur Atones for a Whole Year

Now we're going to say the halacha of distinctions in atonement. Which people are atoned for which things.

The Yerushalmi says that Yom Kippur atones on Yom Kippur, the essence of Yom Kippur atones for a whole year. Okay, let's go further. *Etzumo shel yom*. *Etzumo shel yom* is there such a day Yom Kippur in the year, true. Yes, but there is a Yom Kippur, it's not today it doesn't have power Yom Kippur. It's further on a side, it's quiet. It's there. It's all... Okay, fine.

Okay, we can also say that the *se'ir hamishtalach* atones today, it's also there somewhere in prison in the thousands. Very good. Very good.

Halacha 9 – Introduction to Distinctions in Atonement

"Even though teshuva atones for everything... there are sins that are atoned for immediately and there are sins that are only atoned for after time"

Speaker 1:

We're going to learn distinctions in atonement. In any case, the Rambam says, yes. The Rambam says, **even though teshuva atones for everything**, as we said that teshuva atones for all sins, how, **and the essence of Yom Kippur itself** also atones, it's also a type of teshuva, as you said, there's something there, yes? Okay. He says, but **there are sins that are atoned for immediately**, but there are sins that are atoned immediately at the time when one does the teshuva. **And there are sins that are not atoned for**, the sins are not... I mean, *kapparah*, the simple translation is wiping away, yes? Like... He says Rashi, yes. Kipper... No, it fits here very well, the sin isn't wiped away. There's still something of a presence of it, an aftereffect of it. The sin doesn't go away completely, **except after time**.

Meiri – Kapparah is a Practical Purification

How so? The Rambam explains. There is the Meiri, people who go more in the way of the Rambam who want to explain with intellect, he said this as you say, that all these things, the atonements, make the person... He actually becomes more purified. It's not just that in heaven something magic happens. It's as you say that he's still more refined, he's still close to the sin. In practice, he took a decision, he fell through. Time passes, and the Yom Kippur, the suffering, he actually becomes more purified. It's not just that in heaven something magic happens.

Positive Commandment Without Karet – Atones Immediately

The Rambam says, **How so? If a person transgressed a positive commandment that doesn't carry karet**, what is there teshuva? **He doesn't move from there**, interesting language, **until they forgive him immediately**. It says right away, right away when he does the teshuva, and here he comes to the forgiveness, the atonement. **About these it says, "Return, wayward children, I will heal your waywardness."** That means nothing. I will heal, ah, the moment of teshuva, I will heal. I will heal means the atonement here. The other would be that a Jew got up late at Kriat Shema time, he says, "Tomorrow I'll get up early," and now I go back. One can tell him, "And what's with you? Do you really need to get up early tomorrow?" I'm not talking about what the Rebbe means.

Negative Commandment Without Karet – Teshuva Suspends and Yom Kippur Atones

Sins and negative commandments without karet, what is at this time what is teshuva? Because it's harder than positive commandments. Different, right? **Then teshuva suspends, and Yom Kippur atones**. The teshuva suspends, it has an effect, but it doesn't yet wipe out the... It has

Halacha 10: Negative Commandments Without Karet or Death Penalty from Beit Din

Speaker 1:

So let's say that earth is the sin, and heaven is the atonement. Suspends, one hangs between the two. Yes, suspended and standing. Suspended, what does suspended mean? It's not so... Isn't it lacking atonement? It's something... It's lacking atonement, one remains hanging. It's not yet clear.

Okay. The Pnei Menachem says that suspended and standing means that one hangs on the rope. Okay, whatever, nice.

"And about these it says," he says, "**About these it says 'For on this day He will atone for you to purify you from all your sins before Hashem you shall be purified.'**" About this the verse is said, that the essence of the day does something. It does for the negative commandments. That about this the verse is said. "**For on this day He will atone for you to purify you from all your sins before Hashem you shall be purified,**" that after one has done teshuva, the day helps, the day, to purify you. It atones and purifies. The sins that you've already done, but you still need something more purification, the day makes the purification from all your sins before Hashem you shall be purified.

Chiddush: Two Levels in the Minor Sins

So the difference is, atonement (kapara) is different from before. Before we learned about stringencies and leniencies. Here there are already two levels in the leniencies, right? Because there are positive commandments (mitzvos aseh) and negative commandments (mitzvos lo sa'aseh). Negative commandments, even if they are lenient, if they don't have kares (excision) and don't have death penalty by the court (misos beis din), one must wait for Yom Kippur. Yom Kippur is the... yes.

Law 11 — Kares and Death Penalties by the Court

Speaker 1:

But what happens with transgressions that have kares and death penalties by the court? These are transgressions where there is kares, like many negative commandments and also positive commandments that have kares and death penalties by the court. Positive commandments, only the two that have kares, death - Pesach and circumcision (milah). But death penalties by the court exist for... no, death penalties by the court exist for... death penalties by the court exist for Shabbos, many. Yes, yes.

"**And he does teshuva, then teshuva and Yom Kippur suspend (tolin).**" Even Yom Kippur together with teshuva, still they suspend. Teshuva makes it suspend, and Yom Kippur makes it suspend even more. What does Yom Kippur also have some influence on this? Because "**suffering that comes upon him completes the atonement for him (yisurim haba'im alav gomrin lo es hakapara).**" Suffering that comes upon a person, which suffering?

Discussion: What Does "Yisurim" Mean?

Speaker 1:

That which pains him that he sinned. Or suffering in the world. The measure of suffering is already stated in the Gemara.

Speaker 2:

No, I'm saying the Chassidic thing that the suffering is that he sinned.

Speaker 1:

No, that's a Chassidic thing. But also the suffering is not a problem. The whole world is full of suffering. As you say, one

must wait until suffering, that's not a problem. What you say, for example, how the Maharal would have learned it, you would also say that suffering strikes a person, and it removes a bit more from the pride (ga'ava), which helps him do teshuva. It changes him, it changes him. It strikes a person, he doesn't become angry. Yes, he becomes better.

Novel Idea: The Five Afflictions of Yom Kippur as Yisurim

Speaker 1:

But therefore one must wait until Yom Kippur. One must do once a year, except according to the opinion, simply that on Yom Kippur it's always there. But suffering is always there. I would have said that every Yom Kippur there is suffering, yes? There are the five afflictions (chamisha inuyim). Bring me immediately, one does this, one doesn't need to wait for another Yom Kippur. One places oneself in the same suffering.

The Baal HaTanya's Position Regarding Fasts

Speaker 1:

The Baal HaTanya in Iggeres HaTeshuva has a lengthy discussion, he has a question from a Jew, the Jew asks a question that the Rishonim said that when one does teshuva one must fast, and it was a whole thing. And the Jew says he doesn't understand, how does it say in the Shulchan Aruch that one must fast? There is no such law after teshuva.

So the Baal HaTanya said that the explanation is that what one goes to fast is in order to do for the transgressions that need suffering. No, in order to do for the transgressions that need suffering in order to complete the atonement. Can a person himself not fast Yom Kippur, he can fast just a public fast (ta'anis tzibur) that is stated in the transgressions.

But it would be very good to say that the suffering of Yom Kippur completes the atonement. Yes, but he says that one doesn't think about this. One stands on one's feet, one has the shoes, this is suffering. This is suffering. It already hurts you, and you groan. They complete the atonement for him (gomrin lo es hakapara).

And this is what the Tanya says about what one does with afflictions (sigufim), because one makes oneself into suffering. Others say it doesn't help, because one makes oneself into suffering, and one says... one doesn't make oneself, the suffering comes from Jerusalem. Tell yourself a pain...

Explanation of "Toleh" — A Process That Is Not Complete

Speaker 1:

It is never atoned except with complete atonement, except teshuva and Yom Kippur. That means, you see that suffering helps atonement, it's an important condition, and for kares and death penalties by the court, teshuva alone doesn't help. It suspends (toleh), suspension alone is something halfway. "**Until suffering comes upon him, and through them his atonement is completed, 'and I will visit their transgression with a rod' (ufakadti b'shevet pisham).**"

That is to say, to visit, that means, that is to say, to still pay for their sin. That means, even after they have already done certain teshuva, I will still visit them, I will bring upon them the rod and afflictions, I will bring suffering, which will remove the remaining bit from the transgressions, from the sin.

Discussion: Can One Learn That It Speaks of Without Teshuva?

Speaker 2:

Interesting, from that verse one could have learned that it means he didn't do teshuva. That means, I will... but the Rambam doesn't go with the position that without teshuva nothing helps. Even death by the court doesn't help.

Speaker 1:

But the question is, what happens when there wouldn't be Yom Kippur, when there would only be teshuva and suffering? Wouldn't it help for kares and death penalties by the court?

Speaker 2:

I think that... I think that toleh, you say that toleh means that it waits a bit for atonement. It could be toleh means as you say, lacking atonement (mechusar kapara). That means, we need to have... it's a condition, we're missing a condition in the teshuva.

Speaker 1:

No, I don't mean that it does something. That means, I need to have the teshuva, but the teshuva hasn't finished. It's suspended (toleh). He still has his teshuva, the teshuva doesn't go away, the teshuva isn't lost. The teshuva is lying there. The teshuva finishes with suffering. It's a matter that happens then.

Discussion: Why Does Hashem Bring Suffering Without Teshuva?

Speaker 2:

I don't understand, Hashem brings... I'll ask a question. Hashem gives suffering to a person when he sins, yes? It's severe and not simple. But if he doesn't do teshuva, the suffering doesn't help. Why does He give him the suffering then? To atone a bit? Or perhaps that itself helps even without teshuva? The suffering finishes a bit...

Discussion: What Happens When It's Out of Order?

Speaker 2:

And one can ask differently, what happens when it's out of order (shelo k'sidran)? For example, when he has Yom Kippur, and he does teshuva afterwards, and afterwards he has suffering. Or he has suffering, and afterwards he does teshuva. Does he still have... it doesn't have to be that there's a certain order.

Speaker 1:

It could be that the suffering itself can bring to teshuva. Or there is some kind of teshuva that the suffering brings, some kind of regret (charota).

Speaker 2:

True.

Law 12 — Desecration of God's Name

Speaker 1:

So this is the Rambam further, bringing proof, and this is what we said that teshuva with Yom Kippur, or even together with suffering, helps. It was said "**as long as he didn't desecrate God's name at the time of his return (mishelo yechalel es shem Hashem b'eis shuvo)**", that when he worshipped idolatry, there was no matter of desecration of God's name (chilul Hashem). Ah, regarding one who desecrates God's name, but most was with this desecration of God's name, and what desecration of God's name is, the Rambam already explained earlier. That other people see his... it's a kind of causing the masses to sin (machtu es harabim).

Every desecration of God's name is a kind of causing the masses to sin.

Discussion: Which Desecration of God's Name Is Being Discussed?

Speaker 2:

It's not clear which desecration of God's name is being discussed. Perhaps he means that a great person (adam gadol) commits a transgression and other people learn from it.

Speaker 1:

Okay. "**He transgressed Shabbos and Yom Kippur and stood in his teshuva (avar al Shabbos v'Yom Kippur v'amad bitshuvaso)**." Interesting language. "**He transgressed Shabbos and Yom Kippur and stood in his teshuva.**" Interesting thing. It doesn't look like what I said that the order is not indispensable. It looks like the... no, he means to say... no, here he means to say, even if he received Yom Kippur and he received suffering, and still...

"One who desecrates God's name, even though he did teshuva, and Yom Kippur arrived and he stands in his teshuva, and suffering came upon him, he is not atoned with complete atonement until he dies." As long as he still lives here, they still hold against him the sin. **"Rather teshuva and Yom Kippur and suffering, the three of them suspend, and death atones, as it says, 'And it was revealed in my ears by Hashem of Hosts: Surely this iniquity shall not be atoned for you until you die' (v'niglah b'aznai Hashem Tzevakos im yechaper ha'avon hazeh lachem ad temusun).**" Just as Hashem is witness that what? That until he dies they will not completely atone for the transgression.

Discussion: Explanation of "V'niglah B'aznai Hashem"

Speaker 2:

No, it seems to me, "v'niglah" perhaps means something different from before. It means, that people do certain transgressions, and Hashem sees, Hashem knows, and Hashem says, "I will not forgive you until you die." It means that a person should not be calm, he should always remember the transgression.

Speaker 1:

Regarding what is this relevant? He is liable to death, perhaps he means that he will die. He dies in the end from this. If not for this, wouldn't he have died? Do all people die because of the bit of desecration of God's name that they made?

Speaker 2:

All people die. First of all, yes, because Adam HaRishon made a desecration of God's name, because of that all people die. But aside from that... no, but when we need to know, regarding what is this relevant?

Discussion: What Does "Death Atones" Mean?

Speaker 1:

I mean, Hashem Himself... I mean that death means to say that you owe Hashem. Perhaps he means death as punishment. Death simple meaning. Death means... "ad temusun" doesn't mean that it won't remain until you die. It means to say you will die because of this. Die earlier, whatever, unusual death (misa meshuneh), whatever. That's what I mean. Simple meaning.

Speaker 2:

Perhaps death atones for the transgression. Perhaps death is a kind of greater form of suffering. Then they receive the great suffering of death and that will bring the atonement.

Speaker 1:

It's certain that death... how will death atone for desecration of God's name?

Speaker 2:

I told you... I'll make you understand. Look, I'll tell you an explanation. People tell you, so-and-so doesn't learn Torah, what will be with him? But they said, you know that so-and-so who doesn't learn Torah also died, well, well, he says a person.

Speaker 1:

Or perhaps when one dies, one sees only the mitzvos that he did, his "after death, holy ones" (acharei mos kedoshim), that helps.

Speaker 2:

It's exactly the opposite, because here there is a person with mitzvos, but they don't want to forgive him. That one dies, and every time one says a eulogy (hesped) on that one, they will him again...

Novel Idea: Hashem Is Not Limited

Speaker 1:

I'll make you understand, all these laws, one doesn't limit Hashem. If Hashem wants to forgive someone, give him a gift and forgive without death, without suffering, Hashem is not... Hashem is not limited by the observance of the Torah, I don't know. It means an obligation on the person. The person must remember that he is not yet finished with the sin, he must still...

Novel Idea: A Meiri Way — "At the Time of His Soul"

Speaker 2:

Look, when we speak of reward and punishment in heaven... I tell you, if you go with the Meiri way, you can say that a desecration of God's name means what is at the time of his soul (b'sha'as nafsho). A person should know that if he once did at the time of his soul, the simple meaning is that he should never be assured that he is already healed. He should still always have some certain brokenness, he should always know that if he was in a state of at the time of his soul, he can always fall back again to at the time of his soul. It's a certain broken heart (lev nishbar) of a penitent (baal teshuva).

Speaker 1:

I don't know, I don't know what does it mean. This is... yes, it brings out the severity of the matter (chomer hadavar).

Discussion: Practically — What Can a Person Do?

Speaker 2:

What is perhaps practically from this? Hashem wants to forgive you. I don't know exactly what it means. Perhaps he must still do teshuva, he must still pray Tehillim, whatever, I know. Okay, he must watch.

Speaker 1:

Tehillim itself can be a great transgression, if he says Tehillim and he has a portion in the World to Come (chelek l'olam haba).

Speaker 2:

No, no, it means not finished.

Speaker 1:

Yes, okay. Okay, okay, okay. This is the first chapter. Okay, I saw a chapter.