

# Laws of Repentance, Chapter 3 (Auto Translated)

English

Auto Translated

## Shiur Overview

### Summary of Hilchot Teshuva Chapter 3

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#### Introduction to the Chapter

The third chapter of Hilchot Teshuva is different from the first two chapters which dealt with the foundations of teshuva – what is the mitzvah, the definition, the essence. Chapter 3 is harder to understand what it has to do with Hilchot Teshuva.

**The approach of Chapter 3:** The best answer is that the Rambam in Hilchot Teshuva is coming to address the question of tachlit ha'avodah, the perfection of a person. Chapter 3 is an introduction to this – it goes through **all levels of people:** from the complete tzaddik (the one who serves from love, Chapter 8) to the greatest resha'im who "have no portion in the World to Come." The chapter is a sum total of every type of Jew, from the greatest tzaddik to the greatest rasha. It also speaks about reward and punishment, because this reveals the level of each person.

**Innovation regarding two types of teshuva:** Until now we learned about teshuva in a particular way – a person didn't put on tefillin, tomorrow he puts on tefillin and says vidui. This is a "small teshuva" for a specific mitzvah. But from time to time a person must make a **general cheshbon hanefesh** – not on a specific mitzvah, but rather: "Where do I stand in the world? Am I a tzaddik, a beinoni, a rasha?" This is a much greater avodah of teshuva. Perhaps for this there are **Aseret Yemei Teshuva** – because the general cheshbon hanefesh cannot be done every day (that would be "overthinking"), but there are certain times that are especially good for this. The Rambam himself says there is a judgment every day, a judgment at the time of death, and a judgment during Aseret Yemei Teshuva. The general cheshbon hanefesh is also a matter of **judgment** – just as the Almighty makes a judgment and accounting on a person, a person must judge himself.

Parable: A person who works cannot focus the whole time "Is this the right job?" – he must do his work. But from time to time he must make a deeper accounting.

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#### Halacha 1 – Tzaddik, Rasha, Beinoni

**The Rambam's words: "Each and every person has merits and sins. One whose merits exceed his sins – a tzaddik. One whose sins exceed his merits – a rasha. Half and half – a beinoni. And so too a city, if the merits of all its inhabitants exceed their sins – behold it is righteous. And if their sins are greater – behold it is wicked. And so too the entire world."**

#### Plain Meaning

Every person has merits and sins. Whoever has more merits is a tzaddik, more sins is a rasha, half-half is a beinoni. The same applies to a city and to the entire world.

#### Innovations and Explanations

1. **"From among people" – not only Jews:** The Rambam says "each and every person from among people" – not "from among Israel." This shows that the law applies to all people, not only Jews. Proof: By Sodom the Almighty looked at a gentile city, and the argument with Avraham concerns gentiles.

2. **"Merits and sins" – not "mitzvot and transgressions":** The Rambam uses the language "merits and sins" instead of "mitzvot and transgressions." This is an **innovation**, because "merits" is more inclusive than "mitzvot" – it includes also good character traits, good beliefs, good deeds. "Mitzvot" literally means only what the Almighty commanded, but "merits" means all good things. The same with "sins" – it means more than just formal transgressions. The language "merits and sins" presents it as a **calculation, a bank account** – merit is a credit (plus), sin/debt is a deficit (minus). The language "his sins exceed his merits" is indeed the language of Chazal, but the Rambam's formulation "each and every person has merits and sins" is perhaps his own innovation.

3. **Three types of people – the innovation of beinoni:** There exist **three** types of people, not just two. The beinoni is the hardest to understand – it's almost impossible for someone to have exactly 50/50. Therefore one must understand that "beinoni" means a more general category – a "general beinoni," not an exact beinoni. The normal order of the world is that people have both mitzvot and transgressions, and whoever has more mitzvot is already a tzaddik – which is actually a great thing.

4. **The Rambam doesn't say how to measure:** He doesn't say whether one counts by the number of transgressions, or perhaps one major transgression is worse than a bunch of minor ones. But he will touch on this later.

5. **"And so too a city" – a city as an entity:** The innovation is that **a city is not just a bunch of individuals** – there is a law of a city as "one entity," a large person. A person is an "olam katan" (small world), and a city is also a person on a larger scale. One looks at whether the city as a whole is good or bad.

6. **Why is "beinoni" missing by a city?** The Rambam mentions by a city only righteous or wicked – **no beinoni city is mentioned.** Two answers:

- **First answer:** A person who is a beinoni must quickly push to one side (as it says "a person should see himself as if he is half and half"), but a city doesn't have such a law.

- **Second answer (novel):** Practically a city cannot remain a beinoni. The Rambam already said earlier (Chapter 6 of Hilchot De'ot) that the custom of the city's inhabitants draws people after it. If there are already fifty percent resha'im, people will be drawn after them, and it will quickly become ninety percent. The same if there is a majority of tzaddikim. A

"balanced" city is almost impossible because the social pressure constantly pulls to one side.

**7. Practical difference of the law of a city and world:** A person doesn't belong only to himself – he belongs to a city and to the entire world. If a city is mostly resha'im, it is uprooted like Sodom. If the world is mostly resha'im, it is destroyed like in the Flood.

**8. Innovation regarding gentiles:** We are accustomed to think that most gentiles are resha'im – but the Rambam's approach shows this cannot be, because then the world would have long been destroyed. The fact that the world still exists is a sign that there is still a majority of good in the world.

[Digression: It is brought from Chovot HaLevavot that one should not indulge in pride which is worse than transgressions, and a teaching from a rabbi that we ask "erase our sins" because if we have no sins at all we will have pride.]

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**Halacha 1 (continued) – "He immediately dies in his wickedness"**

**The Rambam's words: "And so too a person whose sins exceed his merits – he immediately dies in his wickedness, as it says 'because of the abundance of your iniquity.' And so too a city whose sins are greater – it is immediately destroyed, as it says 'the outcry of Sodom and Gomorrah is indeed great.' And so too the entire world – if their sins are greater, they are immediately destroyed, as it says 'And God saw that the wickedness of man was great.'"**

**Plain Meaning**

A person with a majority of sins dies immediately; a city is destroyed (like Sodom); the entire world is destroyed (like in the Flood).

**Innovations and Explanations**

**1. The Rambam's interpretation of "rov" (majority):** In all three verses the Rambam interprets the word "rabah" (great) as "rov" (majority) – not just "a lot" but a majority. The simple meaning of "because of the abundance of your iniquity" is that he has many transgressions, but the Rambam learns that "rov" means literally a majority – more sins than merits. Support: What does "many transgressions" mean? Many is more than one needs to have – and that means more than a majority.

**2. Sodom as proof – and a question from Avraham's negotiation:** The Rambam brings Sodom as an example of a city whose sins are greater. But Avraham Avinu had an argument with the Almighty about ten tzaddikim. Perhaps there is another calculation, or perhaps Avraham asked that at least the tzaddikim should be saved, or that the ten tzaddikim can tip the majority to their side.

**3. Two interpretations of "he immediately dies in his wickedness":**

- **Simple interpretation:** He literally dies immediately as punishment.

- **Alternative interpretation:** "Dies in his wickedness" means he sinks into his wickedness – he loses his free choice. As the Rambam says in other places, that when a person does very many transgressions for a long time, his free choice is taken away. "Dies" means the soul is lost.

**4. The Ra'avad's question and answer:** The Ra'avad asks: We don't see that resha'im die immediately! (Just as Tosafot in Rosh Hashanah asks "but we see that resha'im don't die"). The Ra'avad's answer: "Sealed immediately" doesn't mean he dies immediately, but that the judgment is decreed immediately – he will die, but it can still take time. [Note: Tosafot has a different answer – that "sealed immediately for death" speaks of the World to Come, not this world.]

**5. How the Rambam understands "immediately" – law vs. reality:** The Rambam means "immediately" literally – he dies immediately – but he speaks of the law, not the practical reality. The Rambam also lived in this world and knew that not every bad city is immediately destroyed. He rules on the law – what practically happens is a separate question.

**6. Historical example – Nazi Germany:** Bad societies eventually fall: Nazi Germany – naturally one looks at it as a war, but this is the way the Almighty made "they are immediately destroyed" – the rasha becomes more and more insane, his transgressions carry him until he starts with larger countries, until he is removed from the world. Bad societies are not "sustainable" – eventually they are uprooted.

**7. The concept of "majority" is a sharp point:** The Rambam's "tzaddik" doesn't mean someone who never does any transgression – it means someone whose majority of decisions are correct. So too a "tzaddik city" doesn't mean it never does any wrong – it means that most of the time it makes correct decisions (laws, wars, public policy).

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**Halacha 1 (continued) – How merits are weighed against sins**

**The Rambam's words: "And this weighing is not according to the number of merits and sins but according to their magnitude. There is a merit that is equivalent to many sins, as it says 'because there was found in him something good.' And there is a sin that is equivalent to many merits, as it says 'and one sinner destroys much good.' And they are only weighed by the knowledge of the God of knowledge, and He is the One who knows how to arrange the merits against the sins."**

**Plain Meaning**

The calculation of merits against sins doesn't go by quantity but by magnitude (quality). One great mitzvah can outweigh many transgressions, and one serious transgression can outweigh many merits. Only the Almighty Himself can properly measure this.

**Innovations and Explanations**

**1. The verse "because there was found in him something good":** The Rambam brings the verse about the son of Yeravam (I Kings 14). The prophet said that the child will die, but he himself will come to honorable burial – "because there was found in him something good to Hashem, God of Israel, in the house of Yeravam." One "good thing" can outweigh many sins.

**2. Practical difference for the law of a city:** If one goes by magnitude and not by number, one great tzaddik in a city can tip the entire city – not just through numbers, but through the weight of his righteousness.

**3. "And they are only weighed by the knowledge of the God of knowledge" – many criteria:** It's not just one measure (like the severity of the transgression). There's also: how difficult it was for the person, how much suffering he had, how much self-overcoming, and many more factors – and only the Almighty Himself can measure all this. The Almighty is "examiner of hearts and minds" and knows what goes on inside the person, therefore one mitzvah that comes from a deep place with great self-overcoming can weigh more than one would think.

**4. Distinction between categories of severity and the Almighty's weighing:** In an earlier chapter we learned which transgressions are minor and severe (karet, death penalties by court = severe). But here, when speaking of weighing against merits, we don't necessarily mean the formal categories – there are other calculations that only the Almighty knows. The verse "God is a God of knowledge and by Him actions are weighed" means the Almighty understands people's thoughts precisely.

[Digression: Story with R' Itzkl of Pshevorssk about noodle kugel – R' Itzkl used to say that noodle kugel (oneg Shabbat) is added to the mitzvot. When someone thought he could therefore do many transgressions, R' Itzkl answered: "You don't know how much missing my Mincha once weighs." The point: one doesn't know the true weight of mitzvot and transgressions – it's "according to their magnitude" – and the person who thought physically (a crude kugel weighs more) didn't understand that transgressions also have weight.]

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**Halacha 2 – Regrets the First Ones (regret over mitzvot)**

**The Rambam's words: "Whoever regrets the mitzvot he did and wonders about the merits and says in his heart 'what benefit did I have in doing them, if only I hadn't done them' – behold he has lost them all and no merit is mentioned for him in the world, as it says 'and the righteousness of the righteous will not save him on the day of his transgression.'"**

**Plain Meaning**

Whoever regrets his mitzvot and says "if only I hadn't done it" – loses all merits, and no merit is mentioned for him. This is the opposite of what we learned at the beginning of the chapter – that even a complete rasha who sinned all his days, if he does teshuva, "no sin is mentioned for him."

**Innovations and Explanations**

**1. Interpretation of "wonders" – more than simple regret:** The word "wonders" can mean he wonders, he has doubts, he knows it was actually a good thing but he's not sure. But the Rambam makes clear that it means he no longer values his mitzvot – he concludes it wasn't worthwhile.

**2. Interpretation of "if only I hadn't done them" – "if only" means "would that":** The word "if only" here doesn't mean "if" but "would that" (= I wish), as in several places in Chazal (for example "if only they would dig in the way, it would be finished" = would that). This also defines what "regret" means in general – "would that I hadn't done it." This is relevant to the earlier discussion about regret over transgressions in teshuva.

**3. Practical application – one must not denigrate earlier mitzvot:** Even when a person grows in service of God and understands better how to do mitzvot, he must greatly

value the mitzvot he once did – even if he did them with simplicity, or because his teacher told him, or not perfectly. When he thinks "it wasn't worthwhile" he loses everything.

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**Halacha 3 – Weighing at the time of death, every year, and Rosh Hashanah**

**The Rambam's words: "Just as a person's sins and merits are weighed at the time of his death... and in each and every year the sins of each and every person who comes into the world are weighed with his merits on the festival of Rosh Hashanah. Whoever is found to be a tzaddik is sealed for life, and whoever is found to be a rasha is sealed for death, and the beinoni is suspended until Yom Kippur – if he did teshuva he is written for life, and if not he is written for death."**

**Plain Meaning**

Just as one weighs a person's merits and sins at the time of death, so one weighs every person every year on Rosh Hashanah. A tzaddik is sealed for life, a rasha for death, and a beinoni is suspended until Yom Kippur.

**Innovations and Explanations**

**1. Question: Where did we learn about "at the time of death"?** Until now we spoke of weighing at all times – every minute, every day. Where does "at the time of his death" come in? "At the time of death" doesn't necessarily mean when he dies (because before death it was already decided that he must die), but it means: every day he is assessed – if he dies, it was "at the time of death"; if not, it wasn't at the time of death. (It's also mentioned the idea that every night the soul ascends.)

**2. The connection between constant weighing and special times:** Just as with teshuva – one must always do teshuva, but there are special days – so too with weighing: it's always, but Rosh Hashanah is a special "appearance for the matter" – it's more real, it's truly a judgment.

**3. The Rambam's language "sealed" on Rosh Hashanah:** Usually we know that Rosh Hashanah is "writing" and Yom Kippur is "sealing" (we say "may you be written and sealed"). But the Rambam uses the language "sealed" already on Rosh Hashanah for tzaddikim and resha'im. This fits with the Baraita that only beinonim are suspended until Yom Kippur – tzaddikim and resha'im are already sealed on Rosh Hashanah. (We say "may you be written and sealed" on Rosh Hashanah night – on the assumption that you are a tzaddik.)

**4. Question of Ra'avad/Tosafot: "But many resha'im live":** If a rasha is sealed for death, how do so many resha'im live? Several answers:

- **The Zohar's answer:** "This is the secret of reincarnation" – when one brings in calculations of reincarnation, the question falls away.

- **A new answer:** Just as with the conquest of the Land – "and you shall drive them out little by little lest the wild beasts multiply against you" – the Almighty doesn't want a large percentage to die out in every community, because it would be a destruction for the world.

- **The simple answer:** One doesn't know who is a rasha – perhaps he has more mitzvot than what one knows.

**5. A new question on beinoni:** Until now we learned that a beinoni is just a beinoni – no punishment applies to him.

Suddenly it turns out that if a beinoni doesn't do teshuva by Yom Kippur, he is written for death – this means he must indeed do teshuva, which contradicts the earlier learning. (This is elaborated in Halacha 3 continued.)

**6. "Each and every person who comes into the world" – every single one:** The Rambam uses the language of the Mishnah "all who come into the world pass before Him like sheep" – but with the point that each is judged separately. Rosh Hashanah is also a judgment on countries (as in Zichronot: "on countries it is said which for the sword and which for famine"), though the Rambam doesn't bring this explicitly. Perhaps "all who come into the world" also includes countries, because a country is made of people.

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**Halacha 3 (continued) – The law of beinoni in Aseret Yemei Teshuva**

**The Rambam's words (in brief): A beinoni who doesn't do teshuva in Aseret Yemei Teshuva – is sealed for death.**

**Plain Meaning**

The beinoni, who is fifty-fifty, is sealed for death if he doesn't do teshuva in Aseret Yemei Teshuva.

**Innovations and Explanations**

**1. Question: Why does a beinoni die without teshuva?** Until now we learned that a beinoni – nothing happens to him, he's in the middle. Suddenly comes Aseret Yemei Teshuva and he must die?

**Answer A:** Not doing teshuva in Aseret Yemei Teshuva is itself a new transgression. The beinoni is fifty-fifty, and when he goes through Aseret Yemei Teshuva without any thought of teshuva, this makes him a rasha – because he now has a new transgression that tips the balance.

**Answer B (higher explanation):** Perhaps the whole point of Aseret Yemei Teshuva is especially for the beinoni. A rasha also needs teshuva, but he's already a rasha – it's not expected of him. The beinoni is the main addressee of Aseret Yemei Teshuva.

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**Halacha 4 – Shofar blowing as a hint to teshuva**

**The Rambam's words: "Even though the blowing of the shofar on Rosh Hashanah is a decree of Scripture, there is a hint in it, as if to say: Awake, awake you sleepers from your sleep, and you slumberers arise from your slumber, and examine your deeds and return in teshuva and remember your Creator. Those who forget the truth in the vanities of time and err all their years in vanity and emptiness which will not benefit or save, improve your ways and your deeds, and let each of you abandon his evil way and his thought which is not good."**

**Plain Meaning**

Shofar blowing is a decree of Scripture, but there is a hint – the shofar awakens people to do teshuva.

**Innovations and Explanations**

**1. "Decree of Scripture" – source and meaning:** The Rambam bases himself on the Gemara (Rosh Hashanah) "Why do we blow? The Merciful One said blow!" – it's a decree of Scripture. The Rambam means by this: the mitzvah of shofar is not primarily made as a message for the little person. It's the

Almighty's command. But "there is a hint in it" – for the person there is a hint. Perhaps "decree of Scripture" means it's not for the person, but for the Almighty or for the Torah – and "there is a hint in it" is the addition for the person.

**2. Shofar as the source for Aseret Yemei Teshuva:** What is the source of Aseret Yemei Teshuva? Yom Kippur has a verse – "for on this day He will atone for you." But Aseret Yemei Teshuva? It only says "a day of blowing" – not the law of teshuva. The answer: the shofar itself is the hint to teshuva, and from this stems the entire matter of Aseret Yemei Teshuva.

**3. The Rambam's "sermon" – connection to Hilchot Teshuva:** The Rambam connects the shofar to the earlier foundation of beinoni. The beinoni must awaken – and shofar blowing is the mechanism that awakens him.

**4. Analysis of the Rambam's language – gradual teshuva:**

- "**Awake sleepers... arise slumberers**" – a shofar sound awakens a person, like a loud sound.

- "**And examine your deeds**" – make your own judgment and accounting (not just the Almighty in heaven, but you yourself).

- "**Return in teshuva**" – this is abandoning the sin.

- "**And remember your Creator**" – this is acceptance for the future. As the Rambam said in Chapter 2 that "and remember your Creator in the days of your youth" means teshuva when one is still young – we see that the essence of teshuva is remembering the Creator, not forgetting the Almighty.

**5. The beinoni sleeps – not the rasha:** The rasha is not one who sleeps – he wants to be a rasha, he's engaged. But the beinoni – he knows there is a Creator, he does mitzvot, but he sleeps a lot. He forgets. Therefore the Rambam speaks to him: "**Those who forget the truth in the vanities of time**" – these are the beinonim who know about truth, but forget it because they become distracted with temporary foolishness.

**6. "Vanities of time" – temporary things:** "Time" means temporary things – all things of this world, here today, gone tomorrow. "Truth" means eternal things – the Almighty.

**7. "Err all their years":** "Err" is the language the Rambam uses at the end of Hilchot Teshuva – he knows what he did, but he's constantly distracted. "Their years" can mean sleep (sheinah) or year (shanah) – both fit: he sleeps away his years.

**8. "Will not benefit or save" – connection to Hilchot Avodah Zarah:** The language recalls Hilchot Avodah Zarah, but here we see it's deeper – not just idolatry, but all matters of vanity and emptiness are "will not benefit or save."

**9. "Your deeds" – rectification of the soul:** "Your deeds" perhaps means plans (alilah). The Rambam means: look at your soul, understand what a person's perfection is – not vanity and emptiness, but mitzvot and good deeds.

**10. "And let him abandon... his evil way and his thought which is not good" – exactly the language of the definition of teshuva:** This is exactly what the Rambam said earlier (Chapters 1-2) about "what is teshuva" – "that the sinner abandon his sin and remove it from his thought." One clearly sees that the Rambam imagines he's giving the sermon – he writes "each of you" as if speaking to the congregation.

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**Halacha 4 (continued) – "Therefore every person must see himself..."**

**The Rambam's words: "Therefore every person must see himself the entire year as if he is half meritorious and half guilty, and so too the entire world as half meritorious and half guilty. If he sinned one sin – behold he has tipped himself and the entire world to the side of guilt and caused destruction. If he did one mitzvah – behold he has tipped himself and the entire world to the side of merit and caused salvation and deliverance, as it says 'and a tzaddik is the foundation of the world' – this one who made himself righteous tipped the entire world to merit and saved it."**

#### Plain Meaning

A person should constantly view himself as being in the middle – half meritorious and half guilty – and so too the entire world. One mitzvah or transgression can tip everything.

#### Innovations and Explanations

1. **"Therefore" – practical difference:** This is the practical outcome of the entire theory of tzaddikim/beinonim/resha'im. Until now it was theoretical – now comes the practical difference: every person, an entire year (not just Rosh Hashanah), should view himself as a beinoni.

2. **Not just Rosh Hashanah – the entire year:** Though Rosh Hashanah is when one awakens, the Rambam says the approach applies the entire year. When a person has a good moment and he thinks – he should think half meritorious half guilty.

3. **Encouragement, not just rebuke:** A great innovation: this is not just a frightening rebuke-sermon, but a great encouragement-sermon. Usually a person thinks the world is already mostly guilty, long destroyed – "what will I do with one mitzvah?" The Rambam says: No! The world is not destroyed at all. It stands on a point – one more person with one transgression can destroy it, and one more person with one mitzvah can save it. This gives tremendous power – your actions have real significance. This is against the feeling of despair – "the world is so corrupt, what will I do?" No – your one mitzvah, your Passover flour, can be the straw that broke the camel's back in the good direction.

4. **"Destruction" – flood:** "And caused destruction" means like "all flesh corrupted its way" – a flood, a destruction of the world.

5. **"And a tzaddik is the foundation of the world" – tzaddik as active:** The Rambam interprets the verse: "tzaddik" doesn't mean someone who is already a tzaddik (then we wouldn't be speaking of a beinoni). "Tzaddik" means someone who **made himself righteous** – he pushed himself from beinoni to tzaddik. He is "foundation of the world" – he established a foundation (set up) the world so it should stand stable. "Tzaddik" here is active, not a noun (static).

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**Halacha 4 (continued) – All the house of Israel are accustomed to increase in charity and good deeds**

**The Rambam's words: "All the house of Israel are accustomed to increase in charity and good deeds and to engage in mitzvot from Rosh Hashanah until Yom Kippur more than all the days of the year."**

#### Plain Meaning

In Aseret Yemei Teshuva one conducts oneself to increase in charity, good deeds, and mitzvot more than the entire year.

#### Innovations and Explanations

1. **The Rambam's structure: In general** there is weighing of merits and debts the entire year, **especially** Aseret Yemei Teshuva. In general a person must always see himself as half meritorious half guilty, and do more mitzvot. Especially in Aseret Yemei Teshuva.

2. **Three categories:** The Rambam divides: (1) **Charity** – giving to the poor; (2) **Good deeds** – good character traits, good deeds; (3) **Engaging in mitzvot** – God's commandments. He doesn't include specific laws (like pat Yisrael), but a general thing. Charity is emphasized because it's one of the very great mitzvot, and it's also part of teshuva (as earlier in the Rambam).

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**Halacha 4 (continued) – All are accustomed to stand at night in Aseret Yemei Teshuva**

**The Rambam's words: "And all are accustomed to stand at night in Aseret Yemei Teshuva to pray in synagogues with words of supplication and words of submission until the day dawns."**

#### Plain Meaning

The custom is to wake up at night (earlier than usual) and say selichot – supplications and submissions – until it becomes light.

#### Innovations and Explanations

1. **"All" – obligation for every Jew:** The Rambam says "all" – this means it's a custom of all Israel.

2. **Words of supplication vs. words of submission: Words of supplication** – one asks the Almighty. **Words of submission** – rebuke words that speak to the person (for example: you will die, your soul pleads). Many selichot are beautiful rebuke sermons, and many are supplications.

3. **Question: Why didn't the Rambam list prayer in the list of charity, good deeds, mitzvot?** He brings supplications/submissions separately first.

- **Answer 1:** Words of submission is not prayer – it's awakening that leads to charity and good deeds. It's a continuation of shofar – it reminds the person.

- **Answer 2 (perhaps):** Words of supplication can be part of kindness with people – one prays for other people who are in trouble.

4. **The reason for selichot:** The **beinoni** needs one more mitzvah. An entire year he also needs, but especially in Aseret Yemei Teshuva.

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**Halacha 5 – Removes first first**

**The Rambam's words: \*\*"**The first and second sins he sinned are not counted against him, but from the third onward. If his sins from the third onward are found to exceed

#### Summary of Hilchot Teshuva Chapter 3 (Continued)

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**Halacha 5 – Removes first first (continued)**

**The Rambam's words: "The first and second sins he sinned are not counted against him, but from the third onward. If his sins from the third onward are**

**found to exceed his merits – those transgressions are added up and he is judged for all. And if his merits are found to be against his sins from the third onward – they remove his sins first first, because the third is considered the first since the first two have already been forgiven. As it says 'Behold, God does all these things twice, three times with a man.'**"

#### Plain Meaning

When calculating a person's transgressions, the first two are not counted. One begins from the third. If from the third onward transgressions exceed merits – the first two are also brought back and he is judged for everything. If merits exceed – each transgression is forgiven "first first."

#### Innovations and Explanations

1. **The mechanism of "removes first first":** This is an interesting "trick" of how one justifies a person with a majority of merits. The first two transgressions have already been forgiven. The third now becomes "the first" – and the first is not counted. Then the fourth becomes "the first" – and so on. **Each transgression is treated as "only the first"** because the previous one has already been forgiven. Thus all transgressions are forgiven, one after another.

2. **Fundamental question: From where does the Rambam have that a majority of merits means the transgressions are completely nullified?** With a regular majority one follows the majority, but this doesn't mean the minority is nullified! But the Rambam says: **"All those sins are forgiven him and no sin remains for him at all."** The source is the verse "his merits are drawn over his sins and he is righteous" – and the mechanism is "removes first first."

3. **Practical difference when mostly guilty:** When from the third onward he is mostly guilty, it's not such a big practical difference that the first two are brought back (he's simply a majority of transgressions anyway), but one can also **go down from them** – he receives punishment also for them.

4. **When does the calculation begin?** It's not clear when the calculation begins. One approach: after Yom Kippur, after marriage, after every moment when one begins a new calculation – the first two transgressions don't count. If a person has only two transgressions and one mitzvah – he's a tzaddik, because the first two aren't counted.

5. **Is this reversible?** The Rambam does **not** say that after being forgiven, if he begins to sin again, one should return to the old transgressions. If he still lives and he begins again, a **new calculation** begins with a majority of merits. There are commentators who say this speaks **at the time of death**, but the Rambam doesn't make this distinction.

6. **Individual vs. community:** For an **individual** the first two times are forgiven, and from the third time onward the calculation begins – according to the verse "Behold, God does all these things twice, three times with a man." For a **community** the first three times are forgiven, and from the fourth time onward the calculation begins – according to the verse "For three transgressions of Israel and for four I will not reverse it."

7. **Practical question – when does the calculation begin?** Practically everyone is already deep in life, and even a day after Yom Kippur one has probably already sinned three

times. A possible answer: perhaps one counts from Yom Kippur's forgiveness anew.

8. **Perhaps each type of transgression is counted separately:** A leniency – one doesn't count all transgressions together, but each type of transgression separately. That is, when speaking of lashon hara, the first two times of lashon hara aren't counted; when speaking of Shabbat desecration, it's counted separately. The Rambam doesn't say this clearly.

9. **Plain meaning in the way of rectification of the soul:** "Your way has become abundant" means he has become that type of person. Two times is still an incident, three times is already a habit – a chazakah (as Tosafot's principle). For a community it's harder to make a chazakah, therefore four times are needed.

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#### Halacha regarding beinoni with half sins (including tefillin)

**The Rambam's words: "If among his half sins was that he never put on tefillin... he is judged according to his sins and he has a portion in the World to Come."**

#### Plain Meaning

A beinoni – half and half merits and sins – even if among his sins is that he never put on tefillin, he receives judgment according to his sins, but he has a portion in the World to Come.

#### Innovations and Explanations

1. **Why does the Rambam specifically bring tefillin?** He brings tefillin because it says in the Gemara (a skull that didn't put on tefillin), but as the Rambam brings it, it turns out that tefillin is not more severe than any other mitzvah – it's just a detail.

2. **What does "beinoni" mean here?** Beinoni means here exactly half and half. If he has a majority of merits, he's a complete tzaddik and receives no punishment at all. The innovation is that even with half and half, when among his sins is such a severe thing as never putting on tefillin, he still has a portion in the World to Come.

3. **The Almighty has mercy on beinonim:** In the Gemara it says that with half and half the Almighty "leans toward kindness." Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel says this means a beinoni. The Rambam doesn't bring this matter so clearly.

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#### Halacha regarding resha'im whose sins are greater – portion in the World to Come

**The Rambam's words: "And so too all resha'im whose sins are greater, they are judged according to their sins, and they have a portion in the World to Come. For all Israel have a portion in the World to Come even though they sinned, as it says 'and your people are all righteous, they shall inherit the land forever.'"**

#### Plain Meaning

Even resha'im with a multitude of transgressions receive punishment according to their sins, but they have a portion in the World to Come. "Land" is a parable – the land of the living, the world of souls.

#### Innovations and Explanations

1. **"Land" as a parable:** The Rambam interprets that "they shall inherit the land forever" doesn't mean the Land of Israel,

but the land of the living – the world of souls where the soul lives forever, and this is the World to Come.

**2. Pious ones of the nations of the world:** The Rambam brings the innovation (from Gemara Chelek) that also pious ones of the nations of the world have a portion in the World to Come. If they were complete tzaddikim they couldn't be pious ones of the nations of the world – they lack something (only seven Noahide commandments), but they have a portion in the World to Come.

**3. The Rambam's main intention:** He wants to arrive at the point that both beinonim and resha'im have a portion in the World to Come (only the rasha's portion is much smaller), in order to introduce the matter of **"and these have no portion in the World to Come"** – those who lose it entirely.

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### **Halacha regarding transgressions that are "deal-breakers"**

#### **Plain Meaning**

There are certain transgressions that even when one has a majority of mitzvot against them, he loses his portion in the World to Come – "deal-breakers" that destroy the entire calculation.

#### **Innovations and Explanations**

**1. Asymmetry between merits vs. transgressions:** Regarding abundant good deeds the Rambam doesn't say there is one mitzvah that can outweigh all transgressions in the Torah. But regarding transgressions he does say that certain sins destroy everything.

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### **"And these have no portion in the World to Come"**

**The Rambam's words: "And these have no portion in the World to Come, but are cut off and destroyed and judged for the magnitude of their wickedness and sin forever and ever."**

#### **Plain Meaning**

Those who have no portion in the World to Come are cut off, lost, and punished forever.

#### **Innovations and Explanations**

**1. Contradiction: cut off but judged?** The Rambam already asks in his letter a contradiction: if karet means (according to the Rambam in Chapter 8 Halacha 5) that one is completely destroyed – the soul no longer exists – how can one be "judged forever and ever"?

**2. A possible answer according to the Rambam's approach:** "Judged forever and ever" means that the judgment of being cut off and destroyed itself goes on forever – that is, forever when his soul doesn't receive access to the World to Come, this itself is the punishment. It's not that he suffers actively, but the fact that he doesn't hear the Almighty's voice, doesn't feel Him – this is the eternal judgment.

**3. Problem with this answer:** The language of the Gemara says "they descend to Gehinnom and are judged there for twelve months" – it sounds like an active punishment in Gehinnom, not merely absence from the World to Come. The Rambam learned the Gemara differently.

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### **Five types of heretics**

### **The Rambam's words: "Five are called heretics"**

#### **Plain Meaning**

The Rambam defines "heretic" as one who denies the Almighty – he doesn't believe in the Almighty as one must believe. All five are variations of denial of the correct faith regarding the Holy One, Blessed be He.

#### **Innovations and Explanations**

**1. The word "heretic" in the Rambam vs. in the Gemara:** In the Gemara "heretics" can mean different things, but the Rambam has a specific definition – one who has a denial of the Almighty's existence/essence.

**2. The five heretics correspond to Hilchot Yesodei HaTorah Chapter 1** – they are the opposite of the four foundations regarding the Almighty: (a) that He exists; (b) that He is one; (c) that He is not a body; (d) that He is first/source of all. The fifth (worshiper of stars and constellations) is in the category of worshiper, not in the category of one who says.

#### **The five heretics in detail:**

**(1) "One who says there is no God and the world has no ruler":**

**Innovation:** "Ruler" doesn't mean the same as "supervisor." Ruler means without Him there would be nothing – as the Rambam says in Yesodei HaTorah "ruler of the sphere." He leads in a general way, not necessarily in a particular way. One who says there is a God but He doesn't supervise – this doesn't appear here as a heretic.

**(2) "And one who says there is a ruler but they are two or more"** – there is indeed a ruler, but more than one.

**(3) "And one who says there is one Master but He is a body and has form"** – there is one God, but He is a body.

[Digression: The Ra'avad and the dispute about a body – the famous Ra'avad writes that "great and good ones" erred in this. The Ba'al HaTanya brings this Ra'avad. **R' Shlomo Fisher** said it's clear that the halacha is like the Ra'avad (that such a person is not called a heretic). **R' Chaim** explained the Rambam with a beautiful interpretation, but also ruled like the Ra'avad. **The Rebbe** also rules like the Ra'avad. The Ra'avad agrees that the truth is like the Rambam (that the Almighty is not a body), but his dispute is on the halacha – that such a person is not called a "heretic."]

**(4) "And so one who says He is not alone the first and source of all"** – the Almighty is not alone the first and the source of everything.

**Innovation – what is the distinction between #2 and #4?** #4 doesn't speak of there being two gods in the world, but that the Almighty is not the "first" – He is not the source of everything. For example, that the Almighty created the world from material that already existed (eternity of the world/eternity of matter). **The Ra'avad** brings the midrash/Gemara of the heretic who said the Almighty is a "great artist" who found good "paints" – meaning there is material separate from the Almighty. One commentator says #4 means eternity of the world, but **the Rambam did not say this explicitly** – he deliberately didn't say it. The innovation of creation of the world also doesn't appear explicitly in the list of heresies.

**(5) "And so one who worships a star or constellation in order to be an intermediary between him and the**

**Master of the world** – one who serves a star/constellation as an intermediary between him and the Almighty.

#### **Innovations:**

- This is different from the first four – here the problem is not "one who says" (what he says/believes) but "one who worships" (what he does). He knows there is only one Master of the world, but he serves a pseudo-divine power as an intermediary.

- **The Rambam doesn't say "one who says there are intermediaries"** – it may be there are intermediaries, the main problem is "one who worships the intermediary."

- **It's very interesting** that a worshiper of idolatry is called a "heretic" – one doesn't find anywhere else that a worshiper of idolatry is called a heretic. Perhaps the Rambam means that even if he only has an error "for the sake of heaven" (he intends to serve the Almighty through an intermediary), he's called a heretic – similar to the first one who made the error of idolatry (Enosh).

**Question:** Is "they have no portion in the World to Come" a punishment, or is it simply that his soul doesn't grasp the truth? The Rambam doesn't explain here, but here it implies it's a punishment.

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#### **Three heretics (apikorsim)**

**The Rambam's words: "Three are called apikorsim: (1) One who says there is no prophecy at all and there is no knowledge that reaches from the Creator to the hearts of people; (2) and one who denies the prophecy of Moses our teacher; (3) one who says the Creator doesn't know the deeds of people."**

#### **Plain Meaning**

Three types of apikorsim – (1) denies prophecy in general, (2) denies Moses's prophecy, (3) says the Creator doesn't know what people do.

#### **Innovations and Explanations**

1. **Apikoros vs. heretic – the fundamental distinction:** A heretic denies the Almighty's essence/existence. An apikoros doesn't deny the Almighty's essence – his error is in the Almighty's **actions**, specifically in "the arrival of knowledge" – that the Almighty sends wisdom/knowledge to people. He disputes something in the Almighty's actions, not in His existence.

2. **"Denies the prophecy of Moses" – what does this mean?** The Rambam in Yesodei HaTorah says that a prophet who says Moses was not greater than an ordinary prophet denies the prophecy of Moses. This means: "denies the prophecy of Moses" means denying the **type** of prophecy that Moses had – a better, unique type of "measure that reaches from the Creator to people." But the Rambam doesn't say it clearly – he should have said "one who says Moses was a prophet but not in the category of Moses's prophecy."

3. **"That the Creator doesn't know the deeds of people" – why does he use the word "Creator" here?** Until now he said "Master" or "God," and here he says "Creator." The answer: this is connected with creation – He created them but doesn't know what they do afterward. This is connected with apikorsut because it negates the connection of knowledge between the Almighty and people. The distinction: there can be a relationship of creation or providence, but that

it's with knowledge, with order, with understanding – this is what he denies.

4. **Source for the Rambam's definition of apikoros:** The Rambam's definition doesn't match the Gemara's plain meaning. The Gemara in Sanhedrin says "apikoros" means one who says "what benefit have the rabbis given us" (lawlessness/chutzpah against the sages), which is indeed great chutzpah but not the same severity as the Rambam's apikoros. **It's not clear from where the Rambam has his source** for this specific content of apikorsut. Perhaps the Rambam took all things he held that a Jew must believe, and put them into these categories.

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#### **Three who deny the Torah**

**The Rambam's words: "Three deny the Torah: (1) One who says the Torah is not from God, even one verse, even one word, if he said Moses said it of his own accord, behold he denies the Torah; (2) one who denies its interpretation which is the Oral Torah, and denies its transmitters like Tzadok and Baitus; (3) one who says the Creator exchanged this commandment for another and this Torah has already been nullified even though he believes it was all from God, like the Christians and the Ishmaelites."**

#### **Plain Meaning**

Three types of deniers of Torah – denies that Torah is from God, denies the Oral Torah, or says God exchanged/nullified commandments.

#### **Innovations and Explanations**

1. **"Even one verse even one word" – how can this be denying the Torah?** "Denying the Torah" sounds like denying the entire Torah, but here we speak of even one word! The answer: because if one says this verse yes and this verse no, he has no way to distinguish which verse yes and which no – there's no distinction between a detail and the whole. Therefore even denial of one word is already denial of the entire Torah.

2. **"From God" – not "from God's mouth":** The Rambam uses the language "from God" (from with God), not "from God's mouth." This means one is not obligated to believe that the Almighty "speaks" or "writes" in a simple sense. The Rambam in Perush HaMishnayot in Sanhedrin says "that it reached him in a way we don't know" – we don't need to know how it worked, just believe in it.

3. **Denies its interpretation – Oral Torah:** "Denies its transmitters" means he denies the transmitters of the Oral Torah – all the sages and prophets who transmitted the interpretation from Moses generation to generation. The Rambam brings an example: Tzadok and Baitus. This is the first time the Rambam brings a concrete example of a person/group – because one must know such groups exist.

4. **"Exchanged this commandment for another" – the third type:** The person believes there was a Torah from God, but the Almighty later exchanged commandments. **Innovation:** The Rambam says specifically "exchanged," not just removed. If one just removes a commandment, he's like the first type – who says one word is not from God. The innovation of the third type is that he believes "it was all from God" – he believes in the entire Torah, but he says later the Almighty reconsidered and exchanged.

5. **"Like the Christians and the Ishmaelites":** "Ishmaelites" means Muslims – because they are descendants of Hagar (mother of Ishmael). It's discussed whether the Rambam was afraid to write "Ishmaelites" explicitly, or whether "Hagerim" is Mishnaic language for the Ishmaelite religion. In Hilchot Melachim he does write explicitly.

6. **What's missing: one who says Jews distorted the Torah:** The Muslims have two approaches – (a) the Almighty gave a new Torah (this the Rambam brings), (b) the Jews distorted/falsified the original Torah (this the Rambam does **not** bring here). In the Thirteen Principles there is a principle that the Torah we have today is the same Torah – which is against that second approach. But in Hilchot Teshuva that type of denial doesn't appear.

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**Denies resurrection of the dead / coming of the redeemer**

**The Rambam's words: "Denies resurrection of the dead, denies the coming of the redeemer."**

**Plain Meaning**

One who denies resurrection of the dead or the coming of the redeemer.

**Innovations**

The Rambam doesn't explain anything about this – it's simple: one says there won't be resurrection of the dead or coming of the redeemer, nothing needs to be added.

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**Two types of apostates**

**Apostate for one transgression**

**The Rambam's words: "This one who has made it his practice to transgress it constantly... and has become known for it and accustomed... even if it was one of the minor ones, like one who constantly made it his practice to wear sha'atnez or to round the corners of his head, and it turns out as if this commandment has been nullified from the world for him – behold he is an apostate for that matter."**

**Plain Meaning**

An apostate for one transgression is one who has made it his practice to do a certain transgression deliberately, constantly, he is known and accustomed to it, until the commandment doesn't exist for him. Even if it's a minor transgression.

**Innovations and Explanations**

1. **Only prohibitions, not positive commandments:** Both examples the Rambam brings – sha'atnez and rounding the corners of the head – are prohibitions, not positive commandments. It appears the Rambam doesn't speak of an apostate for positive commandments.

2. **The meaning of "apostate":** The word "shemad" originally means destruction – "to destroy, kill and annihilate." The sages applied this to spiritual destruction.

3. **To spite vs. for appetite:** To receive the status of apostate it must be to spite – he is actively against the commandment, not just that he has no strength. "To spite" doesn't mean just to anger the Almighty, but that he is really against the commandment – he opposes it.

4. **Comparison with denier of one commandment:** A strong similarity between apostate for one transgression and the earlier law of one who doesn't believe in one verse of

Torah. With a denier – he doesn't believe in the commandment but doesn't do any transgression; with an apostate – he perhaps believes, but he acts out the transgression in practice so that "this commandment has been nullified from the world for him." Both lead to the same result – the commandment doesn't exist for him.

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**Apostate for the entire Torah**

**The Rambam's words: "Like one who turns to the religion of the gentiles at a time when they decree forced conversion, and says what benefit do I have to cling to Israel who are lowly and persecuted, it's better for me to cling to these who are whole and strong – behold this is an apostate for the entire Torah."**

**Plain Meaning**

An apostate for the entire Torah is one who in a time of forced conversion goes to the gentiles' religion, because he sees the Jews are weak and he wants to be with the strong.

**Innovations and Explanations**

1. **The language "turns":** "Turns to the religion of the gentiles" means he follows the opinion of the gentiles – he is frightened by forced conversion and abandons sanctification of God's name. In a time of forced conversion one must sacrifice oneself, and he doesn't do it.

2. **Opposite of a righteous convert:** The apostate for the entire Torah is the exact opposite of a righteous convert. A convert says: "I want to be with the Jews who are lowly and rejected." An apostate says: "Let's go with the winners." The Rambam's language is very similar to what is said to a convert at conversion, but in the opposite direction.

3. **Not necessarily transgressions – but the statement:** The essence is not that he does all the transgressions in the Torah. The essence is the statement – "and says" – he says he is with the ways of the gentiles. "Turns to the religion of the gentiles" means he does their customs, he places himself on their side. This is a statement, not just actions.

4. **Distinction between one who stumbles in a time of forced conversion and an apostate:** If one simply stumbles in a transgression in a time of forced conversion with a broken heart, he only transgresses that transgression and nullifies the commandment of sanctification of God's name. But here we speak when he is converted – he places himself on the gentiles' side.

5. **Question of the Ra'avad:** The Ra'avad asks: if he turns to the religion of the gentiles, he is severe – he acknowledges idolatry, and he should be a heretic! The answer: "turning of religion" doesn't necessarily mean he believes in idolatry. He's a practical person – he asks "where lies the power?" not that he engages in faith. But the Ra'avad is right that if he truly turns to the religion of the gentiles, he's a heretic – so "turning of religion" must mean a practical identification with the gentiles, not faith in their religion.

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**One who causes the many to sin**

**The Rambam's words: "One who caused sin in a great matter like Yeravam... and one who caused sin in a small matter even to nullify a positive commandment. And one who forces his fellow until he sins... like Menashe who would kill Israelites until they**

## worshiped idolatry... and one who led his fellow astray like Yeshu who was a misleader."

### Plain Meaning

One who causes the many to sin includes both one who forces people to sin (like Menashe) and one who talks them into it (like Yeshu the Christian). Either a major transgression or a minor one, even nullification of a positive commandment.

### Innovations and Explanations

1. **First time positive commandments:** This is the first place in the list where positive commandments can put a person in this category – through causing the many to sin. With apostate for one transgression the Rambam only mentioned prohibitions, but with one who causes sin it says "even to nullify a positive commandment."

2. **Tzadoki and Baitusi as those who cause sin:** The Rambam brings Tzadoki and Baitusi as an example of one who causes the many to sin with denial of a principle. The Rambam in another place says their courts accepted bribes, and their denial came from bias – they became deniers because the rabbis stood in their way.

3. **Menashe's murders:** The Rambam says Menashe "would kill Israelites until they worshiped idolatry." It says "and innocent blood Menashe shed very much" – but this speaks of murders in general. The Rambam grasps it from the juxtaposition.

4. **Yeshu the Christian as a misleader:** The Rambam brings Yeshu the Christian as an example of one who causes sin through leading astray (persuasion), not through force. The Rambam uses the language "misleader" – which connects with inciter and misleader from Hilchot Avodah Zarah. But "led astray" can mean broader – he led astray against the Oral Torah or other matters, not just idolatry.

5. **One who causes sin as a "campaign":** One who causes the many to sin means a systematic action to bring others to sin.

6. **One can be in more than one category:** A person can be both a heretic and one who causes the many to sin.

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### One who separates from the ways of the community

**The Rambam's words: "Even if he didn't transgress, but separated from the congregation of Israel, and doesn't do commandments with them, and doesn't enter into their troubles, and doesn't fast on their fasts, but goes in his way like one of the gentiles of the land, and as if he is not from them."**

### Plain Meaning

One who separates from the ways of the community is one who separates himself from the community of Israel – even if he doesn't do any transgressions, but he does commandments alone, he's not part of their troubles, he doesn't fast when they fast, he goes his own way like a gentile.

### Innovations and Explanations

1. **Distinction from apostate for the entire Torah:** The apostate for the entire Torah says "I'm becoming a gentile." One who separates from the ways of the community says "I'm not becoming a gentile – I'll sit at home, put on tefillin, keep Shabbat. But the rabbis decree a fast? What do I need that for?" He does commandments, but not with them. He doesn't

go to synagogue, he has a study hall separated from the community.

2. **How does one arrive at this?** The right way to arrive at this is when one says "everyone is wicked" – and therefore he doesn't go together with the community. A division is a concern of separating from the ways of the community, and one must be careful. And if you yourself are a "community" – you can't make your way the community.

3. **Concealment of face:** "One who is not in the concealment of face is not from them" – one who is not part of the concealment of face of the community of Israel, he is not from them.

4. **Practical difference – the Holocaust:** People who say "if there will be God forbid a Holocaust, I'll save myself" – one must know that if there is a decree on the community of Israel, you are also part of it.

5. **Proof from Mordechai to Esther (Megillat Esther 4:14):** "For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish" – this is a model example of the matter that one cannot separate oneself from the troubles of the community of Israel.

6. **"Eat and drink for tomorrow we die" (Isaiah 22:13):** The Gemara says the verse refers to one who separates from the ways of the community – people in Isaiah's time, when a destruction was coming, said "eat, drink, if we die we'll die."

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### One who does transgressions with a high hand

**The Rambam's words: "One who does transgressions with a high hand like Yerovam, whether he did minor ones or severe ones – he has no portion in the World to Come. And this is called one who reveals his face against the Torah, and was not ashamed of the words of Torah."**

### Plain Meaning

One who does transgressions with chutzpah and brazenness, publicly, without any shame – there's no distinction whether he does minor or severe ones. The essence is the attitude, the high hand, the chutzpah against Torah. He is called "one who reveals his face against the Torah."

### Innovations and Explanations

1. **Distinction between "reveals his face" and "shame of face":** Shame of face is a matter of refinement and respect for Torah. "Reveals his face" is the opposite – language of "he hardened his forehead" – he displays his face with brazenness, instead of being ashamed.

2. **Connection to "whoever transgresses and is ashamed of it, all his sins are forgiven":** This goes in both directions – just as "and was not ashamed of the words of Torah" makes "he has no portion in the World to Come," so too the opposite: even one who does many transgressions, but he is indeed ashamed of the words of Torah, receives a portion in the World to Come. **Shame is a basic thing** – if a person takes it seriously, he at least has shame, he's still connected.

3. **The entire chapter is encouragement:** The entire chapter's message is: as long as you don't officially present yourself – "I'm an outsider, I don't believe in the Almighty, I don't believe in Torah" – you're still part of Jewishness, even as a transgressor, you have teshuva and a portion in the World

to Come. Only when one becomes one of the 24 categories, does one become lost.

**4. A pretty large percentage of the 24 has to do with chutzpah:** This separation from Jews, the chutzpah against the sages – this is a recurring theme.

**5. Pride as the root of apikorsut:** An important psychological analysis – many people become apikorsim not because they have true doubts, but because they don't want to be a "transgressor." He stumbled with a transgression, and instead of having shame and acknowledging he has a deficiency, he has pride – he becomes an apikoros so as not to have to be ashamed. "I don't want to

### Summary of Hilchot Teshuva Chapter 3 (Continued)

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#### One who does transgressions with a high hand (continued)

**5. Pride as the root of apikorsut (continued):** An important psychological analysis – many people become apikorsim not because they have true doubts, but because they don't want to be a "transgressor." He stumbled with a transgression, and instead of having shame and acknowledging he has a deficiency, he has pride – he becomes an apikoros so as not to have to be ashamed. "I don't want to be a transgressor – I'm an apikoros."

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#### Informers (Mosirim)

**The Rambam's words: "Two are the informers – one who informs on his fellow into the hands of gentiles to kill him or to beat him, and one who informs on his fellow's money into the hands of gentiles or into the hands of a violent person who is not a gentile."**

#### Plain Meaning

Two types of informers: (1) handing over a Jew's body to gentiles – to kill or beat; (2) handing over a Jew's money – either to gentiles, or to a violent person who is not a gentile (a Jewish violent person).

#### Innovations and Explanations

**1. The Rambam says "his fellow" not "Israel":** But he means an honest Jew.

**2. Informer as a type of one who separates from the ways of the community:** The Jewish violent person himself is a lustful person who cannot restrain himself, but the informer actively goes against the community. It's a type of chutzpah of going against the ways of the community.

**3. Question on "into the hands of a violent person who is not a gentile":** With gentiles one understands why it's terrible, but what is the innovation with a Jewish violent person? The explanation: we speak of one whom the court cannot reach – he is too strong – and the informer instigates him.

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#### One who casts fear upon the community not for the sake of Heaven

**The Rambam's words: "This one who rules the community with force, and they are afraid and terrified of him, and his intention is for his own honor and for all his desires, not for the honor of Heaven, like the kings of the nations."**

#### Plain Meaning

One who forces the community with strength, everyone is afraid of him, but he intends his own honor, money, or power – not for the honor of Heaven. He conducts himself like the kings of the nations.

#### Innovations and Explanations

**1. Distinction between a king of Israel and kings of the nations:** A king of Israel is "the heart of Israel" – he has in mind the good of the community. One who has power among Jews but only intends to enrich himself, is like a gentile king.

**2. He doesn't speak of a wicked dictator:** "Like the kings of the nations" means a normal gentile king – he makes his regulations and laws, but he does it for his own honor. He doesn't force the many to do transgressions (that would be simply one who causes the many to sin) – he frightens them to do good things, but for his own honor.

**3. Ramban in Sha'ar HaGemul – the main problem:** The Ramban explains that the problem is that **the congregation becomes worshipers of idolatry**. When people say Tehillim because they're afraid of the rabbi (not of the Almighty), this is a type of idolatry. One who casts fear makes others also be not for the sake of Heaven – they're afraid of him instead of fear of Heaven.

**4. "Not for the sake of Heaven" applies to the fear itself:** Not just to the one who casts, but to the fear itself. An honest one makes a fear that is for the sake of Heaven – the congregation is afraid of the rabbi, of Torah, and of the Almighty, all in one package. But one who makes the fear be of the person himself, of his own craziness – this is not for the sake of Heaven.

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#### Summary: The 24 categories

**The Rambam's words: "Each and every one of the twenty-four people we counted, even though they are Israel – they have no portion in the World to Come."**

#### Plain Meaning

All 24 categories, though they are Jews, have no portion in the World to Come.

#### Innovations and Explanations

**1. The calculation:** Among the 14 main categories became 24 when one counts out the sub-categories (like 5 heretics, 3 apikorsim, etc.).

**2. "He has no portion in the World to Come" doesn't always have the same severity:** With the 24 he means it seriously – it's a law of karet and punishment, even if he does many mitzvot. But in other places in Chazal when it says "he has no portion in the World to Come" it's not always with the same severity.

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#### Minor transgressions that one becomes accustomed to

**The Rambam's words: "And there are transgressions lighter than these, and nevertheless the sages said that one who is accustomed to them has no portion in the World to Come, in order to distance from them and to be careful of them."**

#### Plain Meaning

There are lighter transgressions than the 24, but when one becomes accustomed to them, the sages said "he has no

portion in the World to Come."

#### Innovations and Explanations

1. **Distinction between the 24 and "minor transgressions":** With the 24, "he has no portion" is literal – he is deleted. With minor transgressions the sages said this **in order to distance from them and to be careful of them** – it's a type of warning, not necessarily literal.

2. **The reasoning:** The transgression itself is not so dangerous, but that one becomes accustomed (habituates oneself) is very dangerous.

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#### Eight categories that Chazal said "they have no portion in the World to Come"

**The Rambam's words: "One who gives a nickname to his fellow, one who whitens his fellow's face in public, one who honors himself through his fellow's disgrace, one who disgraces Torah scholars, one who disgraces his teachers, one who disgraces the festivals, one who desecrates holy things."**

#### Plain Meaning

The Rambam counts out eight categories that Chazal said "they have no portion in the World to Come," but this is not literal – Chazal frightened with the sharpest language because these are things one can become accustomed to.

#### Innovations and Explanations

1. **Structure of the eight categories – two groups of four:** The **first four** (gives a nickname to his fellow, whitens his fellow's face in public, honors himself through his fellow's disgrace) deal with **basic respect and honor that is due to every person** – one doesn't conduct oneself with basic human respect. The **last four** (disgraces Torah scholars, disgraces his teachers, disgraces the festivals, desecrates holy things) deal with **people or things that are due a higher level of honor** – honor of a Torah scholar, honor of one's teacher (even more), honor of a festival, honor of holy things.

2. **Distinction between gives a nickname to his fellow and whitens his fellow's face in public:** "Gives a nickname" means he thinks up a derogatory name for that person, or he calls that person by a derogatory name that others already thought up. "Whitens his fellow's face in public" is **more inclusive** – it includes even shaming without a nickname, only through other means.

3. **One who honors himself through his fellow's disgrace – the manipulator:** This is not one who explicitly wants to shame that person (like whitens), but one who **manipulates** – he knows that by putting that person down he becomes great. For example, he asks that person a question in public that the other won't be able to answer, in order to show how smart he is. The Rambam already explained this in Hilchot De'ot – he holds onto comparing himself with that person: "that one is weak, and through this I become great."

4. **Disgraces the festivals – practical explanation:** This means he doesn't take the festival seriously – he doesn't go to get matzah on Chol HaMoed, he conducts himself like a weekday, he doesn't honor the festival. The opposite of honoring the festival.

5. **Distinction between the eight categories and the earlier "they have no portion in the World to Come":** The earlier ones (heretics, apikorsim, deniers) deal with

**honor of God, honor of Torah, honor of prophecy** – this is truly they have no portion in the World to Come. The eight categories here deal with things that **are due honor** (festivals, holy things, Torah scholars), but it's not the same severity – though it's very severe, it's "in the category of" they have no portion in the World to Come (with the frightening language).

6. **Connection to one who separates from the community:** The first four categories (gives a nickname, whitens, honors himself through disgrace) are similar to "one who separates from the community" – he loves the community of Israel, but each individual person he can shame and call with bad names.

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#### Halacha 11 – The power of teshuva even for the worst transgressions

**The Rambam's words: "All these we said have no portion in the World to Come – when he died without teshuva. But if he returned from his wickedness... behold he is of the children of the World to Come, for there is nothing that stands before teshuva. Even if he denied the essence all his days and at the end returned – he has a portion in the World to Come, as it says 'Peace, peace to the far and to the near, says God, and I will heal him.'"**

#### Plain Meaning

All categories – heretics, apikorsim, deniers, and the eight categories – have no portion in the World to Come only when they die without teshuva. If they do teshuva, even a denier of the essence his entire life who does teshuva in his old age, he has a portion in the World to Come.

#### Innovations and Explanations

1. **"To the far and to the near" – explanation of the verse:** "Far" means one who was far from the Almighty, and "near" means he became near. The holy Zohar in Parshat Vayikra interprets this way. "And I will heal him" means healing of the soul – his soul was very sick, almost lost the portion in the World to Come, but the Almighty is merciful and gracious and accepts him in teshuva.

2. **"Denied the essence" – what does it mean?** One commentator understands "denier of the essence" as specifically the heretic – the one who says there is no Almighty. The Rambam in **Yesodei HaTorah Chapter 1** says "one who doesn't believe in this, behold he denies the essence," and in **Chapter 2:** "And one who brings to mind that there is another god besides this... and denies the essence, for this is the great essence upon which everything depends." Denier of the essence is essentially one of the four heretics – the worst of all, because the great essence is the existence of God, that the Almighty is one and there is no second to Him.

3. **Connection to the matter of knowledge:** The matter of "he has no portion in the World to Come" goes on the reasoning that the **knowledge** was very sick – this is the matter of the World to Come as "the world of knowledge," and one who has sick knowledge cannot live in that world of knowledge.

4. **Contradiction with Hilchot Avodah Zarah Chapter 2 – "Heretics are never accepted in teshuva":** In Hilchot Avodah Zarah it says "heretics from Israel are never accepted in teshuva, as it says 'all who come to her will not return,'" but

here it says even a denier of the essence can do teshuva! The **answer**: "Are not accepted" means **the court** doesn't accept them – they are not accepted as a practical matter for the court. But "accepted" here means **the Almighty** accepts – for the Almighty he has a portion in the World to Come.

5. **"Whether they returned in teshuva publicly, or whether they returned in secret"**: The Rambam speaks of resha'im, sinners, and apostates – even apostates. "Sinners" apparently means against people (informer on his fellow's money, transgressions with a high hand), "apostates" is what he counted out. Both teshuva publicly and teshuva in secret – both are accepted. The language "in secret" comes from the verse "Return, backsliding children" in Yirmiyahu.

"Backsliding" means a wanderer, a trouble-maker – even if he still looks like a sinner in public, but inwardly he did teshuva.

6. **Practical difference of the entire sugya – the greatness of the power of teshuva**: This is the great practical difference: (a) one must know there are transgressions that are indeed very terrible, (b) but even for the worst transgressions – even a denier his entire life – one always has a chance in his old age to come out, and he has a portion in the World to Come. This is the greatness of the power of teshuva.

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## END OF CHAPTER 3 SUMMARY

## Full Transcript

### Laws of Repentance Chapter 3 – Weighing Merits and Sins: The Righteous, the Wicked, and the Intermediate

#### Introduction: The Nature of Chapter 3 in the Laws of Repentance

##### Speaker 1:

Gentlemen, we are learning the Laws of Repentance in Sefer HaMada, Chapter 3.

So, the previous first two chapters of the Laws of Repentance were literally the fundamentals of what the mitzvah of teshuva (repentance) means, what is the definition of teshuva, what is the essence of teshuva. This everyone understands, there's no problem at all understanding how it fits into the Laws of Repentance.

Now we're learning the third chapter, which is a bit difficult to understand what it has to do with the Laws of Repentance. It stands in the middle, as we'll see, it's clear that one should do teshuva, and the ten days of repentance (aseret yemei teshuva), the Rambam speaks about a bit. But we need to give a better explanation.

So the best explanation that I've seen in the commentators, I mean it was novel, I don't know anymore from where, I saw it long ago, that the simple meaning is that we learned that in the Laws of Repentance the Rambam is going to approach the question of what is the ultimate purpose, the ultimate purpose of service, the ultimate purpose of a person's perfection, and so on. So here is in a certain sense an introduction to this, or one aspect, one detail of this, because the Rambam goes through here all the levels of people that exist.

In other words, the best person is the one who goes to the World to Come, as we'll learn in Chapter 8, the one who serves from love, that is the completely perfect tzaddik (righteous person), he has already done teshuva or he is already a perfect person. Now, but most, it seems to me, most of humanity is someone who is a rasha (wicked person) who hasn't done teshuva, or a baal teshuva (penitent) who is in the middle of doing teshuva.

So the chapter, in a certain sense, describes every sort of level of person, from what begins with the fact that every person has obligations and transgressions, and if his majority is obligations he is a tzaddik, and in the middle he is a beinoni (intermediate), and so on, all these laws.

That is, he speaks apparently also a bit about the reward and punishment of this, because as we learned, and we already said last night or the night before, that the reward and punishment exists because this shows the perfection, the level of each person.

So in the chapter the Rambam goes from the normal order of a person – tzaddik, beinoni, rasha – all the way until, as we'll see in the second half of the chapter, he speaks of the tremendously great wicked people who are not at all in the category, who "have no portion in the World to Come." So all these laws of who has no portion in the World to Come stand in this chapter.

#### Innovation: Two Types of Repentance – Particular and General

But if one thinks that the chapter is the totality of every sort of Jew, from the greatest tzaddik to the greatest rasha, this is apparently the... I would say this in my language like this, that until now we learned about teshuva, and we struggled a bit because teshuva is simple, for example a person didn't put on tefillin for a few days, the next day when he puts on tefillin he does teshuva, but does it still require that he should say, Creator, I forgot to put on tefillin, I'm now doing teshuva, I'm putting on tefillin. This is a very particular thing.

But from time to time a person needs to make an accounting of the soul (cheshbon hanefesh), not on a specific mitzvah, but rather where do I stand in the world? There are tzaddikim, there are beinonim, there are reshaim. It's very different when a person needs to do teshuva on a very general undertaking, to decide I am a rasha and I need to become a beinoni, or I am a beinoni, I need to become a tzaddik, is a much greater work of teshuva, and perhaps for this there are the ten days of repentance.

The teshuva that every person needs to think about all the time, oh I didn't do, it falls under some mitzvah or sin, to think, oh at this time I stumbled in this sin, let me now not stumble and quickly say a small vidui (confession), this is a small teshuva.

But let's take here the teshuva, and this one cannot do every day. A person cannot think every day, how am I? Am I a tzaddik? Am I a beinoni? Am I a rasha? This is perhaps not, this is people will become overthinking. And this there are certain times, as the Rambam said, there are times that are especially good.

This is a greater teshuva of where do I stand in the world? What kind of person am I? Tzaddik, beinoni, rasha. And this is already more also a matter of judgment. This is like a judgment and accounting that the Almighty makes on a person from time to time, as the Rambam calculates. The Almighty judges the whole world, and the same way a person must judge himself, not that he sees now it falls under some sin, he thinks, did I stumble yesterday, ah, will I now restrain myself? Rather more on a greater undertaking, to make an accounting of the soul, where do I stand? Do I have more sins, more merits...

**Discussion: The General Judgment and the Practical Difference**

**Speaker 2:**

Yes, correct. Yes. Approximately. Yes. Not disagreeing, not disagreeing. You're saying the practical things, what is the practical effect of what I said more theoretically, more in terms of learning.

**Speaker 1:**

Yes. Well, the Rambam says. The only thing I could disagree with in what you're saying, you remember that it's going to say in this chapter, that there is a judgment every day, the Rambam said, but in a general way, and there is a judgment at the time of death, and there is a judgment during the ten days of repentance. Do you want to learn that the simple meaning is, that the judgment is the general thing, that one cannot need to think about this every day, or is that the point.

**Speaker 2:**

Yes.

**Speaker 1:**

And so I'm not like the Chassidic books that say that one must make that there is a special time for teshuva. Most of the time a Jew must live in the joy of mitzvah, make a certain small time for teshuva. It fits with this, but in reality there is a very true side.

And he says that teshuva means that one has always seen oneself to be distressed.

**Speaker 2:**

True.

**Speaker 1:**

What they speak about, speaks of being distressed, but there is indeed teshuva comes with crying out. But even in simple terms, for example, that a person works, he cannot focus all the time, "am I in a good job? Do I have a good position?" He needs to do his job the best he can. But once in a while he needs to make a deeper accounting of the soul, "is this the job I want? What kind of job is it? What am I doing?" It's a very practical thing.

**Speaker 2:**

Yes, it's let's say, the principle that you're saying that there is the general judgment on the person which is not particular, is one hundred percent correct. I mean that this is the topic of the matter. The practical law that you're saying from this that there are two types of accountings of the soul and the like, this is already a thing that I... It's already a thing. No, yes, one needs to consider it. I don't know how strongly also in the Rambam it says. I mean it certainly doesn't say explicitly. But also what I'm saying doesn't say explicitly, one just needs to learn it out. Also very practically, because I don't know, one needs to think about this. Okay.

**Law 1: Three Types of People – Tzaddik, Rasha, Beinoni Speaker 1:**

Okay, the Rambam says, "**Every single one of human beings**" – every person. It's the Rambam. Let's first see what... No, say the other, say this. What is the first... It's the Rambam is going to explain here that there is such a thing as weighing, one weighs. One weighs people. The picture for Rosh Hashanah, there is a scale, a balance scale. It's a real thing. It's a metaphor, but there is a thing. The Almighty weighs and looks either at all humanity, or at a local place, a country, or a city, and also at a person. What is he more? Do I have from him... The Almighty looks at His business, is the business... The person is an investment. Is it a good business, he brings merits, he brings good things, or he...

So this is the Rambam thus: "**Every single one of human beings**" – every person, he doesn't say "of the children of Israel," he says "of human beings." Simply he takes that because on Sodom it says the Almighty already looked, and the argument with Abraham goes on a gentile city. But it doesn't have to be a Jew. True, the service is not only for Jews.

**Speaker 2:**

Where are there sins and mitzvot?

**Explanation: "Merits and Sins" – Not "Mitzvot and Transgressions"**

**Speaker 1:**

Yes. "**Every single one of human beings has merits and sins**" – has merits and sins. Ah, now he's going to say a great word. He doesn't say "mitzvot and sins," "merits." Merits is more inclusive than mitzvot. It means presumably good character traits and good beliefs. Our cheder things mitzvot and transgressions, sins means also not just a transgression. Sins is very similar to transgression, but let me translate what I mean.

That is, even in cheder, also in the language of the Sages, when one says mitzvot and transgressions, but literally, mitzvot means what the Almighty commanded, and transgressions means what one transgresses on that command. Right, but it's not necessarily the only way that things become bad. We say, on every good thing we say it's a mitzvah. It says in the Gemara "mitzvah to do," it doesn't mean that the Almighty commanded, literally, it means to say this is a good thing, the Almighty should have commanded it, because it's a mitzvah. But merits and sins is more like the general thing.

The opposite of merits one would say obligations (chovot). Merit means a plus, a credit, and obligation is a minus, is a deficit. But the Rambam means, according to the version, that it's an accounting, a bank account. But it could be that the Rambam means more, he says merits and sins because perhaps he means more than mitzvot per se, as in this is included good deeds and other things.

I mean that this is the language of the Gemara, merits and sins, perhaps this is not in the version. One needs to open what brings the sources and one will see. If I remember, I mean that the language "every person has merits and sins" this doesn't say in the Gemara, this is an innovation. Because the Gemara says that by tzaddikim the merits are greater. But I mean that the language "one whose merits are greater than his sins" it could be that it's simply the language of the... Yes, "his sins exceed his merits" says in the language of the Sages. I don't see now the version, but it could be that it simply came

from the language of the Gemara. It says in the Gemara differently, sins and merits, it's the language of the Gemara. Okay, so that's the root.

**The Rambam's Distinction: Tzaddik, Rasha, Beinoni**

The Rambam says, every single one of human beings has both, has merits and sins. Now comes an interesting thing, that there are three types of people. We didn't know this, one can learn the entire Torah and not know about this, that there are three types of people. That there are two everyone knows, but there is a third type.

Yes, **one whose merits exceed his sins**, one whose merits are more than his sins, **is a tzaddik**. One whose sins are more than his merits **is a rasha**. **Half and half is a beinoni**.

The Rambam doesn't tell us how one measures this by an amount of transgressions, whether there is sometimes one great transgression that is worse than a bunch of small ones. He doesn't say clearly, he's going to say explicitly already at the end, and again in the other here, yes yes yes, he's going to tell you.

The point however is a very important principle. There are three types of people, okay? Regarding this, perhaps regarding other matters there are other types of people. There are three types of Jews, three types of people. There is a tzaddik, a rasha, and a beinoni.

The beinoni is apparently the hardest to understand, because it's not possible to find someone who has done exactly 51 mitzvot and 49 transgressions. Therefore one must say that it means something more general...

**Speaker 2:**

There is a beinoni beinoni, not an exact beinoni.

**Speaker 1:**

I know the thing, but that's the innovation. A normal person, this is the order of the world. I can tell you, almost every normal person, perhaps there is one completely righteous person in the world. How many are there? What is the normal order? A complete tzaddik, a beinoni, which is in our language a tzaddik, or a rasha.

What it says here is that the normal order is that one has mitzvot and transgressions. And therefore, whoever has more mitzvot, that is a tzaddik. When someone seeks a tzaddik to go to travel to him on a holiday, this means someone who has more mitzvot than transgressions – a great thing, because let each person indeed do many mitzvot, but he also does many transgressions. So someone who has more...

**Digression: Pride and Transgressions**

**Speaker 2:**

There is the Chovot HaLevavot that says that one should not allow oneself with something that is worse than transgressions, and that is pride. Well, one of the rabbis says that under the bed we ask "erase our sins," because if one has no transgressions at all, one will have pride.

**Speaker 1:**

Ah, nice. When one holds there, you know what one holds there. Yes.

**"And So the City" – A City as an Entity**

So the Rambam says, **"And so the city"**. There is a way of looking at every person externally. Yes, people are a small world, yes? One can look at the person, and one can look at the

city, the jurisdiction. There is a thing called "particular," there is a thing called "general." A city is also a large person. A city has a law unto itself. There is a concept "city." A city is not just a bunch of individuals, but rather it's something a law of a city. There is such a thing as a city, it's one entity of a city. And one looks if the city is a good city.

If **the merit of all the city's inhabitants exceeds their sins**, among all the residents there are more merits than transgressions, **this is a righteous city**, it is a city that is a tzaddik. **And if their sins are greater, behold this is wicked**, it is a bad city, a city of wicked people.

**Speaker 2:**

What is it? There is no beinoni city?

**Speaker 1:**

Interesting. A beinoni city is even harder mathematically to arrive at a beinoni of a city. But apparently...

As it's cut off, it's interesting to me that he doesn't say that there is a beinoni city. Perhaps usually... A person is affected, because if he sees that there is a beinoni, he needs to quickly push to one side.

**Speaker 2:**

Well, it says "run like a deer, swift as an eagle," it's not beinoni.

**Speaker 1:**

It says yes, the same Baraita that goes beinoni. Ah, yes, one needs to see that the whole world is like at the break of his rabbi's memory for a blessing. Perhaps it means it's huge.

**The Judgment of a City and the Entire World – Weighing Merits and Sins in a Collective**

**Law 4: A City as Its Own Entity**

A city is also a large person. A city has a law unto itself. Here you have a concept of a city. A city is not just a bunch of individuals, but rather it's something a law of a city, which is a... You have such things as a city. It's one entity of a city. And one looks at the city, whether the city is a good city.

If **the merit of all its inhabitants exceeds their sins**, that among all the residents there are more merits than transgressions, **it is a righteous city**, it's a city that is a tzaddik. **And if their sins are greater, behold this is wicked**, it is a bad city, a city of wickedness.

**Question: Why Is There No Beinoni City?**

Why doesn't he say that there is a beinoni city? There is a beinoni city, it's even harder to arrive at a beinoni of a city.

So, if you'll ask me, it's interesting to me why he doesn't say that there is a beinoni city. Perhaps usually a person is affected, because if he sees that he is a beinoni, he needs to quickly push to one side. It says **"every person should see himself as if he is half and half"**. It says yes, the same Baraita is going to go... Ah, yes, one needs to see that the whole world is like at the break of his rabbi's sins. Perhaps it means to say that a city, I think, I don't know, a city usually is a city either a tzaddik or a rasha.

**Answer: A City Cannot Remain Balanced**

I'll tell you, the Rambam said that the custom of the people of the city is to be drawn. So if a city has a majority bad, it's almost not going to remain balanced, because if it's tzaddikim the people are going to become tzaddikim, it will be tzaddikim. If it's reshaim it's going to become reshaim. It's very hard that

it should be balanced, because one is going to be drawn after the reshaim. If there are enough reshaim that it should be up to fifty percent, it will become ninety percent.

### **Judgment of the Entire World and the Weighing of Merits Against Sins**

Why shouldn't they be drawn after the righteous, so that it becomes ninety percent righteous? Fine, indeed, it will be a righteous city. But it's very difficult for it to remain a beinoni (intermediate) city, because one gets drawn after other people. Interesting. If this is correct, it's interesting to think about this, that a city usually isn't half and half. No, because one gets strongly drawn, yes.

#### **The Judgment of the Entire World**

Okay. **"And so too the entire world"**, also regarding the world there is a way of looking at the entire world. Is the world a place of more sins or more mitzvos? In other words, it's a great chiddush (novel idea). That is, besides the fact that a person belongs to himself, he himself must make sure that he is a tzaddik, he also belongs to a city. One must make sure, what is the practical difference if the city is righteous? So that it shouldn't become like Sodom. Also, besides this, people belong to the entire world. If a person sees that the world is mostly wicked, if you think that the world is mostly wicked, you must know that the world would have been destroyed.

So says the Rambam, that if the world is mostly wicked, it gets destroyed. We are accustomed to think, for example, that most non-Jews are wicked. That can't be, because then the world would have been destroyed long ago. Just as there is a law that if the city is bad one should flee from the city, if the world is bad, it's **"mecheh na misifrechah"** (erase me from Your book), erase me from Your life.

Good, well, the next halacha, I mean the next halacha where he will say that the world gets destroyed, it's implied that if the world is not destroyed, it's a sign that there is still good in the world. Not just good, that it's mostly good.

#### **Halacha 4 (continued): "He Immediately Dies in His Wickedness"**

The Rambam says: **"And so too a person whose sins are greater than his merits, he immediately dies in his wickedness, as it says 'because of the multitude of your iniquity'"**. What does it say in the verse? Rashi means, I mean, one simply thinks that "the multitude of your iniquity" means that he has many sins. But the Rambam says that "multitude" means a majority. But what does it say there before that? "Behold you will die because of the multitude of your iniquity"? Something like that, let's just see, something it says, **"for your discipline is cruel because of the multitude of your iniquity"**. Yes, punishment comes to you "because of the multitude of your iniquity". The Rambam says that "multitude" means majority.

**"And so too a city whose sins are greater than its merits, it is immediately destroyed"**. The city becomes destroyed. Just as we clearly see that this was the case with Sodom. Sodom was a unique case of a city where its sins were greater, and the city was destroyed, **as it says "the outcry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great"**. "Great" also means a majority, that it became a majority. The "outcry", the "outcry" here means the wickedness, was a majority.

#### **Question: The Ten Righteous People of Sodom**

It's very interesting, because there were indeed a few righteous people in Sodom. Avraham Avinu had that whole argument there with the Almighty, the ten righteous people, and even fewer than that would have helped. It's very difficult. Okay, perhaps there is another calculation, or perhaps the point then was that "at least" the ten righteous people should be saved. Okay, but the ten righteous people can still tip the majority, make the majority be on their side.

#### **Judgment of the Entire World – The Generation of the Flood**

**"And so too the entire world, if their sins were greater"**, if the entire world is full of a majority of sins, **"they are immediately destroyed"**, just as was indeed the case with the flood, **as it says "And Hashem saw that it was great"**, in all three places it says "that it was great", that the evil of man was more than the good in the world, one must overturn it.

Even if we say that the simple translation, as you argued, that "multitude" doesn't mean a majority excluding the minority, it means a lot, I can still say that it means a majority. Because what does a lot mean? What does a lot mean? What is too many sins? As you asked about sins, very good. More sins means literally, one should be a tzaddik who has more merits than sins. But what is the simple meaning of many sins? Many sins is more than how much one should have. Normal is to have a little less than a majority. Too much is more than a majority.

#### **Discussion: Two Interpretations of "He Immediately Dies in His Wickedness"**

But one must think, when the Rambam says "he immediately dies in his wickedness", does he mean to say that punishment happens and he dies, and if we don't see it, it's simply that there is a certain concealment of face and the reward and punishment of a person is not so actively manifest? Or does he mean to say that the person sinks into his wickedness, because one makes it so, "dies in his wickedness" - he dies into his domain, he has no way back, he loses his free choice? Just as the Rambam says in other places, that when a person does very many sins for a long time, he loses free choice. And that means that he is dead. The soul becomes lost, the soul is dead.

#### **The Ra'avad's Question: We Don't See That the Wicked Die Immediately**

The holy Ra'avad immediately asked a question on the Rambam, "not as he thinks", the Rambam built on the Gemara, let's remember. The Gemara says in Rosh Hashanah **"the wicked are sealed immediately for death"**. That is, the Rambam says "immediately for death" - he dies right away. Says the Ra'avad, "but we don't see it that way". Tosafos in Rosh Hashanah, and other places, immediately asks on the Gemara, **"but we see that the wicked don't die"**. Here we see from Tosafos that one can ask a question from reality on the Gemara. The Gemara says, but we see that he still lives. One must give an answer.

So the Ra'avad says that when it says "sealed immediately", it doesn't mean that he dies right away. It means that his judgment is sealed immediately that he will die. He dies, the judgment is applied to him. He still has perhaps a reprieve for a certain time.

It's interesting, one can first of all think that perhaps Iran is also such a thing, because the Rambam says that one who admits to idolatry is a denier of the entire Torah, so necessarily

he has sins greater than his merits, so he dies in his wickedness.

#### **Example: Bad Societies Eventually Fall**

But one must also think that bad countries do indeed eventually fall. For example Nazi Germany, so if one looks at everything only naturally, okay, there was a war. But that was a way that the Almighty made that they should be immediately destroyed, meaning he became more and more insane, and his sins carried him until he started with bigger countries, until he was indeed removed from the world and the country was torn out. This happens to all bad societies, they don't last very long, eventually they are torn out, because the sins that one does are not sustainable.

#### **Discussion: How the Rambam Understands "Immediately"**

Yes, but let's, you made me think, there is a Tosafos that has another answer, I remember, Tosafos says that it means in the World to Come in general, the person lives long in this world. But I think that we don't see that the Rambam says this answer, we don't see at all that the Rambam addressed this question at all. The Rambam states a halachic ruling, the Rambam also lived in this world, he knew that not every city that has one more sin immediately dies the entire city. Seemingly the Rambam means to say that this is the law. What happens practically is another matter. I mean the Rambam means literally, he doesn't go into the matter that the Rambam means that they will be immediately destroyed because it's bad. It's due to them for worlds, that's the law. What happens practically, even one who also lived, that lived, it was very much continuing further.

#### **Novel Idea: "Majority" Doesn't Mean Extremes**

Also I think that the point of the majority is a very sharp thing, because we are accustomed to think in extremes, not only in all our discussions about tzaddikim and resha'im, is he a tzaddik or a rasha? Even a tzaddik doesn't mean someone who never does any sin, it means someone who believes that he is a tzaddik, means that the majority of his decisions he makes the right decisions. Because a majority of sins, for example someone doesn't wear tzitzis, okay, tzitzis, I know that it makes him at the moment a free person, he doesn't wear tzitzis.

Understand, one has claims sometimes on a city, for example a leadership. Presumably when one speaks of a city one also speaks of public decisions that the city makes, whether they have such laws, whether they make such wars, and so on. So what does it mean a city that is righteous? It doesn't mean that they never kill any innocent person. That's a complete tzaddik, it's not relevant. It means that most of the time they kill the right person, or do you understand what I'm saying?

Yes, I hear. Okay. And likewise if it's a majority, eventually it falls, or immediately. The Rambam says immediately, but the Rambam says the language immediately, he will immediately die. It's very emphasized. Just as we already argued earlier about when the Rambam says immediately does he mean that he dies right away. Ah, you say that it means literally.

When was it then immediately, when did it start? Because immediately he will be a prophet. Ah. I hold that the Rambam means literally immediately right away, and he doesn't mean to speak about the reality. He means to say the law. What the reality is, one must speak separately. Okay.

#### **Halacha 4 (continued): How Does One Measure Merits Against Sins**

Ah, now an important thing. You indeed asked a question: how does one measure this? What does majority mean? Majority means amount, or... yes?

Says the Rambam, "**this weighing is not according to the number of merits and sins**". One doesn't go according to how many times one did merits and sins. "**Rather according to magnitude**", rather how great the sin is.

He says, "**there is a merit that is equivalent to several sins**". There is sometimes a merit, a mitzvah, that is very great and very powerful. Yes? As it says in the verse, "**there was found in him a good thing**". It says about the son of Yerovam. Yerovam did many sins, but he did one good thing. One great good thing can be against many great sins that he did. Not Yerovam, but the child... exactly, yes. The child, he had a son, whom the prophet said he will die. And it says that they made a great eulogy and brought... "**therefore this one alone shall come to Yerovam to a grave, because there was found in him a good thing toward Hashem God of Israel in the house of Yerovam**". Ahh. Okay, perhaps he means it is indeed a good thing itself.

What is against... this speaks about... what he argued that there is one tzaddik who is great. In other words, when one counts the tzaddikim of the city, it also means one must make numbers. There can be such a great tzaddik that he tips the entire city.

Right, "**and there is a sin that is equivalent to several merits**". There is such a thing as sins, that should be very heavy sins, and it should weigh down, **as it says "and one sinner destroys much good"**. One sin, one sin, that should destroy. The Rambam learns it as in the weighing, when one judges merits against sins, there can be one sin that should be very heavy.

Does "one sinner" mean one sin or one sinner, one chote? It can be one act of a sinner.

#### **Only the Almighty Can Measure This**

Says the Rambam, how does one actually measure it? "**And one only weighs with the knowledge of the God of knowledge**". For this one must have the Almighty Himself. The Almighty who is the God of knowledge. Who knows everything, who can measure everything, "**who knows how to arrange the merits against the sins**", He knows how to arrange the merits against the sins.

Presumably the Rambam means to say that it's not just one standard, it's not just how severe it is, and it's also how difficult it is for the person, and it's also sometimes pain, there are very many things that one takes into consideration, which only the Almighty Himself can do.

And also seemingly, I mean what you said,

#### **The Weighing of Merits and Sins — Only the Almighty Knows the Calculation, Regret About the First Ones, and the Law of Rosh Hashanah**

#### **Halacha 3 (continued) — Only the Almighty Knows How to Arrange the Merits Against the Sins**

He knows how to arrange the merits against the sins. It's implied that the Rambam means to say that it's not just one standard, it's not just how severe it is, and it's also how difficult it is for the person, and there is the entirety of pain,

there are very many things that one takes into consideration, which only the Almighty Himself can do.

And also seemingly, I mean I'm explaining to you what you said, that doesn't mean that we saw in a previous chapter that we know which sins are light and severe, yes, excisions and death penalties of the court means severe and so on. But when we speak here that there is a weighing against how many merits, one doesn't mean excisions and death penalties of the court specifically. It can be that yes, but according to the Almighty's calculations. There are more calculations for that.

#### **Digression: Story About Reb Itzikl of Pshevorsk About Noodle Kugel**

It's told that Reb Itzikl used to always say, Reb Itzikl of Pshevorsk, that the noodle kugel is added to the mitzvos, yes, you probably know, because one places it on the scale of the mitzvos. Someone said, "Rebbe, if so I can do many sins." He said, "But you don't know how much missing my mincha once weighs." You don't know. That was to say that it's according to its magnitude, you don't know. It can be that enjoying a noodle kugel weighs like a small rabbinic mitzvah, a hundred years of noodle kugel... Okay, noodle kugel is actually a mitzvah of one Shabbos, it's not something... The question is, you say, how great is the mitzvah, according to what does one weigh it? The other person thought, poor thing, that the Rebbe means physically, that a large kugel weighs... You don't grasp that the sins also have a weight.

There are other tzaddikim who said that one weighs the journey that one travels to the Rebbe with the mud and dirt etc. It's true, but it only brings out that one must still have the knowledge of the God of knowledge. **"Hashem is a God of knowledge and actions are weighed by Him"**. This means that the Almighty understands the knowledge of people, yes, He knows exactly... It's the same thing, the Almighty examines hearts and minds, the Almighty knows what goes on in the person, therefore He knows that many times one mitzvah can come from a very deep place with great overcoming and so on.

#### **Halacha 4 – Regret About the First Ones: One Who Has Regret About His Mitzvos Loses Everything**

The Rambam says further. I mean the connection here is, that once we understand that mitzvos are weighed, and there are mitzvos that have more importance and less importance, and it doesn't only depend on their categories, there is a Krias Shema of the bed, it's a matter, a loose matter, it also has to do with how the Almighty values it. Yes, I mean that's the connection to what comes in.

He says, **"anyone who regrets the mitzvos that he did"** – we spoke about repentance from sins, here someone does repentance on mitzvos. There is, one always asks what one calls someone who is the opposite of a baal teshuva, he does repentance on his... One calls him "regrets about the first ones". There is the group who are called that, they called themselves that, one must tell them that they are called... Such a person is called one who regrets about the first ones. It's a different...

There is the Rambam, **"anyone who regrets"**, someone who is... someone who has regret about the mitzvos he did, **"and regrets about the merits"**. It's interesting, because "regrets" can mean he wonders so, he has two difficulties, he knows that it was indeed a good thing. Is that even more than someone who says such a clear... "Already, you know, you who

are already stringent sometimes." But the Rambam will say clearly what... The Rambam is already not... because he is a God-fearing person, he thinks that it wasn't complete. He means to say, he wonders whether it was at all a good thing, he no longer values his mitzvos. But it means he makes the conclusion.

**"And says in his heart"**, he says in his heart, **"and what did I gain by doing them, if only I had not done them"**. Perhaps it wasn't at all... I only did it because my teacher told me to, I already know what the repercussions are. I think that "if only" means "would that". Ah, would that I had not done it. I remember that there are a few places in Chazal where the word "if only"... "who would give", yes, he translates such a simple conditional. **"If only they would dig in the way of innocence"**, would that. Yes, he translates a simple conditional. Ah, there are a few places where we see that "if only" is not an "if", rather "if only" is a would that. Would that I had not done it.

#### **What Does Regret Mean**

By the way, now we see what regret means. They struggled with what "regrets about sins" means. I wanted to say this, but regret is "would that I had not done it".

#### **Laws of Repentance Chapter 3: The Judgment of the Intermediate Person During the Ten Days of Repentance, Shofar Blowing, and the Power of a Single Deed**

**"Behold, he has lost them all"**, he loses the mitzvos, he loses the merits. **"And no merit is mentioned for him in the world"**. One no longer mentions the merit that he had. This is the opposite of what was learned in the same beginning of the chapter. Ah, yes, even a complete wicked person who sinned all his days, it was said "no sin is mentioned for him," the same thing, **"one who regrets the earlier [good deeds]"**. **"No merit in the world, as it says, 'And the righteousness of the righteous shall not save him on the day of his transgression'"**. When a day of transgression begins, if he did repentance from the mitzvos, then he is a complete wicked person and he doesn't have a single mitzvah.

#### **Practical Application: One Must Value the Mitzvos One Once Did**

This is a very important law to remember always. I know that I said that I don't mean the Chassidic talks, but many times a person can think, "I was simple, I did mitzvos, I thought it was nothing, or I just grabbed it." He says, even if he says, "I understand better how to do mitzvos," one must greatly value the mitzvos that he once did, and he doesn't have the merit.

#### **Law 5 – Weighing at Death, Every Year, and Rosh Hashanah**

Very good. Until now we have learned the essence, I will go more into details when it is the special time of weighing sins and transgressions, or also when not only does the Almighty do it, but when a person must do it. Because the Almighty does it, there is a weighing in a general manner, and also a weighing every year. There is once in a lifetime, or perhaps every minute. Earlier what I learned I said that it is every minute, and I saw that now it says the same thing. Also there is every year, there is once a year such a sort of measure.

It's also like this by repentance, one must always do repentance, and there are special days that are good for

repentance. Also one must always weigh. This isn't really a distinction, it's only "it beautifies the matter" that it is even better, "it beautifies with addition". Here it makes it sound more real, here it sounds like it's truly real, there is actually a law.

Okay, so. Says the Rambam, **"Just as one weighs a person's sins and merits at the time of his death"**, just as when a person dies there is some reward and punishment, a judgment and accounting, and then one evaluates him.

**Question: Where Did We Learn About at the Time of Death?**

But I don't understand, where did we learn about at the time of death? It was just spoken about... one goes with clear death, isn't that at the time of death? Perhaps at the time of death? But we didn't have this, one had a life then. So this is interesting what one will now think, because we learned that the day of a person's death atones. A person's death is the time when one makes the weighing of reward and punishment.

No, that's a different matter. I mean to say, there are two ways how one can learn at the time of death. One can learn at the time of death means when a person dies, as one always says, he goes to the heavenly court, and one judges whether to send him to Gehinnom or Gan Eden. Apparently the Rambam doesn't speak of that, because that is a judgment on a person after death, because before death one had to have weighed him and decided that he must die. Apparently at the time of death means every day, if he died it was at the time of death, if he didn't die it wasn't at the time of death.

Ah, you mean to say like it says that every night the soul goes up?

I don't know how one clarifies every second, every day. I mean, besides that, he says thus, **"And every single year one weighs the sins of each and every one of those who come into the world with his merits"**. Every year one weighs the transgressions of every person of those who come into the world, not "all who come into the world pass before You like sheep," but this is the language of the Mishnah, yes, each and every one. It's the whole world, but each and every one. **"With his merits on the holiday of Rosh Hashanah"**.

**Question: Isn't There Also Judgment on Countries on Rosh Hashanah?**

Interesting, on Rosh Hashanah isn't there also judgment on the countries collectively? It does say yes, "concerning the countries it is said," one says in the Zichronos. What does it say there? That one comes with... one punishes the country for their transgressions. "Concerning the countries it is said, which for the sword and which for famine," based on the transgressions of the whole city, or... okay.

No, it's interesting, the Rambam actually brings the language of the Mishnah, there actually is, that one judges each person individually. But apparently one must say that on Rosh Hashanah one also judges the... perhaps all who come into the world means including the country. The country is made of people after all. Yes.

**Judgment of Righteous, Wicked, and Intermediate**

So, **"One who is found righteous is sealed for life"**. One seals him for life, it means written and sealed. It's a parable, like when a king makes a decree there is a writing with a signature. Yes. **"And one who is found wicked is sealed for death"**. Because this the Rambam says, yes, as if written.

He doesn't say immediately. No, but it's interesting, because usually we know that the sealing is on Yom Kippur, and on Rosh Hashanah one uses the language of writing, "written," and after Yom Kippur is "sealed." No, we know... No, they didn't use the language "written" right away.

**Discussion: The Language "Sealed" on Rosh Hashanah**

Wait, well, that's the plain meaning of the Baraisa that the Gemara... that's the only place where it says that Rosh Hashanah there is a writing and Yom Kippur is a sealing for everyone. First of all, that speaks of the intermediate ones. Ah, as you say, suspended. We are stuck, in other versions it actually says Rosh Hashanah they write, and we say "etc. they seal" etc. But I think that is either built on what we imagine ourselves to be intermediate, or there is another opinion that it's actually so. But I think the plain meaning of the Baraisa, of the Gemara, is that... yes, by the way, we also say, we say on Rosh Hashanah may you be written and sealed for good. On Rosh Hashanah at night, on the assumption that you are righteous.

**"One who is found righteous is written for life, one who is found wicked is written for death, and the intermediate one is suspended until Yom Kippur"**. Now he has the ten days when much repentance is demanded, and one looks, **"If he did repentance he is written for life, if not he is written for death"**. This is very interesting, because here is the question that others have asked, how are there people who live?

**Question: How Do Wicked People Live?**

That's the question? The question of the Raavad? No, no, the question is... actually that isn't a question, that is only a question if you think there are wicked people. By the way, I have another answer to the Raavad's question. But an interesting answer occurred to me to the question, that we learned in the laws of eruv techumin that one doesn't make three cities at once an eruv techumin, because it would be a great burden. "Lest the wild beasts multiply against you". Yes, **"And I will drive them out little by little lest the wild beasts multiply against you"**. The Almighty also doesn't want that in every community it should become half, the world would become a destruction. Imagine, every Day of Judgment around there becomes a plague and a huge percentage of every community dies, it would be a great disaster. The Almighty has more mercy on you.

Yes, well, that's the Raavad with the Tosafos, they all say, "But there are many wicked people who live". You know that he is wicked, you know that he doesn't do transgressions that you know. But he perhaps has more mitzvos against that.

Yes, but I say no, and the Zohar has its own answer, about this it says "And these are the judgments," "the secret of reincarnation," once one brings in such calculations like reincarnation and other things, the question... doesn't become a question.

**Question: Why Must an Intermediate Person Do Repentance?**

But I don't know, let's leave that. The few minutes of theft. But there is another question, what is the plain meaning that an intermediate person should die if he didn't do repentance? Until now we learned, what is an intermediate person? An intermediate person is an intermediate person, nothing matters to him. Suddenly, it comes out that he must indeed do repentance.

## **Laws of Repentance Chapter 3: The Judgment of the Intermediate Person During the Ten Days of Repentance, Shofar Blowing, and the Power of a Single Deed**

### **Question: Why Does an Intermediate Person Die Without Repentance?**

#### **Speaker 1:**

But I say no, the question of the ten days of repentance... But the Zohar has its own answer, about this it says "And these are the judgments," judging his spirit, the reincarnations. Once one brings in such calculations like reincarnations and other things, the question doesn't become a question.

And you know, no, let's leave that, there are several approaches. There is another question, why is the plain meaning that an intermediate person should die and he didn't do repentance? Until now we learned, what is an intermediate person? An intermediate person is an intermediate person, nothing happens to him. Suddenly, the ten days of repentance come, didn't do repentance, he must die. Why specifically an intermediate person?

#### **Answer A: Not Doing Repentance Is a New Sin**

#### **Speaker 1:**

It could be that the sin of not doing repentance, that outweighs. It's a new sin. He, the intermediate person, is fifty-fifty. Having gone through the ten days of repentance, he didn't have any thought of repentance, made him into a wicked person. Okay, so there are those who say so, but one must... I feel that here...

#### **Answer B: The Ten Days of Repentance Are Especially for the Intermediate Person**

#### **Speaker 1:**

It could be that the whole point of an intermediate person is that... oh, perhaps one can say so, the connection of the whole laws of the ten days of repentance is the intermediate person, he is the one who must do repentance. A wicked person must also do repentance, but he is already wicked. From a wicked person we don't expect that. Something one must understand, this is all the Rambam who organizes all the Gemaras etc., but something one must understand here, the intermediate person.

#### **Law 4: Shofar Blowing — A Hint to Repentance**

#### **The Rambam's Words: A Decree of Scripture But There Is a Hint in It**

#### **Speaker 1:**

Today the Rambam says very beautiful things about Rosh Hashanah. I say, about weighing the merits and transgressions on Rosh Hashanah, the Rambam says that... so let's understand. The Rambam has told here a new thing, not a new thing, he built on the Gemara etc. Ah, the topic of the ten days of repentance, as we learned, there is a detailed law, there are ten days of repentance when then one makes a new judgment, and there is a distinction, that here one must arouse the world to do repentance. One takes the intermediate ones a list, and one tells them they should do repentance. The Rambam connects, the Rambam wants to connect into this another thing from Rosh Hashanah, the mitzvah of shofar blowing.

A principle we now said that now is the time when the intermediate person must awaken and grasp that now is a time

of repentance. Says the Rambam that shofar blowing is the thing, shofar blowing is what must awaken him.

Says the Rambam, "**Even though shofar blowing on Rosh Hashanah is a decree of Scripture**", the mitzvah of shofar blowing on Rosh Hashanah isn't made some message for the person. The Almighty commanded it, it's presumably based on the Gemara of "why do they blow," and the Gemara asks, why do you ask? The Merciful One said blow? It's a decree of Scripture. Probably the Rambam thought of the Gemara. But I also think, when he says decree of Scripture means, because the Almighty commanded, it's not necessarily some secrets from this little person here, the little person. But there is a hint in it for the person.

#### **Discussion: What Does "Decree of Scripture" Mean?**

#### **Speaker 2:**

Yes, but a hint for the person. Ah, the most simple is, a person shouldn't enter to understand the reasons for the mitzvos, because that's not necessarily connected to a hint. Do you want to show something that the Rambam said something about decree of Scripture? Because this isn't just said. He says, let's not enter.

#### **Speaker 1:**

I just want to show that perhaps this is also the source. I think that in articles one brings this. What is the source at all of the ten days of repentance? The answer that on Yom Kippur one must do repentance we already learned in the previous chapter, "How does one confess?" It says in the verse, "For on this day He shall atone for you" etc. But what is the source of the ten days of repentance? How does one know that it begins before Rosh Hashanah? How does one know the whole law of Rosh Hashanah? It doesn't say in the verse. Yes, it says "a day of blowing". The law isn't stated. The answer is that the shofar is a hint to this. The shofar that one blows on Rosh Hashanah already shows that one should do repentance.

#### **Speaker 2:**

No, I would have learned, I would have said decree of Scripture means that it's not for the person, but it's for the Almighty, or I don't know what, for the Torah. And there is a hint in it for the person, there is a hint for the person.

#### **Speaker 1:**

As if, what you say that it's for the Almighty, that is much more problematic than to say that there is a reason.

#### **Speaker 2:**

It's not for the person, it's for... but there is a hint in it, there is a hint for the person. There are things that the Torah is repair of the body, healing of the body, is doubtful, but it is indeed repair of the soul. Repair of the soul means the person. Well, but then?

#### **The Rambam's "Sermon": Awake You Sleepers from Your Sleep**

#### **Speaker 1:**

Okay, that is, what is the hint? That is, the Rambam says here, you used to believe that the Rambam is shofar blowing sermon. That is, the Rambam says so, the shofar blowing cries out. What does it cry? Does it hear cries? It hears so, as he says, "**Awake, awake you sleepers from your sleep and arise you slumberers from your slumber**". It's simple, because the sound of the shofar is something that awakens a person. A loud noise awakens a person. It's made to awaken

people. Wake yourselves up, sleepy ones, from your deep sleep.

And what should one do after one is awake? **"And search in your deeds"**, start to look, search in your deeds. That means, it looks to you like you're doing a deed, but make the calculation, make your own judgment and accounting. It's not that the Almighty makes the judgment and accounting in heaven, you make your own judgment and accounting.

What does one do after that? When you go to make a self-accounting, you will become, somewhere there was we sinned. **"Return in repentance"**, be repentant. **"And remember your Creator"**, and now, you would have done this, start to remember your Creator.

#### **Analysis: The Step-by-Step Repentance**

##### **Speaker 1:**

I think that the remember your Creator is the acceptance, just as the we sinned and transgressed is like a sort of confession, that one has sinned. Return in repentance is abandoning the sin. And remember your Creator is simply one goes from now, an acceptance, one goes from now to remember the Almighty.

Remember we learned in chapter 2 that "and remember your Creator in the days of your youth" means one should do repentance when one is still young. One sees that repentance means remembering the Creator. The essence of repentance that one must do is not to forget the Almighty.

#### **The Intermediate Person Sleeps — Not the Wicked Person**

##### **Speaker 1:**

I think it's also very beautiful, because the wicked person isn't one who sleeps. The wicked person is wicked, he wants to be wicked, he persists. The intermediate person, usually why is he intermediate? Because he does many mitzvos. Why does he do mitzvos? Because he knows there is a Creator. But he sleeps a lot. One tells him, **"These who forget the truth in the vanities of time"**. To whom am I speaking here? To the intermediate ones who forget that there is a truth in the vanities of time. He knows there is a truth, but he forgets it because he becomes distracted in the vanities of time, with the foolishness of the time. He lives with the time, he is troubled and immersed, but he becomes busy with other things.

Time means apparently temporary things. All things of this world are time. Today it's here, tomorrow it's not here. What is the truth? The true things, the things that are eternal, that are the Almighty.

**"And err all their years"**, they err, they forget, they are in the category of erring, they waste their year. Why their years? Because now is once a year when one awakens. I mean first of all, I think that erring is the language that the Rambam says at the end of the laws of repentance, or what we learned and we will learn. Erring means that he knows what he did, but he is constantly distracted in his sleep or in his year. I think that their years means sleep or year.

#### **Continuation of the Sermon: Look to Your Souls**

##### **Speaker 1:**

Again, **"Remember your Creator"**, start to remember the Almighty. You people who sleep and forget the Almighty, when you become busy with the vanities of time and vanity and emptiness. And what is the vanity and emptiness? **"Which will not benefit and will not save"**. Why are they vanity and emptiness? Because they don't have a true effect.

They don't help, they don't save. This makes them vanity and emptiness, they are foolish things. This reminds us of the language that he said in the laws of idolatry. Right, right, right. Will not benefit and will not save, even though I was with them. But here one sees that it's deeper than that. Essentially all matters of vanity and emptiness are will not benefit and will not save.

#### **Translation**

And he says further, **"Hetivu na et darkhechem ve'et ma'alelechem"**. Start improving your ways and your deeds. "Ma'alelechem" perhaps means your plans, schemes... could be. I think one should understand from this tikkun hanefesh (rectification of the soul). They learned. Look at what kind of person you are, look at what a person's nefesh (soul) means. A person's nefesh is something whose perfection is not to be hevel varik (vanity and emptiness), but rather its perfection is to do mitzvos and good deeds. Improve your character traits, improve your deeds.

**"Veya'azov kol echad mikem darko hara'ah umachshavto asher lo tovah"**. Each one should abandon his evil way, and abandon his plans for the new year that are not good plans and not good thoughts. This is exactly what the Rambam said earlier about "what is teshuva," yes, "sheyazov hachotei chet'o veyasirenu mimachshavto" (that the sinner should abandon his sin and remove it from his thoughts). Here you see clearly that it's the Rambam's drasha (exposition). He says, "veya'azov kol echad mikem." Who is crying out here "kol echad mikem"? The shofar, the Rambam's drasha. You see clearly that the Rambam imagines that he said the drasha.

#### **Halacha 4 (continued): Lifikach tzarich kol adam sheyireh atzmo**

**Practical application: Every person should view himself as half meritorious and half guilty**

##### **Speaker 1:**

The Rambam says further, **"Lifikach tzarich kol adam sheyireh atzmo kol hashanah kulah ke'ilu chetzvo zakai vechetzvo chayav"** (Therefore, every person must see himself the entire year as if he is half meritorious and half guilty). What is "lifikach"? How does this connect again? It's very interesting. This is a continuation of what he said that there is the weighing of sins, and if one is a beinoni (intermediate person) there are troubles, and without teshuva there are troubles. So, what must one do? What is the practical application? We said earlier, there is the theoretical halacha, you want to work on it, but there is a practical application. What is the practical application of this whole thing that there are tzaddikim (righteous), beinonim (intermediate), resha'im (wicked)?

The answer is this: Every person, not only on Rosh Hashanah, but kol hashanah kulah (the entire year), a whole year a person should view himself as if half meritorious and half guilty. But he must think on Rosh Hashanah, because then it's... yes. It's not that on Rosh Hashanah one must awaken, but you're saying, he's saying truly, when you have just a good moment and you think, you should think as if half meritorious and half guilty.

**Vechen** (and likewise), he should consider that **kol ha'olam chetzvo zakai vechetzvo chayav** (the entire world is half meritorious and half guilty). And this gives a person tremendous power, that in his actions lies the matter. So much

is at stake, as they say. In your actions lies everything. **Im techeta mah tif'al bo?** (If you sin, what will you accomplish?) If you go and do one more sin, you're right now in the middle. **Harei hichria atzmo** (behold, he has tipped himself), you will tip yourself to bad. We know that you are the one person who is in the middle. **Vehichria kol ha'olam kulo lechaf chovah vegaram lah hashchatah** (And he has tipped the entire world to the side of guilt and caused destruction). This means, hashchat kol basar et darko (all flesh corrupted its way), the world will be destroyed just as there was the flood. I think hashchatah means that the world will be destroyed, there will be an end to the world, there will come a flood, there will come global warming and destruction to make the world destroyed.

But **asah mitzvah achat, harei hichria et atzmo** (he did one mitzvah, behold he has tipped himself), he has tipped himself, he pushed himself from being a beinoni to being more of a majority meritorious, **and with this hichria et kol ha'olam kulo lechaf zechut, vegaram lahem teshu'ah vehatzalah** (and tipped the entire world to the side of merit, and caused them salvation and rescue). He is the tzaddik who saved the world. Why? Because he did one mitzvah.

**Discussion: Encouragement or mussar?**

**Speaker 2:**

Which do you think is harder to think?

**Speaker 1:**

I think this way, that a person can think, what is the novelty of this? This is frightening, this is a mussar drasha (ethical discourse), half meritorious and half guilty. I hold that it's a great encouragement drasha, because we are usually accustomed to think that the world is already majority guilty, it's already long destroyed. The Rambam says, no, it's not destroyed at all. It stands that one more person needs to do one sin in order for it to be destroyed, and you are that person.

So, it's a great power, it's not just a great power, it's a great encouragement. That is, usually, at least I, when I look at the world I think more in terms of despair, or about myself too. Okay, I'll do one mitzvah, whatever, it's a waste of time. No, a person can say, the world is so corrupt, what will I do one deed, I'll do one mitzvah that's not corrupt. Perhaps you'll be the straw that broke the camel's back. Perhaps you'll turn back, you'll make one... what's it called? Your kimcha depischa (Passover flour charity), chesed in you, will be the one kimcha depischa that you gave money for erev Pesach for a poor and destitute person, and this will make tomorrow the entire world will be...

**"Vetzaddik yesod olam" — Tzaddik as an active verb**

**Speaker 1:**

Tremendous. The Rambam says, **zehu she'amru** (this is what they said), and he interprets it into a verse. This is what it says, **"vetzaddik yesod olam"** (and the righteous is the foundation of the world). How is the tzaddik the foundation of the world? The foundation of the world is, I know, the creation, God made the earth. He says, **zehu tzaddik atzmo** (this is the tzaddik himself), the person who made himself into a tzaddik, he pushed himself from being a beinoni to a tzaddik, **hichria et kol ha'olam vehitzilo** (he tipped the entire world and saved it).

So, tzaddik here is an active verb, not a... a person. The person who made himself righteous, he became a tzaddik. Not tzaddik

meaning one who is a tzaddik, because then we're not talking about a beinoni. He was, he now established the foundation of the world, he now set up the world to stand stable.

So this is the entire year, and the same thing is the entire year.

**Hilchos Teshuva Chapter 3 — Weighing merits and sins, customs of the Ten Days of Repentance, and they don't count the first and second sin**

**Halacha 8 (continued) — "Tzaddik atzmo" is the person who made himself righteous**

The Eshes Chayil says "tzaddik atzmo," the person who made himself into a tzaddik, he pushed himself to be a beinoni or a tzaddik. **"Hichria et kol ha'olam lechaf zechut"** (He tipped the entire world to the side of merit).

So a tzaddik here is an active verb, not a person. The person made himself righteous, he became a tzaddik, not tzaddik meaning one who is a tzaddik, because then he's not talking about a beinoni. He was a rasha (wicked person), he now established the world, he now set up the world so it should stand stable.

And this is the entire year, and the same thing is the Rambam's new concept he says, about the concept that Rosh Hashanah is when there is the main weighing of merits and sins.

**Halacha 9 — Customs of the Ten Days of Repentance**

**Generally the entire year, especially the Ten Days of Repentance**

So one can say the picture this way, generally there are merits and sins the entire year, especially the Ten Days of Repentance.

Generally a person must always see himself as half meritorious and half guilty, and always do more mitzvos so that it should become half. Especially the Ten Days of Repentance. And therefore, **nahagu kol beis Yisrael leharbos bitzedakah uvema'asim tovim vela'asok bemitzvos** (all the house of Israel are accustomed to increase in charity and good deeds and to engage in mitzvos).

Tzedakah — giving charity to poor people. Good deeds — good deeds means one should adopt good character traits, good things. And to engage in mitzvos — do God's mitzvos **merosh hashanah ve'ad yom hakippurim yoter mikol yemos hashanah** (from Rosh Hashanah until Yom Kippur more than all the days of the year).

**The Rambam says a general thing, not specific halachos**

And halacha, one hasn't put in clear halachos. During the year one is not particular about pas Yisrael (bread baked by a Jew), one should be particular. But the Rambam says a general thing. The concept of tzedakah is very important. One does conduct oneself, one gives more tzedakah, but it appears that tzedakah is one of the very great mitzvos, it's a very remarkable thing.

And just as earlier, tzedakah is part of teshuva.

**Nahagu kulam la'amod balailah be'aseres yemei teshuva**

The Rambam says further, **venahagu kulam la'amod balailah be'aseres yemei teshuva** (And they are all accustomed to stand at night during the Ten Days of Repentance). One must conduct oneself, all Jews, nahagu kulam, yes, the Rambam says kulam means that it's an obligation for every Jew. It's a custom of all Israel to awaken at

night. At night means to say not ten to early, but it should be earlier.

**Be'aseres yemei teshuva, lehitpalel bebatei knesiyos bedivrei tachnunim** (During the Ten Days of Repentance, to pray in synagogues with words of supplication), to pray in the study halls, in synagogues where one prays words of supplication, words of supplication, **vedivrei kibushin ad sheya'or hayom** (and words of submission until the day dawns), until it becomes light.

I think if one looks at the selichos (penitential prayers), it's supplications and submissions. Many selichos for example are about you're going to die, your soul pleads to you. It's simply mussar words. One doesn't talk about knocking on heaven, one talks to the person. Many selichos are beautiful mussar drashos. And many are supplications, one pleads to God. And this is because there it's worthwhile, because the beinoni needs one more mitzvah. The entire year he also needs one more mitzvah, but especially during the Ten Days of Repentance.

**Question: Why didn't he enumerate prayer?**

But why didn't he enumerate prayer? He enumerated tzedakah, good deeds, mitzvos, and now he says he should do supplications and submissions. So words of submission I understand, that this will bring tzedakah, good deeds. It could be another thought that words of supplication is one of chesed (kindness) with people. Yes, people are in troubles, you're going to pray for them. I think that perhaps the kulam thought this way simply. There are other customs, this was already a custom in the time of the Rambam, today it's already a custom that everyone says selichos. Perhaps this is what he means by kulam.

**Selichos is more awakening — a continuation of the shofar**

In any case, the selichos is... no, so I think that the selichos is more awakening, which is the submission. The selichos is like the continuation of the shofar. This reminds you again, you're going to sit the entire day. Supplications also affect a person. It's not necessarily that it's prayer. It's prayer, but it awakens the world. There is teshuva, there is God, and so on.

**Halacha 10 — They don't count against him the first sin he sinned or the second**

**One doesn't measure the first two sins**

So, we learned the thing that there is a thing of weighing sins. One measures, yes? One measures off, God measures, or the heavenly court, whoever, I don't understand who, we'll see perhaps the language of weighing. But one measures whether a person has more mitzvos or more sins, or is he then a tzaddik or rasha, for which there are judgments, or is he a beinoni, for which then there are laws of beinoni, that he needs to do teshuva, etc. So the measuring is not so simple, not just that one counts off. Rather there is a special halacha, there is a special law how one calculates it.

This the Rambam says when... There it's relevant how does one measure? **Ein machshivin alav techilat avon shechata bo velo sheni** (They don't count against him the first sin he sinned or the second). One doesn't measure the person's first sin, and not even the second. One only begins counting **ela mishlisho va'eilach** (only from his third onward). This is a halacha, that one only counts from the person's third sin and further. It's not that one throws away entirely the first and the second, but one puts it to the side. I'll tell you.

**If his sins from the third onward are greater — they add those sins**

And it's this way, **im nimtze'u avonosav mishlisho va'eilach merubin al zechuyosav** (if it is found that his sins from the third onward are greater than his merits) — if one finds that from the third and further the sins are more, then he is found guilty, yes? Then one also counts the first two sins, **umetzarfin osan aveiros, vedanin oso al hakol** (and they add those sins, and judge him for everything). It's interesting, because actually one doesn't need to have even the first two then, because he's just simply a majority of sins anyway.

The novelty is only that the first two sins that a person does don't count. Only from the third and further begins the obligation. Yes, but if from the third onward is greater than his merits, then the person is anyway majority guilty. Then it's not such a great difference that one brings back the first two, but one can also go down from them.

**Discussion: When does one begin to calculate the accounting?**

That means this way, one counts from the third and further, and one sees that he is majority guilty. Majority guilty is without the two that one now adds.

**Speaker 2:** No, no, what are you thinking? One doesn't count at all. It doesn't count from weighing. It's speaking generally. When a person begins, he was a tzaddik until now and he started to sin, the first two sins are not yet part of the accounting.

**Speaker 1:** Yes, but he's talking further regarding whether the person is majority meritorious or majority guilty, yes?

**Speaker 2:** No, he doesn't say that. He says when one weighs, one doesn't begin from the first. If a person has only two sins, he can have only two sins and one mitzvah, and still one doesn't count the first two, he's a tzaddik. If he already has two, three sins, then one needs to know if he has four mitzvos or only two mitzvos or only three.

It's not like that. If there is a moment from when one begins counting. For example, let's say he was forgiven on Yom Kippur, or I know that he was a groom, and now he begins a new accounting. The new accounting doesn't count the first three sins. Yes, that's how one would say, the first two sins.

**Speaker 1:** When does one begin to calculate the accounting? When does one begin to calculate the accounting? In other words, one can say it this way, that the first two sins don't count. That's what one can say. Even when there are majority sins, after he did a third sin, then one begins to calculate whether it's more, whether it's less. Ah... yes, that's what I think.

**Halacha 11 — Removing first by first**

**The Gemara's language: "If his sins from the third onward are found to be greater"**

The Gemara says "if his sins from the third onward are found to be greater," because there it means as you started to say, as if the question is whether he had more sins without the first two. Yes, more sins without the first two, and one judges him, when will we judge him as majority guilty. But it appears that there's still an accounting for each sin, let's say that for each sin comes to him just an extra punishment, he would then also receive a punishment for the first two sins, but this is only

after he is majority guilty. So, yes, I would have interpreted it differently than I think, it makes more sense to me.

**When he has majority merits — they remove his sins first by first**

And the interpretation is "if his sins are found," if after he did three sins, it comes out this way, the halacha is this way, we go further. **Umetzarfin zechuyos keneged avonosav, ve'im shlishi va'eilach** (And they combine merits against his sins, and if from the third onward), but if from the third sin further he did more merits than his sins, that means that the merits are weighed, are more, going up, **ma'avirin al avonosav rishon rishon** (they remove his sins first by first), then God removes the sins, that means one forgives him, or one lets it be forgiven, yes? It goes away. **Lefi sheshlishi nechshav rishon** (Because the third is counted as first), because the third, the third one, one counts as the first, **shekvar nimchalu hashnayim** (since the two have already been forgiven).

And it's very interesting. But when one forgives a person because he has more merits, and one judges him favorably, and one forgives him then the sins, then the first two one has already forgiven, so the third is called the first, and the first one doesn't count the first. It's an interesting trick how one justifies a person who has majority merits, that each new sin one counts, "ah, this is only the first," because the first two one has already forgiven.

**Vechen harevi'i nechshav rishon** (And likewise the fourth is counted as first), after one has forgiven the third, which has now become number one, then what is now number one is the fourth. **Shuv nimchal lo shlishi, vechen ad sofo** (Again the third is forgiven him, and so on until the end). This is how Chazal expounded the word "ma'avir rishon rishon" (removing first by first). Each sin we look at as if the other one has already been forgiven, so this is now the new one sin. One sin at a time and one is forgiven.

**The Rambam's approach: Majority merits means all sins are forgiven**

In other words, let's understand it this way, this is apparently according to how the Rambam understands it here, this is the way how majority merits helps. Apparently, majority merits, he still has other sins besides this, and he should receive punishments for the sins. The Rambam says that one doesn't receive any punishments for the sins. He says, the moment you have majority merits, the Rambam says, **vechen im shakal avonos adam echad im zechuyosav, lo yihyu avonosav merubin mizechuyosav, kol osan ha'avonos nimchalin lo, velo nish'ar lo avon kelal** (And likewise if one weighs a person's sins with his merits, his sins will not be greater than his merits, all those sins are forgiven him, and no sin remains for him at all). Let's think, the first, the third is the first. You don't have any first at all. It's always the first. So it's as if nullified, yes? As if nullified, a kind of thing.

**Question: From where does the Rambam say that majority merits means the sins are nullified?**

But from where did he even start when one says that majority merits means simply that one throws away the sins? From where does he say this? Majority merits, one looks at the majority. What does it mean that the minority is nullified? The minority becomes as if it seems to him? Judged according to its majority? We're talking that one goes after the majority, and not simply that the minority is nullified. But that's how it

says, "yitzdak" (he will be justified), "yimshoch zechuyosav al avonosav vetzadak" (his merits will draw over his sins and he will be justified). What about the small sins? Removing first by first.

**The interesting thing: After the weighing ends**

**Hilchos Teshuva Chapter 3 (continued): Details of the Categories of "Those Who Have No Share in the World to Come"**

And the interesting thing is also that after the weighing ends and he begins to sin again, it doesn't go back to chozer v'ni'or (reset). They continue counting. It doesn't say here that when he begins to sin again... Let's be clear, the topic that we need to understand is that he begins to sin again. There are commentators who say that we're talking about at the time of death. I don't know, whenever it's talking about, that's when it's talking about. One can be precise, there are those who make distinctions between shogeg and meizid, and I don't know. The Rambam doesn't say that this is one time and then it starts over again. If he starts over again and he's still alive, it goes back to majority of merits, the whole thing starts again. If that's how we calculate. One must know, when we calculate, the whole thing that the Rambam says that we calculate every year, is also not so clear to understand what it means. But okay, let's finish the thousand sins. We calculate one year, the simple meaning is that all the other previous years we don't count.

**Idea: When Do We Begin Calculating the Account?**

I had a moment, I'll finish this piece, I'll say an idea that I have that can make sense in the simple meaning of the Rambam. The Rambam learns that ma'avir rishon rishon (passing over the first) is that when there's a majority of merits, it's only until three times. Only three, after the three he continues. It's explicit. **"Hen kol eileh yif'al Kel pa'amayim shalosh im gaver"** (Behold, all these things God does two or three times with a man). Two, up to three times with a person he has the fixedness of this thing.

He has mercy and he is ma'avir lashon hara. But this is the sin of the individual.

**Hilchos Teshuva Chapter 3: Ma'avir Rishon Rishon, Beinonim and Resha'im, and Share in the World to Come**

**Halachos 10-12: The Law of "Ma'avir Rishon Rishon" - For the Individual and the Community**

It says, he brings a verse **"Hen kol eileh yif'al Kel pa'amayim shalosh im gaver"**. Two, up to three times with a person he has the merit, he has mercy and he is ma'avir rishon rishon. But this is the sin of the individual.

But as we learned earlier that there's a law that we write kol hayachid and we write kol harabbim. The rabbim don't have this benefit. They have better benefits.

But a community, **"a tzibbur she'chat'u alav rishon v'sheini u'shlishi"**, excuse me, on the contrary, for the community we count even the first three, not just the first two, but the first three. It says, **"Al shlosa pish'ei Yisrael v'al arba'ah lo ashivenu"**. It means, he explains that for the first three I am ma'avir al seder, but **"al arba'ah"**, on the fourth, **"lo ashivenu"**, I will not settle him, I will not bring him back, I will not accept his teshuva or whatever. He won't be forgiven. Does this mean that one must be al derech zeh, one must be on

arba'ah va'eilach. On the sins of the community we only count from the fourth onward. It means the first, not just the first two is one ma'avir al seder like an individual, but we give one more, we give until the fourth.

This is the halacha of ma'avir rishon rishon, and from this, how do we call it? Yes, this is the "pa'amayim shalosh im gaver."

#### **In Brief: The Practical Meaning**

In brief, everyone should know that one has credit to sin twice, it doesn't cost anything. On the third time the problems begin. And for a community there's credit three times.

#### **Discussion: Practical Difficulties in This Calculation**

**Speaker 1:** I think I can make it clearer. It's hard to take this, as they say, take to the bank, because no one knows exactly from when we calculate the account or further.

**Speaker 2:** What are you saying, from when he became a katan or... forever, or...

**Speaker 1:** Yes, but no one is holding by the first two, everyone is already holding deep in the middle of life. The day after Yom Kippur, have we already sinned three times? I'm afraid yes. Okay.

#### **Possible Answers: How the Calculation Works**

As we said here in chapter 27, I have mine. No, but if the calculation is as we've already discussed after the request for forgiveness, perhaps like after Yom Kippur.

But I also hold that each type of sin is calculated separately. I can make a kula. It's not the simple meaning that one sin, he did chillul Shabbos. No, that he's forgotten from that type of sin. Or as we speak about lashon hara, we don't count the first two times that one spoke lashon hara. It could be, the Rambam doesn't say clearly how the calculation works.

#### **Simple Meaning in the Way of Tikkun HaNefesh**

I mean, if one wants to say such a simple meaning that has to do with tikkun hanefesh, one must say that the simple meaning is, what does "nidnach ribah" mean? "Nidnach ribah," the simple meaning is what they said at the beginning, that he's such a type of person. He's not, what type of person is he? He's a tzaddik. Two times it's an incident, three times it's already become a habit on this chazaka. As Tosafos says, he has a community, it's harder to make a chazaka on it, you need four times.

As in hilchos onashin for example in korbanos, which they learned this week Vayikra. Not such a thing, I mean, there are laws when one weighs. One must understand precisely, because you know that it's not... It would have been a great chiddush if someone would have said such a thing. Yes? But when these are the chiddushim, they say great chiddushim.

#### **Halacha 13: Beinonim and Resha'im - Their Share in the World to Come**

The Yehoshua Rabbi is now going to learn, there are types of people, as they learned that one is a beinoni but he only has two sins with two merits, and now we're going to learn that there are also boundaries.

#### **Sins That Are "Deal-Breakers"**

There are certain sins, he shows if one is a rasha, he did more sins than mitzvos, the scale tips and he goes straight to Gehinnom or loses his portion etc. But then there are certain sins, that even if he's a beinoni, he also loses his share in the world to come, that the sin is like a... like a... this is a deal-

breaker, that the person broke a deal. He made a deal which is a deal, which has more mitzvos, more sins etc. There are certain sins that destroy the whole thing, he doesn't make calculations, he's out. This is the logic of the next chapter. Yes? Yes.

#### **The Rambam's Halacha: Beinonim and Resha'im Have a Share in the World to Come**

Says the Rambam... But this has less to do directly with hilchos teshuva, but it comes with hilchos shekilas aveiros, or hilchos sechar v'onesh. So they said that this is hilchos tzaddikim beinonim u'resha'im.

Says the Rambam, a beinoni... It's interesting, there are also with the tovos merubos, there are also things that with one mitzvah of them, even if he did all the sins in the Torah it helps, but the Rambam doesn't say such a thing there. It's clear with the tovos merubos. There are certain sins that even if he's a beinoni, kol hamellig al divrei chachamim, even an idol worshipper like other people, they make him... Could be that he made himself a mumar, and the Rambam doesn't accept it.

#### **The Rambam's Words About a Beinoni**

Okay, says the Rambam, a beinoni, yes? Says the Rambam, a beinoni is like this, "**Im haysa bichlal machatzah avonosav shelo hiniach tefillin me'olam**", I asked, we spoke earlier that for a mitzvas asech teshuva is relatively easier. Yes? So why does he bring in specifically tefillin, because it's a mitzvas asech?

He brings tefillin because it says in the Gemara about this, but according to how the Rambam brings it, it comes out that there's no difference at all between tefillin and other mitzvos. One must understand. Even if he never put on tefillin, it doesn't matter. "**Danin oso k'fi chata'av v'yesh lo chelek l'olam haba**". He receives a certain judgment. Could be even shelo hiniach tefillin me'olam, it's counted as a harsh thing. I don't see that he's liable kol rasha, as he says. The Gemara says about this, but there isn't k'fi chata'av, it's actually with giving a punishment for being mevatel the mitzvas asech, but v'yesh lo chelek l'olam haba. The Gemara says about this, karkafta d'lo manach tefillin, but it comes out from the Rambam that it doesn't make a difference, tefillin is not more severe than any other mitzvah. Right.

#### **The Rambam's Words About Resha'im**

Says the Rambam, "**V'chen kol haresha'im she'avonoseihem merubim**", even resha'im who have a majority of sins, "**danin osam k'fi chata'eihem**", we give him a judgment, we give him a punishment according to the sins, but "**yesh lahem chelek l'olam haba**". It doesn't take away his essential share in the world to come that he has. Why? Says the Rambam, "**shekol Yisrael yesh lahem chelek l'olam haba, af al pi she'chatu**", he brings as it says in the well-known Mishna, all Jews have a share in the world to come, even if they sinned, it says "**v'amcha kulam tzaddikim l'olam yirshu aretz**".

What does aretz mean? Says the Rambam, aretz is a metaphor. Aretz here doesn't mean that they will inherit Eretz Yisrael or whatever, but we're talking here about the matter of reward and punishment. Lomar, the aretz is a metaphor, klomar aretz hachaim, the land there where one lives forever, there where the soul lives, v'hi olam haba. So in olam haneshamos there all Jews, even those who have avonos merubim, have a share in olam haba.

### Chassidei Umos HaOlam

And he says there further, "**V'lo Yisrael bilvad**". He says here a chiddush that's stated there in the Gemara in Chelek, also the chassidei umos ha'olam yesh lahem chelek l'olam haba. Even though they have it very hard, they don't have any sins, they are chassidei umos ha'olam. If they were complete tzaddikim they couldn't be chassidei umos ha'olam. There's some deficiency, and he says "nemusados kapos temarim." But a share in olam haba he has. That's it. That's there chassidei umos ha'olam means that they only have the seven mitzvos, but only fulfilled the seven mitzvos of Bnei Noach. Something is missing. I have here a huge reason why one needs to have 613 mitzvos when it's... But even so, perhaps he wasn't mekayem the mitzvos, perhaps something is missing, but a share in olam haba he has.

#### Discussion: What Does "Beinoni" Mean Here?

No, but here I don't see that not only as I said that there are sins that even when he has against them a majority of mitzvos it doesn't help, the Rambam says another thing, different from what was thought earlier. He says that what does beinoni mean here? It's not like that. Beinoni means here that it's exactly half and half. If it's more majority of merits, he becomes a complete tzaddik and he doesn't receive any punishment at all. If he has exactly half and half, it comes out that if he didn't steal tefillin then... But in general, I don't know, if he didn't put on tefillin, it's not like that. He doesn't say clearly. If he didn't do a sin and he did put on tefillin, he's even half and half, apparently he doesn't receive any punishment. So it comes out here, and it's not like I said.

I see that in the Gemara it says, there's a sugya in the Gemara, there's a give and take in the Gemara, that half and half the Holy One has mercy. On this it says in the Gemara, the Gemara brings on this Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel that what we say that on this the Holy One has mercy, "noteh klapi chesed," that it means a beinoni. But on this the answer is open, that the Rambam doesn't bring it so clearly, I don't know how to learn.

But what he says here is, he wants to say, both beinonim and resha'im, by both there's a share in olam haba. There's only a difference, the rasha's is much smaller than the beinoni's. But what he wants to get to is that both have in practice a share in olam haba, and he wants to get to the "**v'eilu she'ein lahem chelek l'olam haba**".

#### Discussion: Why Does the Rambam Bring Tefillin?

And what is he telling me about the topic of putting on tefillin? But this one doesn't even need to understand. I'm telling you that if I'm right, one must learn that a normal beinoni doesn't have nidon k'fi chato, because the Holy One has mercy on beinonim. But what then? He doesn't have such harsh things. For example, he did a certain mitzvah, it could be the words aren't specifically tefillin, but he did a certain mitzvah that he never did. As you say that for example, what plays the part in his soul, and on this he's not... Could be, could be that's the simple meaning. But the Rambam only says the halacha, tefillin is a detail, but all of them, both the beinonim and the resha'im, this is majority of merits, majority of sins, either way, at least he has a share in olam haba.

### Halacha 14: "V'eilu She'ein Lahem Chelek L'olam Haba"

But "**v'eilu she'ein lahem chelek l'olam haba**", they don't have a share in the world to come, their soul doesn't go into a share in the world to come, "**ela nichrasim v'ovdim**

**v'nidonim**". They are cut off, they are lost, it means they don't go into a share in the world to come, and they are "**nidonim al godel rish'am v'chatasam l'olam ul'olmei olamim**". Forever they will receive a punishment, and they are cut off from olam haba.

#### Discussion: The Contradiction Between "Nichras" and "Nidon"

So apparently, the Rambam is going to learn, one must precisely see here what there is, there's a bit of a contradiction, if he's lost, why are we going to punish him? So one will apparently see in chapter 7 halacha 9, it's interesting that the Rambam is going to learn that kares means that one doesn't get anything.

If so there's a contradiction, the Rambam already asks this contradiction in his letter, he asks a contradiction that the Rambam says that one is judged forever and ever. What are you judged if you're not there? Apparently I mean that according to the Rambam's way one must explain that the judgment forever is that he's never there. It's a great judgment that he hears the Holy One's voice, feels Him. Perhaps one must say like this, the judgment for the nichrasim v'ovdim, it means their judgment is that they become nichrasim v'ovdim, and the nichrasim v'ovdim goes forever. It means he becomes nichras v'oved, it means forever when his soul doesn't get access to olam haba, it's perhaps such a type of judgment.

The problem is that there's no soul. The language of the Gemara, the Rambam is here, because the language of the Gemara is that yordin l'Gehinnom v'nidonin bah 12 chodesh, a soul that he's there is only in Gehinnom. For this apparently the Rambam learned this way, but already.

#### The List of "Eilu She'ein Lahem Chelek L'olam Haba"

The Rambam has a long list, yes, haminim. And he's going to explain all these things from the list, he's going to explain, so... Minim and apikorsim, he's first going to enumerate five types... Stop a moment.

So yes, it's a long list, the list I mean comes in the Braisa.

### Hilchos Teshuva Chapter 3 - Continuation: Details of the Categories of "Those Who Have No Share in the World to Come"

#### The Entire List of the Rambam

The language of the Gemara, the Rambam is a posek, and the language of the Gemara is that "**yordin l'Gehinnom v'einam olim**". The implication is that he's there, he's just in Gehinnom. From this apparently the Rambam learned this way.

But already, this is the... The Rambam has here a long list. Yes, haminim. And he's going to explain all these things from the list he's going to explain. So...

Haminim, apikorsim. He's first going to enumerate five types. Stop a moment. So yes, it's a long list. The list I mean comes from the Braisa, and the Rambam is going to say. This I wrote in here.

#### Chiddush: Minim and Apikorsim Are Not the Same Thing

Minim, apikorsim, is not the same thing. By us it's accustomed to this all as one thing, because the Rambam made separate each category. He's going to explain in a minute what all these things are.

Minim, apikorsim, kofrim baTorah, kofrim bitchiyas hameisim, and kofrim bevi'as hago'el.

When? Much further. What is meshumadim? Minim, apikorsim, and then kofrim in three types of things: Torah, techiyas hameisim, and vi'as hago'el.

Further, v'hameshummadim. It says so apparently this is dependent on avodah zarah, meshummadim.

Machti'ei harabbim, which the Rambam already mentioned earlier in chapter 8 of hilchos de'os, the Rambam spoke strongly about machti'ei harabbim.

V'haporshim midarkhei tzibbur, those who separate from the ways of the community, who don't go with the Jews. Everything the Rambam is going to explain. Yes, yes, I'll translate right away.

V'ha'oseh aveiros b'yad ramah b'farhesya, one who does sins with a high hand with pride.

V'hamosirim, those who hand over other Jews.

U'matilei eimah al hatzibbur shelo l'shem shamayim, those who cast fear on the community not for the sake of Heaven.

Shofchei damim, murderers.

U'va'alei lashon hara, people who always speak lashon hara.

V'hamoshech orlaso. I'm going... The Rambam is going to explain.

It's such a long list of fourteen in the list, and it becomes even longer. He's going to elaborate I mean the Rambam that there are twenty-four.

### **Chamishah HaNikra'im Minim**

Says the Rambam, "**Chamishah hen hanikra'im minim**". Five types... There are five minim, five types of people.

#### **What Is the Root of the Word "Minim"?**

What is the root of the word "minim"? Is it like arba'ah minim, types of people? Or is it a more specific word for "min"?

### **Laws of Teshuva Chapter 3 - Heretics and Deniers of Torah (Continued)**

"Min" is a word from the Gemara. What it means literally, I have a translation, but the Rambam doesn't learn that word. By the Rambam, "min" means someone who says a certain thing. The Rambam has a precise definition of what this is. Apparently not with the translation of the word. Simply in the Gemara "minim" can mean one thing, the Rambam apparently had some precision why he learns that this is what "min" means, but it's not a clear thing in the sources in the Gemara the Rambam's way.

But the Rambam, "min" means someone who is a denier of the Almighty, he doesn't believe in the Almighty the way one must believe in the Almighty. This is... we'll see from his list.

#### **The Five Types of Heresy Correspond to Hilchos Yesodei HaTorah Chapter 1**

These are like five, five types of heresy in the correct faith.

**"One who says there is no God and there is no ruler of the world"** - there is no God, and or the world... apparently or, yes? Same thing. God means one ruler of the world. But it could be that someone can mean a Creator, okay. There is no ruler, or I'll give you another translation.

**"And one who says there is a ruler"**, yes there is someone who is a ruler of the world, **"but they are two or more"**, the world is run by more than one ruler.

**"And one who says there is one Master"**, yes there is one Master, one Lord, one God, **"but He is a body and has**

**form"**, the God is a physical being, He is a body and has form.

**"And likewise one who says that He is not alone the First and the Rock of all"**, that the Almighty is not alone, and He is not the first, and He is not the... the power for everything.

And what is this different from two or more? A good question. And likewise, he says not, the Rambam says not. I don't want to say that he doesn't say what he means, I can certainly say what I think he means, but what he says is exactly this. Someone who says that the Almighty is not alone, and this is what in our siddur it says "that the Creator blessed be His name is first and He is last", meaning that the Almighty wasn't before everything. How one translates this is not clear. I'm telling you what the Rambam says, someone can say that the Almighty is not the first.

Let's go through all five, afterwards we can talk about this matter. He says that one of the commentators says that he means that the world is eternal, and the Almighty created the world from things that already existed. The Rambam didn't say it. The Rambam knew clearly what he wanted to say, he didn't say it.

Very good. **"And likewise"**, he says, **"and likewise one who worships a star or constellation in order to be an intermediary between him and the Master of the Universe"**, someone who... and this is already less "one who says", his problem is not the saying, but he serves another divine power in order to be an intermediary between him and the Master of the Universe, he knows that there is only one Master of the Universe, but there is another pseudo-divine, a pseudo-power, that he should be the intermediary before the Almighty.

The Rambam doesn't say there "one who says there are intermediaries", it could be that there are intermediaries, the main thing is "one who worships an intermediary".

#### **The Four Foundations Regarding the Almighty**

So basically, let's want to be precise, these are the five about, these are all things that have to do with Hilchos Yesodei HaTorah Chapter 1, or the fourth thing is Hilchos Yesodei HaTorah Chapter 1, and it's the opposite of them, right?

If one wants to understand exactly what he means, one must think that there are more or less four things, afterwards the fifth we'll talk about, is in the category of worship.

There are four things that a person must know about the Almighty.

What a Jew, not just a person, a Jew, by the way, a person, right?

This is not a denier of Torah, this is not what he's talking about here.

He wants to understand Chassidus Umos HaOlam, perhaps.

Chassidus Umos HaOlam is someone who believes in this.

A person must know this.

A denier of Torah doesn't know any Chassidus Umos HaOlam.

One may not be a denier of Torah, because he has already received the Torah.

But...

So a denier perhaps means that he denies what he has already received.

But a min is someone who doesn't know one of the four things about the Almighty.

What are the four things?

**(1) She'yeshno - He Exists**

First of all, she'yeshno, she'yeshno, He exists.

That there is an existent First Being.

You can call Him ruler.

Ruler means, this is a word that we say, what is a God?

A ruler of the world.

He doesn't mean to say providence, this is what I mean to say.

Someone should say that there is a God, but He doesn't supervise, that's not written here.

I don't know if the Rambam holds that it's possible to say so.

He doesn't say the word clearly.

Ruler and supervisor is not exactly the same word.

Because ruler means, as he says in Hilchos Yesodei HaTorah Chapter 1, ruler of the sphere, not ruler He directs every thing.

Also, ruler means that if not for Him there would be nothing.

Yes, also that He directs it, but not necessarily directs in a particular way, He can direct in a general way etc., and that's not written here.

So the first thing is that there is, yes, there.

You see here the word "there" again.

**(2) She'hu echad - He is One**

The second thing is, that He is one, that this Cause is one and there will not be like His oneness another one.

Yes?

**(3) She'eino guf - He is Not a Body**

The third thing is, that He is not a body.

Yes?

**(4) She'hu rishon/tzur l'chol - He is First, the Source of Everything**

The fourth thing is, that He is the first thing.

The first thing is apparently included in the definition of Cause.

It's a bit difficult to understand why he adds but this is the meaning, He is the first thing, He is the source of everything. This is what it says here, and I actually don't understand, I mean, it's actually difficult why it's not included. But, just as the truth is that one is also included in echad, the Rambam said that truly the tradition is true that He is one, because one body cannot be two, etc. etc., all things that this is one, only people can have a mistake one in the other.

**Discussion: What Does "She'eino levado harishon v'tzur l'chol" Mean?**

But this is a kind of variation of number two. He doesn't say that in the world there is more than one God, but He is not the source of all, perhaps there are other universes or other worlds where there is another God.

No, the source is meaning, source is meaning first, origin. The Rambam translates to origin. First means the first, He is the source. Someone says, what can he say exactly? Not clear what is the other side. One can say to the other, another kind of way of saying that He is two, only not saying perhaps that the whole world exists as two, but perhaps there is another world where there is another God.

There is no world, there is no world, that's not the point. All these things talk about the world. These things talk about the world, it's not, the minim are things about the Almighty. No, no, the minim are things about the Almighty. He doesn't understand that the Almighty is first. He thinks that the Almighty is the... let's say so, yes, yes, that he thinks that there is another source for other things besides for all. Okay, I don't think that's the meaning. What I mean is that someone can think, I can't grasp, let's say so, that someone can think for example that the Almighty existed always and the world existed, like the eternity of the world. But the Rambam doesn't say... no, no, eternity of the world is not written here, creation of the world is not written here. The closest thing to creation of the world that is written is this, and you can understand that someone should say, that someone should think that the Almighty is equal to the world, He is not the source of the world, and both exist as one, and He is the Creator, but He is somehow equal, He is not prior to the world. These are the words.

So the Raavad brings immediately to the Gemara, that there was a heretic who said that the Almighty is a great artist, a great painter, he found good materials, he found good paints, and he painted a beautiful thing. So this is the... this means that there is something else besides the Almighty. Yes, that there is something else. That as if the Almighty had good material with which to create a world. So this means that he doesn't give all the credit to the Almighty that He is the source of all, He is the origin of everything.

**Digression: The Raavad and the Dispute About Body**

And this is the piece from the Baal HaTanya is also here the famous Raavad that great and good ones erred in this. But we rule like the Rambam. There are certainly great ones, I don't know if they rule. But my friend told me many times from Rabbi Shlomo Fisher, a great Torah scholar, said that it's clear that the halacha is like the Raavad. He told me that Rav Chaim explained the Rambam, he says a very nice interpretation in the Rambam, that the halacha is not like the Rambam, the halacha is like the Raavad. So there are certainly great ones who rule like the Raavad. This is also the ruling of the Rebbe, worth knowing. In short, it's not halacha that one comes to give him a death penalty, only he goes a thousand generations and they will let him into the World to Come. No, the Raavad also agrees that the truth is like the Rambam, only his halacha is only that he's called a min. But if someone is not relevant in practice, it's only relevant who has an error.

**Return: The Fifth Min - One Who Worships Idolatry**

Okay, this is anyway, this is heretics. Ah, sorry, this is minim. The fifth is very interesting. The fifth is, "one who worships idolatry" is called a min. Very interesting. Perhaps the Rambam means so, an idol worshipper who thinks that the god is a god is an idol worshipper, but even if he only has the error for the sake of Heaven he's called a min. So just as he is the first for the idol worshippers, he is the one who made the error of idol worship. The first, Enosh. I don't know. It's very interesting, because we don't find anywhere that an idol worshipper is called a min. Not clear to me.

**Ruling: All Five of These Minim - Have No Share in the World to Come**

Okay, the Rambam says that **"these five are minim, who have no share in the World to Come"**. And this is yes. The having no share in the World to Come is a punishment, or

is it simply that his soul doesn't grasp the truth? Yes, could be. The Rambam doesn't explain here. But here he says that it's a punishment. Could be perhaps later we'll see.

### Three Who Are Called Apikorsim

The Rambam says further, "**three of these**" - another kind is apikoros. "**Three of these are called apikorsim**". So minim and apikorsim.

What is an apikoros?

#### (1) One Who Says There is No Prophecy at All

The Rambam explains, "**one who says there is no prophecy at all**" - someone who doesn't believe in prophecy. He says that there is no prophecy in the world.

And what is the meaning of this? The meaning is, "**and there is no knowledge that reaches from the Creator to the heart of people**" - the basic idea of prophecy is that there is wisdom that the Almighty sends to people, wisdom that a person doesn't grasp on his own. The wisdom that the Almighty sends to a person.

Someone who doesn't believe in this that there is such a thing, a prophecy, which means a wisdom that comes from the Almighty to the heart of people, is an apikoros.

#### Innovation: The Difference Between Min and Apikoros

Not a min, because he is not disputing the existence of God, he is disputing something of one of the Almighty's actions so to speak. He is not denying anything about the Almighty's essence, his error is in the Almighty's essence, his error is in the arrival of knowledge that comes from the Almighty.

### Hilchos Teshuva Chapter 3 - Apikorsim and Deniers of Torah (Continued)

#### Three Who Are Called Apikorsim

##### Apikoros - Denies Prophecy in General

Wisdom is not what a person grasps on his own, but a wisdom that the Almighty sends to a person. Someone who doesn't believe in this that there is such a thing, a prophecy, which means a wisdom that comes from the Almighty to the heart of people, is an apikoros.

Good, not a min, because he is not disputing the existence of God, he is disputing something of one of the Almighty's actions so to speak. Not a question of he is not denying anything about the Almighty, he only says I hold that it's an error about the Almighty. His error is in the arrival of knowledge that comes from the Almighty to people.

##### One Who Denies the Prophecy of Moshe Rabbeinu

Further, "**and one who denies the prophecy of Moshe Rabbeinu**", someone who denies the prophecy of Moshe Rabbeinu. Okay, this is already much more specific.

##### Discussion: What Does "Denies the Prophecy of Moshe" Mean?

**Study partner A:** He says that Moshe Rabbeinu was not a prophet.

**Study partner B:** I deny the power of a prophet, but I don't believe that Moshe Rabbeinu is specifically a prophet, or I don't believe that Moshe Rabbeinu was more than other prophets.

**Study partner A:** He says that he denies the prophecy of Moshe. He says that Moshe, he looks at Moshe like just a person. There is such a thing as prophecy, but Muhammad was a prophet, not Moshe. Let's say. He's not an apikoros, he's not denying the fact of prophecy, he's denying... okay,

Muhammad is already a difference. Let's say someone is denying, someone says that Moshe was not a prophet.

**Study partner B:** It could be that he means to say so, after all, first the essence of prophecy, and afterwards he denies the unique prophecy of Moshe. But the Rambam doesn't say it clearly. He should have said "one who says that Moshe was a prophet but not in the category of Moshe's prophecy". It could be that this is what he means. One must look earlier in Yesodei HaTorah how he defines the...

**Study partner A:** The Rambam says that a prophet who says that Moshe was not greater than just a prophet is denying the prophecy of Moshe.

**Study partner B:** Okay, that's clear.

**Study partner A:** It could be that this is what he says. "Denying the prophecy of Moshe" means he is denying the type of prophecy that Moshe had, the unique prophecy. He says that Moshe had more than a measure that reaches from the Creator to people. Moshe was more than this.

**Study partner B:** Not more, a better type.

**Study partner A:** A better type of this, let's say.

**Study partner B:** There is a general and there is a particular. A better type of measure that reaches.

**Study partner A:** Not clear.

#### One Who Says the Creator Doesn't Know the Deeds of People

The Rambam says further, "**one who says**", the third, "**that the Creator doesn't know the deeds of people**". Someone who says that the Creator, the Almighty, doesn't know the deeds of people. He created them, but He doesn't know afterwards what they do.

Interesting that here he uses the word "Creator". Until now he said Master or God. Okay, because this is a topic of creation, this is a topic of creation. No, he only says created, but he is also a changer of orders. It's a type.

Apparently this is connected with heresy, because this is the thing that characterizes prophecy. Prophecy means that a message comes from the Almighty to people, and afterwards the Almighty knows what people do. It's the connection of knowledge, the second thing. And specifically the relationship of knowledge, right? There is perhaps another relationship, that He is a Creator, He is governance, this is perhaps a type of relationship. But this that it's with knowledge, that it's with a certain order, with a certain understanding, this is a denial.

He can deny it in the category of general prophecy, he can deny the general knowledge, and he can afterwards be the specific thing that is called the prophecy of Moshe. Okay, this is not a denier of Torah, this we'll still see. A denier of Torah is another thing. It's this that the prophecy of Moshe is a type of prophecy.

#### Source of the Rambam's Definition of Apikoros

This is called apikoros. Also, from where the Rambam took that this is called apikoros, I don't know, but so says the Rambam. He says that this word means apikoros, period.

The Gemara of "what benefit have the rabbis given us"? "What benefit have the rabbis given us" means the thing of not regulating the sages from the sages? No, no, this is the Gemara in Sanhedrin. Only the Rambam said that this means that. And the Gemara has another interpretation in the word apikoros.

We didn't know what this is. The Gemara means that apikoros is lawlessness.

Let's say so, everyone says after the Gemara in Sfas Emes, he says that apikoros meaning "what benefit have the rabbis given us" is apikoros. This is not written in the Gemara, and this is the total confusion. The Gemara says that it's written in the Mishna a word apikoros, no one knows what this is. The Gemara says, one interpretation is that it means someone who says "what benefit have the rabbis given us", which is actually a great chutzpah, "has no share in the World to Come", but not such a stringency of apikoros of the Rambam.

And the Rambam translates the word apikoros differently. The Rambam translates that apikoros that appears in the Mishnah means one of three things, someone who says "mah hani'a lan rabanan" (what benefit have the rabbis given us), and that is not related to apikorsus. He says that the Gemara translates this as lashon chutzpah (language of insolence), not... it's not clear from where his source for this type of apikorsus is. The sources, searching for sources, but the words don't appear.

Or the Rambam took all the things that he held a Jew must believe, and he placed them into the words, into the categories. He had to have a source, he couldn't just make up things. And he says the three types of kofrim (deniers) that he mentioned, **sheloshah hen hakofrim baTorah** (three are the deniers of Torah). He placed the three types of people who are kofer baTorah (deniers of Torah).

### Sheloshah Hen Hakofrim BaTorah

#### Ha'omer She'ein HaTorah Me'im Hashem

Three types of people are kofer baTorah. One, **ha'omer she'ein haTorah me'im Hashem** (one who says the Torah is not from God). He says the Torah is not from the Almighty, **afilu pasuk echad, afilu teivah achat** (even one verse, even one word), even about one verse or one word he says that it is not me'im Hashem (from God).

But what does he say? **Im amar** (if he says), if he says **Moshe amaro mipi atzmo** (Moshe said it from himself), Moshe said it on his own, **harei zeh kofer baTorah** (behold this one is a denier of Torah). He is a kofer baTorah.

#### Discussion: How Can "Afilu Teivah Achat" Be Kofer BaTorah?

It's puzzling, if what he says kofer baTorah means he denies the entire Torah. But here he says even if he says about one verse. There is a difference if he denies one verse or the entire Torah.

The point is, here is the Torah that the Jews must believe, because the Torah obligates him. But he says that the last verse "vayamas sham Moshe eved Hashem" (and Moshe the servant of God died there) or I don't know what, perhaps that wasn't Moshe's writing, but the Almighty said it mipi Hashem (from the mouth of God). Or someone says that not Moshe wrote it but Yehoshua wrote it, I don't know. There it doesn't say me'im Hashem, the point is me'im Hashem.

The Rambam says here that Moshe mipi atzmo (from himself), if he says that Moshe himself thought this up, that is called a kofer baTorah. But you understand yourself, that if someone says this verse yes and this verse no, he has no way at all to distinguish which verse yes and which verse no, you can understand, because there is no difference between a detail and a general principle.

#### "Me'im Hashem" – Not "Mipi Hashem"

The same thing, he doesn't say me'im Hashem, the Rambam doesn't say mipi Hashem (from the mouth of God) or... me'im Hashem it says. It's not mipi Hashem, it's me'im Hashem. Perhaps it says in the Midrash "magid mevora lev bnei adam" (declares to man what is his thought), comes from the Almighty, that's what he's talking about. It's not obligatory to believe that the Almighty can speak, that the Almighty can write to you. That is a matter that the Almighty involved Himself to give to mankind.

So rather what, it's dibur d'Moshe (Moshe's speech). But it's a Midrash "magid mevora lev bnei adam" exactly. How is already another matter. The Rambam in Peirush HaMishnah in Sanhedrin says shehigi'a eilav bederech (that it reached him in a way) that we don't know, it's such a language. We don't need to know how it worked, we only need to believe in it. Okay.

#### Hakofer BeFeirushah – Torah She'Be'al Peh

**Vechen hakofer befeirushah** (and likewise one who denies its interpretation), one who denies the interpretation of the Torah. What is the interpretation of the Torah? That is Torah she'be'al peh (Oral Torah), as the Rambam said in the introduction. **Vehikchish magideha** (and denies its transmitters), he doesn't deny the Almighty, but he denies the transmitters of the Torah she'be'al peh, he denies the transmitters of the Torah, all the sages and prophets who said that all the interpretations that Chazal (our Sages) learn is Torah she'be'al peh that was transmitted to us from Moshe generation to generation.

**Kegon** (such as), he says, who are the types of deniers of the interpretation of Torah? You have the Gemara in **Tzedokim uBaitosim** (Sadducees and Boethusians) who were the deniers of Torah she'be'al peh.

This is the first time he grabs an example of a person? Yes, interesting. Okay, but perhaps this is why he needs to say it, because if not, why should someone think that there are such groups? It's after all today, in the Rambam's times there wasn't any Reform movement, but there is the same thing. Okay.

#### Ha'omer SheHaborei Hechlif Mitzvah Zo BeMitzvah Acheret

Now further, **ve'omer sheHaborei hechlif mitzvah zo bemitzvah acheret** (and one who says that the Creator exchanged this commandment for another commandment). The third type of kofer baTorah is someone who says that it indeed appears in the Torah, but the Almighty afterwards exchanged a mitzvah, and He nullified a mitzvah. Or He exchanged, not even removed, not that there are fewer mitzvos, but the Almighty exchanged one mitzvah, He exchanged it with another mitzvah. **Harei zeh kofer uvateil haTorah zo** (behold this one denies and nullifies this Torah).

#### Discussion: "Hechlif" or Simply Removed?

Even if he specifically means hechlif (exchanged), or if someone simply removes one mitzvah is he like the first one, who says that one word is not from the Almighty.

Yes, the point is, **af al pi shehu ma'amin shehi kulah me'im Hashem** (even though he believes that it is all from God), the point is that the person believes that there is such a thing that the Almighty gave a Torah. He doesn't say there is no Torah, he doesn't say there is no prophecy, not like someone who says that the entire Torah was made up by Moshe Rabbeinu. No, Moshe Rabbeinu received the Torah from the Almighty, but tomorrow the Almighty gave Yankel

two mitzvos. Later the Almighty exchanged a part of the Torah, or a mitzvah from the Torah. He exchanged the mitzvos, not the Torah she'be'al peh.

Right, if not he is like the one who denies one verse or one word. He believes in the entire Torah, but he says that later the Almighty exchanged, perhaps exchanged the meaning of the mitzvos, or exchanged the mitzvos.

Ah, the meaning in the sense of kofer baTorah she'be'al peh. It remained 613, but the way how one observes Shabbos is through observing Sunday. That would be a kofer baTorah she'be'al peh. Verse in its interpretation. Okay, yes, there's a difference. I'm speaking even, yes, okay. If he says a new interpretation that is not against Torah she'be'al peh, one may.

**SheHaborei hechlif mitzvah zo bemitzvah acheret**, he also says essentially, he says that the verse that we know is not from the Almighty, because the Almighty took it back. **Af al pi shehu ma'amin** (even though he believes), the Rambam says, **chut min hanevi'im** (except for the prophets). He says it was, the Almighty later reconciled and exchanged.

#### **Kegon HaNotzrim VeHaGarim**

**Kegon hanotzrim vehagrim** (such as the Christians and the Hagarites). Hagarim means the Muslims.

#### **Discussion: Why Are They Called "Hagarim"?**

Why are they called Hagarim? Because they are descendants of Hagar. I think so.

Why why why do you give the credit here specifically to Hagar?

That she should write it?

They only live thanks to Hagar.

Hagar saved them, she cared for them there in the desert, she created the water for them.

Yes.

But it's interesting, the Ishmaelites according to the Rambam deny the Torah.

I don't know why.

They say that the Almighty gave the Torah to Moshe, but there is a new Torah afterwards that was given to Muhammad, which is an even better Torah.

So there is a list, one Muslim who says so.

There are other ways that the Muslims say, that they say that the Jews distorted the Torah.

The Rambam doesn't bring this topic here, yes?

As everyone knows, in the Thirteen Principles there is another principle that says to believe that the Torah that we have today is the same Torah.

Which is also against the Muslims who said that it is the same Torah, but the Jews distorted it.

And the Rambam doesn't bring here that type of heresy, he only brings the one who says that it indeed was, but the Almighty gave a new one.

The one who says that it never was, that is rank one, it doesn't appear in Hilchos Teshuvah that type of apikorsus, interesting.

Kofer baTorah.

#### **Discussion: Was the Rambam Afraid to Write "Yishmaelim"?**

Could it be the Rambam was afraid to write the word another language, or Muslims, was he afraid to write the word Yishmaelim, so he made such a hint-like word Hagarim?

Perhaps, perhaps.

I think that in Hilchos Melachim he writes yes explicitly, yes?

I don't believe that he thought they would read it.

But the Rambam held himself in one holy Mishnah.

You see that he distinguished in Hilchos Teshuvah, he doesn't mean the Ishmaelites bnei Yishmael (children of Ishmael), he means you the religion of Ishmael.

The religion of Ishmael is called Hagarim in the language of the Mishnah.

I don't know what the Rambam distinguished.

I don't know.

Yes, so the Rambam wrote.

I don't know why.

There are other places where they're called Hagarim, Hagarim, Hagarim.

I don't know.

Anyway, these are three types of kofrim baTorah, yes?

#### **Kofer BiTechias HaMeisim VeKofer BeBi'as HaGo'el**

So, let's go back to the list.

Here were two more that the Rambam doesn't explain. It's apparently simple, **kofer bitechias hameisim o bebi'as hago'el** (one who denies resurrection of the dead or the coming of the redeemer). The Rambam doesn't explain anything. It just says, yes? It appeared in the previous list, there appeared kofer bebi'as hago'el and kofer bitechias hameisim. It's simple, someone says there won't be any resurrection of the dead, he says there won't be any coming of the redeemer, and one doesn't need to add anything to this, yes?

#### **Shenayim Hem HaMeshumadim**

Afterwards there are two types of meshumadim (apostates). Yes? What is the translation of meshumadim? The Rambam, there are two types. **Shenayim hem hameshumadim, hameshumad la'veirah achat** (two are the apostates, the apostate for one transgression), there are two types of meshumadim: a meshumad for one transgression, **vehameshumad lechol haTorah kulah** (and the apostate for the entire Torah). That is the Rambam.

What is meshumad for one transgression? You see that he held himself, he made himself so.

#### **Hilchos Teshuvah – Categories of People Who Don't Have a Share in the World to Come (Continued)**

##### **Meshumad La'veirah Achat**

This is simple, someone says there is no resurrection of the dead, someone says there is no coming of the redeemer, he doesn't need to add anything to this.

Afterwards there are two types of meshumadim. What is the translation of meshumadim? Says the Rambam, there are two types of meshumadim: a meshumad for one transgression, and a meshumad for the entire Torah.

What is meshumad for one transgression? **"Zeh shehechezik atzmo la'avor aleha tamid"** (this is one who held himself to transgress it constantly). He held himself that he does a certain transgression intentionally, **"vehitparsem bah vehuragal"** (and became publicized in it and habituated). He became comfortable with the transgression,

that the transgression he officially does the transgression, he became publicized that he does it, he became habituated in it.

Says the Rambam, "**afilu haytah min hakalos**" (even if it was from the light ones), even if this is from the light mitzvos, "**kegon shehechezik tamid lilibosh sha'atnez**" (such as one who constantly held to wear sha'atnez). He held himself that he constantly wears sha'atnez. I have only a prohibition of a lav (negative commandment), not an aseah (positive commandment). On a mitzvas aseah he doesn't say any meshumad for mitzvas aseah, it seems. I have only two examples of lavin.

Someone who constantly holds to do a transgression of wearing sha'atnez, "**o lehakif pe'as rosho**" (or to cut off the corners of his head), or he shaves the pe'os harosh (sidelocks), "**venimtza ke'ilu bitelah mitzvah zo min ha'olam etzlo**" (and it turns out as if this mitzvah was nullified from the world for him). He uprooted the mitzvah, the mitzvah doesn't exist for him. "**Harei zeh meshumad le'oso davar**" (behold this one is an apostate for that thing). He is called a meshumad for that thing.

#### The Meaning of "Meshumad"

What is the translation of the word meshumad? Lashon shemad (language of destruction) means dying? The mitzvah died for him? No, he is a mumar (apostate). I think that shemad originally means like physical shemad, it means dying. Lehashmid laharog ule'abed (to destroy, to kill and to annihilate), not just dying, something like being destroyed completely. And the Sages said, mumar, someone who becomes destroyed spiritually, culturally, that is also mumar. But here, he is mumar, and he is a mumar leta'avon (for desire).

#### Lehach'is vs. Leta'avon

Sometimes to receive the punishment of kares (excision), or someone who is liable to death, one must do the transgression lehach'is (to anger), it must be intentional, habitually, but it must also still be lehach'is. It's interesting, it's very similar to like someone who doesn't believe in one mitzvah. It appeared earlier if he doesn't believe, it's even if he doesn't do a transgression, but he believes that one verse is not a part of the Torah.

And here he acts out this type of thing, he doesn't say it's not in the Torah, but he acts in such a way that the mitzvah doesn't exist for him. But it must be with an intention, with a lehach'is. Lehach'is means to make the Almighty angry, to anger, what does lehach'is mean? It's something like, for real, he is against the mitzvah. He doesn't do bris milah (circumcision), let's say, he is against it. He must be against it. It's not enough that he says I don't have strength, he must be against it. That is perhaps the point of saying lehach'is.

#### Meshumad Lechol HaTorah Kulah

Yes, but wait, mumar for the entire Torah, says the Rambam, **kegon hachozar leudas hagoyim besh'a'ah shegozrin shemad** (such as one who returns to the religion of the gentiles at a time when they decree forced conversion). Ah, this is the language chozer (returns). Chozer means he returns from, yes, he goes away from the path of Torah, and he goes to the gentiles. When the gentiles make a shemad, they say that whoever will be a Jew they will kill him, whatever, yes, he goes to the... and he becomes a gentile.

#### The Language "Chozer"

Interesting the language chozer. Chozer means turning from, not chozer to... chazar, he goes after, he goes after the opinion of the gentiles, because he is frightened of shemad, he misses out on kiddush Hashem (sanctification of God's name). When it's a time of shemad one must sacrifice oneself, and he doesn't sacrifice himself, and in both ways he goes to the gentiles, **veyomar** (and he says), he says so, "**mah betza li lidbek beYisrael shehem shefalim venirdefim, tov li she'edbak be'eilu shehem shelemim utekifim**" (what profit is there for me to cling to Israel who are lowly and persecuted, it is better for me that I cling to these who are whole and mighty). Why should I be with the Jews who are lowly and persecuted? It's better I should be with those who are mighty, let's be smart, let's go with the winners, let's go with those who are strong. **Harei zeh mumar lechol haTorah kulah** (behold this one is an apostate for the entire Torah).

#### Difference Between One Who Stumbles in Time of Shemad and Meshumad

Earlier in the se'udas haTorah (Torah meal) we were taught that if someone simply stumbles in a transgression because of a time of shemad, he only transgresses that transgression, he only nullifies the mitzvah of kiddush Hashem. But here we're speaking when he does it with such a... he becomes converted, he is on the gentiles' side, not that he does it with a broken heart. If someone falls through and he does it with a broken heart, then he only nullified the mitzvah of kiddush Hashem and he transgressed the transgression of chillul Hashem (desecration of God's name). But if he does it with such a going to the gentiles, interesting, he goes... the language is very similar to what is said to a ger tzedek (righteous convert).

#### The Opposite of a Ger Tzedek

He sees the logic, you know, the rabbis who say that the Jews are lowly and rejected are right, and let me indeed be with the winners.

Very interesting, he is the exact opposite of a ger. A ger is someone who says, I don't want to be with the winners, I want to be with the Jews who are lowly and rejected. And a meshumad is the opposite, he sees the logic to be with the gentiles, "**holech leudas hagoyim**" (goes to the religion of the gentiles).

#### Not Necessarily Transgressions – But the Statement

It can also be, it doesn't say that he does transgressions. I imagine that he will do all the transgressions in the Torah, but by meshumad for the entire Torah it's not the point that he does all transgressions. The point is that he says, "I admit that the Jews are weak, I am with the ways of the gentiles." "Chozer leudas hagoyim" means simply that he does their customs. However, the point is not that he transgresses transgressions, but the essence is not the actual deed, but the statement, the statement, the statement. He says, he says, "**ha'omer**" (one who says), yes, "**veyomar**" (and he says).

#### Question of the Ra'avad

The Ra'avad asks a question, that if he returns to the religion of the gentiles he is severe, because the one who returns admits to idolatry. The Ra'avad asks the question here. So returning to the religion doesn't necessarily mean, even if he continues to believe, he is not someone who is engaged in faith, he is a practical person. He says, where is the money? Where is the power? This is such a type of statement. Simply, what certainly the Ra'avad is right, if he returns to the religion

of the gentiles he is a min (heretic). The returning to the religion must mean something else.

### Machti Es HaRabim

Yes, the next category of people who don't have a share in the World to Come is machti es harabim (one who causes the masses to sin). The Rambam explains, "**echad shehechti bedavar gadol**" (one who caused to sin in a great matter), whether he causes other people to sin with a great thing, "**keYarov'am**" (like Jeroboam), like Jeroboam, or causes a Jew to sin with idolatry, or a Tzedoki or Baitos who caused Jews to sin with denial of a fundamental principle.

### Tzedoki and Baitos as Those Who Cause Others to Sin

The meaning of Tzedoki and Baitos, besides that it could be that the Tzedoki and Baitos themselves believed, yes, so the Rambam says in one place, that the Rambam says that they, that their courts accepted bribes, but the problem with the rabbis who stood in the way, they became deniers with the rabbis. So the Rambam explains what I remember in certain stories, the Rambam said that it's all bias. So the meaning of earlier what he said going Tzedoki and Baitos, he means people who are Tzedokim and Baitosim. Tzedokim and Baitosim themselves were primarily those who caused others to sin.

### Great and Small Transgressions

"**And one who caused others to sin in a minor matter**"... One can be grouped together in more than one of the categories from the list, one doesn't have to fit into only one of them. It's possible a Jew can be in both of the above-mentioned. The Rambam said further, "**And one who caused others to sin in a minor matter**", one who causes other people to sin even with a small transgression, **even to nullify a positive commandment**. "**And one**" – either, and the other is "**one who oppresses his fellow until he sins**". Or perhaps this is another category. That means first of all, there's no difference between a major transgression or a minor transgression.

### Causing Others to Sin as a "Campaign"

He's talking about causing others to sin, a campaign against. Someone who has a campaign that people should be less careful with guarding their eyes, he's a campaign against guarding the eyes, this is such a thing.

Furthermore, the first thing we see is that a positive commandment can place a person in the category of causing the masses to sin. Furthermore, when he says causing to sin, he doesn't necessarily mean such oppression, even if he speaks to one person.

### Menashe's Murders

He says, what is causing to sin? Either he forces people that they should sin, "**like Menashe who killed Jews until they would worship idolatry**", that he should worship idolatry. Where does it say that he killed the masses? It doesn't say. From here he derives it. Oh, he screams to kill that prophet. Indeed, he says that regarding Menashe it says a lot about his murders, "**and innocent blood Menashe spilled very much**", such language.

### Jesus the Christian as a Seducer

Oh, the other way of causing the masses to sin is, even without forcing, but "**who led his fellow astray**", he swayed other people with bad ideas, and he led them away from the Jewish path, "**like Jesus who was a seducer**", like that man, Jesus

the Christian, who wasn't a violent person, he was, that is, such a refined person, but he caused people to sin with his mouth. It's interesting, he's an inciter and seducer. The Rambam says here the language "**seduced**", there it says "**the masses**". The truth is, an inciter and seducer that we learned in the Laws of Idolatry, is also one who causes the masses to sin, this is also included. But the Torah, the Rambam says that he's an inciter and seducer regarding idolatry, he swayed, he could have swayed against the Oral Torah or whatever, but he swayed. Or idolatry, because he incited. So he's a... yes, perhaps this was seen a generation later, who can know? He swayed with any prohibition. The Gemara says that he was called secrets of Jewish lineage and a sorcerer, idolatry, I remember. Actually today is the yahrzeit, I mean in this period.

Anyway, so this is one who destroys the masses.

### One Who Separates from the Ways of the Community

Next the Rambam continues, one who separates from the ways of the community. The next category was one who separated from the ways of the community, he goes away from the ways of the community. What does this mean? He says, **even if he didn't transgress**, he is **separated from the congregation of Israel**, even if he doesn't do transgressions, but he separates himself from the Jewish people, from the congregation of Israel, **and doesn't perform commandments together with them**, he doesn't do mitzvot together with the Jews, **and doesn't enter into their troubles**, he's not part of their troubles, **and doesn't fast on their fasts**, he doesn't fast when they fast, **but goes in his own way like one of the nations of the land**, he goes in his own way like one of the gentiles, **and as if he's not from them**, as if he weren't a part of the Jews.

### Distinction from an Apostate to the Entire Torah

He's not an apostate to the entire Torah, like the previous one. He's not an apostate to one thing, not even to one transgression. Even didn't transgress, he doesn't do any single transgression. The sages say, he does mitzvot, but not with them, he doesn't go to synagogue, he does it in his study hall, his house, he has a study hall that's separated from the rest of the community, I don't know. One must be precise.

### How Does One Come to This?

But it is a separation. The proper way to do this is to say that everyone is wicked, and because of this he doesn't go together with the rest. A separation is a concern of separating from the ways of the community, and one must be careful about this. But if one makes too many separations, certainly one comes to this. If you yourself are a community, one must know, a community, you can't make your way the community. The community means... But anyway, the point is that the Rambam says that this is the essence, there is someone who says, "I do mitzvot". Not that he does like the apostate. He says, "The Jews are going badly, they have troubles". The apostate says, "I'll become a gentile". He says, "I won't become a gentile, I'll sit at home, I'll put on tefillin, I'll keep Shabbat. The rabbis decree a fast, there's a decree, why do I need this?" This is the meaning.

### Hiding of the Face

One is part of a dark mouth, because he is as if in him, he goes, he speaks with the gentiles, he's not... As it says there "one who is not in the hiding of the face is not from them".

### Practical Application – The Holocaust

I always think this way, I always tell people who say, if there will be God forbid a Holocaust, he'll save himself. Maybe, one must save oneself, and in a certain sense, if there will be a decree on all of Israel, you'll also be part of it. It's not so simple.

#### Proof from Mordechai to Esther

There's a clear proof from the verse that Mordechai says to Esther, **"and if you remain silent at this time"**.

### Chapter 3: Those Who Have No Share in the World to Come (Continued)

#### Category 9: One Who Commits Transgressions with a High Hand

##### The Rambam's Words:

**One who commits transgressions with a high hand like Jeroboam, whether he did minor or major ones – has no share in the World to Come. And this is called one who reveals his face against the Torah, and is not ashamed of the words of Torah.**

**Explanation: Transgressions with Audacity and Brazenness**

##### Speaker 1:

This is very similar to the Mishnah we learned earlier, the publicizing. But it seems this is more like a public thing. Yes? One who commits transgressions with a high hand. One who does transgressions with a high hand, with a raised hand. There's a verse "with a high hand", one who does a transgression. No, this means that he does it with a high hand. He's not participating with a high hand, he does a transgression with a high hand. He does a transgression with audacity, with revelation. Like Jeroboam, about whom it says that he was one of the worst kings of Israel, he was a great one who caused sin against Judaism, against Torah.

"Whether he did minor or major ones", there's no difference whether he did a minor or major transgression, it's the attitude, the high hand, the audacity against Torah. "Whether he did minor or major ones", one is a distinction. And he says that this brazenness has another name, he's called in the Sages' words "one who reveals his face against the Torah".

#### What Does "Reveals His Face Against the Torah" Mean?

##### Speaker 1:

Shame is a matter of refinement, proper conduct toward the Torah. "Reveals his face" means like brazen face, language of "hardened his forehead", "and revealed his face". He puts forth his face, "I don't hold by this". Not like one who is ashamed if he stumbles with a transgression, but he does it with brazenness, "and is not ashamed of the words of Torah", he's not ashamed of the Torah.

**Connection to "Anyone Who Transgresses and Is Ashamed of It, All His Sins Are Forgiven"**

##### Speaker 1:

I think about this it says "anyone who transgresses and is ashamed of it, all his sins are forgiven". The explanation is as I said earlier, that shame is a good quality among all things. Just as one who does all transgressions, but the "and is not ashamed" makes him "has no share in the World to Come", the same thing, even if one does transgressions, he does many transgressions let's say, but he is ashamed of the words of Torah, he gets a share in the World to Come. Understand?

Because shame is a basic thing, a person has at least shame, he takes it seriously.

#### This Entire Chapter Is Encouragement

##### Speaker 1:

Ah, you have a difficulty, a deficiency, this is a whole chapter essentially. Perhaps this is the subtitle that lies after the chapter, because the entire chapter is encouragement. I always say about this chapter, as long as you're not official, you don't present yourself "I'm an outsider, I don't believe in God, I don't believe in Torah", one of all these twenty-five types that exclude a person, you're still part of Judaism, even if you're a criminal, you have repentance, you have a share in the World to Come.

#### A Pretty Large Percentage Has to Do with Audacity

##### Speaker 1:

But it's interesting, a pretty large percentage has to do with this matter of audacity. This separation from Jews, the audacity against the Sages.

#### Pride as the Root of Heresy

##### Speaker 1:

I also think it has to do with the pride that a person has. A person stumbles with a transgression, and he thinks it's really not such a transgression, and he becomes a heretic. He doesn't have to be a heretic, he did a transgression, and he says "okay, I don't understand, I can't understand, I don't know". He stumbles, and instead of that he has pride. I'm talking about such a type of pride. I know of so many people who became heretics because it didn't suit him that he stumbled. I know literally such stories.

I also want to say that there's a specific type of pride. Pride is a type of self-confidence, that now the right thing is to do this, and he separates himself. It's simply not to have the shame. I know such people, he stumbled with a transgression, so he became a heretic. Why? What, was he God forbid in doubts taking. Simply he didn't want to be a criminal. Okay, I don't want to be a criminal, I'm a heretic. A heretic comes a period, and he doesn't believe.

#### Category 10: Informers

##### The Rambam's Words:

**There are two types of informers – one who informs on his fellow to gentiles to kill him or beat him, and one who informs on his fellow's money to gentiles or to a violent person who is not a gentile.**

#### Two Types of Informers

##### Speaker 1:

The next category was informers. What does informers mean? There are two types of informers. One who informs on his fellow to gentiles, he hands over his fellow, he informs on his fellow to gentiles, to kill him or beat him, to kill or beat a Jew. That means, he causes punishment on his body. The second thing is that he informs on his fellow's money. That means, he informs, he tells things against Jews. It's interesting that he says here "his fellow", he doesn't say "Israel". But he means this, he means an honest Jew. To gentiles, or to a violent person who is not a gentile, or he hands over his money from a Jew to a Jewish authority, to a violent person who is not a gentile. I can be an informer without speaking to a gentile, and I can inform to her.

## **Informer as a Type of Separating from the Ways of the Community**

### **Speaker 1:**

The violent person himself, it depends, perhaps he'll still be admitted to the World to Come if he does repentance one day. But the informer, the informer is also a type of way of separating from the ways of the community. The Jewish violent person is a great lustful person, he can't restrain himself from stealing. But the informer, he hands him over, he goes against the community. It's perhaps also a type of audacity of going against the ways of the community.

**Question: What Is the Innovation in "To a Violent Person Who Is Not a Gentile"?**

### **Speaker 2:**

It's not clear why it's something so terrible. Yes, I hear what you're saying. By the gentile I understand, but here he says "to a violent person". What's the explanation?

### **Speaker 1:**

As if, you make that someone who the law can't reach him, he's not weak, the court can't do anything to him, you poke him. Something like that.

## **Category 11: One Who Casts Fear on the Community Not for the Sake of Heaven**

### **The Rambam's Words:**

**Those who cast fear on the community not for the sake of Heaven — this is one who rules the community with force, and they are afraid and terrified of him, and his intention is for his own honor and all his desires, not for the honor of Heaven, like the kings of the nations.**

**Explanation: One Who Casts Fear for His Own Honor**

### **Speaker 1:**

Okay, the next category was one who casts fear on the community not for the sake of Heaven, people who cast fear on the community not for the sake of Heaven. It's an interesting thing, because we learned earlier that a Torah scholar may cast fear, he must cast a bit of fear. We also learned that a Torah scholar may watch over the students. But what does "not for the sake of Heaven" mean? The Rambam says, this is one who rules the community with force, he forces the community with force, with strength, and they are afraid and terrified of him, he's a strong head of the community, he's a strong powerful person, everyone is afraid of him, but he explains what "for his own honor and all his desires". He has in mind his honor, or his other needs, his money, or his power. "Not for the honor of Heaven". He conducts himself "like the kings of the nations". He conducts himself like the kings of the nations.

## **Distinction Between a King of Israel and Kings of the Nations**

### **Speaker 1:**

A king of Israel is the heart of Israel, a king of Israel is the heart of the Jews, he has in mind the Jews, he has in mind the good of the community. One who is a bit of a king, he has power among Jews, but he only means to make himself rich...

**Discussion: What Does "Like the Kings of the Nations" Mean?**

### **Speaker 2:**

What you mean to say is, a king, his job is to be a strong man who casts fear on the community, which is the role of a king.

But he doesn't have any kingdom greatness.

### **Speaker 1:**

I want to add something that the Ramban says in his sermon, in his book Shaar HaGemul I mean, there is this thing there. The Ramban explains like all these things, we must learn that he doesn't mean that he does transgressions. If he forces the masses that they should do transgressions and the like, that's simply causing the masses to sin. We're talking that he frightens them to do good things, like a king of the nations. He says "like the kings of the nations", he's not talking about any wicked dictator, he's talking about a normal gentile king, he makes his ordinances and laws that he didn't have from his fathers, but why does he do it? He does it for his own honor and not for the honor of Heaven.

### **Speaker 2:**

Even then he's called one who casts fear on the community, his problem isn't that he's not right to make his fear on the community. The problem is that he's for his own honor and not for the honor of Heaven.

## **The Ramban's Explanation: The World Becomes Idol Worshippers**

### **Speaker 1:**

The Ramban says that the problem with this is that the world becomes idol worshippers. Because now when the world says Psalms, they're afraid of the rabbi, not of God. So it says in the Ramban.

**Discussion: "Not for the Sake of Heaven" Refers to the Fear Itself**

### **Speaker 2:**

So that's the word "not for the sake of Heaven", that he makes that others should also be not for the sake of Heaven. They're afraid of him instead of being afraid of Heaven. Or he makes them should be afraid of him in order for the sake of Heaven.

### **Speaker 1:**

No, the not for the sake of Heaven doesn't only go on the casting, it goes on the fear. He makes a fear that is not for the sake of Heaven the entire fear. An honest one makes a fear, but this is for the sake of Heaven the entire fear. He makes that the world should be afraid of the rabbi, of the Torah, and of God, it should be one package. But one who makes that the fear should be a fear of the person himself, of his own craziness...

### **Speaker 2:**

But seemingly it goes together. Whoever means not for the sake of Heaven, one understands quite well that one is afraid of him, not for the sake of Heaven. Usually the way how they can make their fear is they say that they mean for the sake of Heaven, and we know that it's not for the sake of Heaven.

### **Speaker 1:**

And one can see, it's not so hard to figure out the distinction.

**Summary: The 24 Categories — "They Have No Share in the World to Come"**

### **The Rambam's Words:**

**Each and every one of the twenty-four people we counted, even though they are Jews — they have no share in the World to Come.**

## **The 24 Categories and Their Severity**

### **Speaker 1:**

Now, the Rambam says further, each and every one of the twenty-four people we counted, now counted, among all of them were twenty-four people. Yes, I made a list here to count, whoever can look at the papers, one sees that it's twenty-four. There are fourteen, but among them became twenty-four. Now counted these types of heretics, he said, five types, or more. Okay, all of these? The Rambam says, all of these, even though they are Jews, we said, all Israel has a share in the World to Come, except for these, and these Jews have a share in the World to Come.

**Introduction: "Has No Share in the World to Come" Doesn't Always Have the Same Severity**

**Speaker 1:**

### Chunk 9 Translation

Now, let us remember, and let us make a brief introduction. These are the laws, in "they have no portion in the World to Come," of people where it's like a judgment of karet (spiritual excision) and punishment. Even though he does many mitzvot and everything, but he has one of these problems, he is out, basically, out as a person, right? "Ein lo chelek l'olam haba" (he has no portion in the World to Come), it's, basically, deleted. There's not too much to talk about. Now, whoever learns Gemara or Midrash and the like, because, has heard about very many things, "ein lo chelek l'olam haba." And it was important for the Rambam to explain, not every time that it says, "ein lo chelek l'olam haba," does it have the same meaning, the same severity as it says here. Here when the Rambam says "ein lo chelek l'olam haba," he meant a very important thing. One can even say that, the Olam Haba (World to Come) is only an image, only a hint, only a sign. He doesn't mean it literally? But they don't mean that! How did we know which ones are serious and which ones are not? By those names next to his name. And I need very much with the Rambam.

**Minor Transgressions That One Becomes Accustomed To**

**The Rambam's Words:**

**"And there are transgressions lighter than these, and even so the Sages said that one who is accustomed to them has no portion in the World to Come, in order to distance oneself from them and to be careful of them."**

**Distinction Between the 24 and Minor Transgressions**

**Speaker 1:**

But he says that this is the next step. "Yesh aveirot kalot mei'elu" (there are transgressions lighter than these), says the Rambam, there are transgressions that are lighter than this, the 24 that we counted out are indeed dangerous transgressions, says the Rambam we're going to count out things, but these not so dangerous transgressions, but what then, therefore the Sages said, that one who is accustomed to them has no portion in the World to Come. That means that if one becomes accustomed to this, this is indeed a very bad thing, even though the transgression itself is not so dangerous, but that one must accustom oneself to this is very dangerous, and Chazal (our Sages) said "ein lo chelek l'olam haba," "kedei lehitrachek meihen ul'hizaher meihen" (in order to distance oneself from them and to be careful of them). Yes.

**Discussion: The Sages Did Not Mean Literally**

**Speaker 2:**

Could it be that the baal tefillah (prayer leader) is angry in truth, he perhaps didn't become one of 20 things, but in the end he will become one of Olam Haba, nu.

**Speaker 1:**

Could be, but in any case, the Sages did not mean literally that he has no portion in Olam Haba, they meant because it's something that one can become accustomed to...

**Halacha 26-27: The Power of Teshuva Even for the Worst Transgressions**

**Halacha 26: Even a Denier of Fundamentals — If He Does Teshuva, He Has a Portion in the World to Come**

**Speaker 1:**

Could be that if someone transgresses this he perhaps doesn't become truly "ein lo chelek l'olam haba." Perhaps he is in doubt whether he becomes "ein lo chelek l'olam haba"-nik. Could be. But in any case, Chazal did not mean literally that he has no portion in the World to Come. They meant, because it's something that one can become accustomed to and it's blood very bad, they frightened with the sharpest thing that can be.

**The Eight Categories of Halacha 25 — Structure and Explanation**

So he says, one, "**hamechaneh shem l'chaveiro**" — one who calls his friend by a derogatory name. Yes, that's the word, "hamechaneh shem l'chaveiro." We've already learned, I think, this law in Hilchot Deot (Laws of Character Traits), "hakorei l'chaveiro b'chinuyo" (one who calls his friend by his nickname), and even if the person himself made a nickname. Or "mechaneh" means he gives him a name, he makes a name, he thinks up a derogatory name for that person. Yes, like our prime minister has, whatever, he finds bad nicknames for his enemies, yes? That's "mechaneh shem l'chaveiro," he thinks up bad names, yes. Or one who already has, there's already a wicked person who is "mechaneh shem l'chaveiro," and someone catches on with that wagon, and he calls that person by that nickname that they started calling him.

Or "**hamalbin pnei chaveiro b'rabim**" — one who embarrasses his friend in public. The Gemara says, "malbin" means he becomes white, because when one embarrasses him he becomes pale. Seemingly this is the same as "hamechaneh shem l'chaveiro," not "hamalbin pnei chaveiro b'rabim"? It's still a bit more. "Malbin" is more inclusive, even if there isn't on him any "mechaneh shem l'chaveiro."

"**Hamitkated b'kelon chaveiro**" — one who honors himself through his friend's disgrace. "Malbin pnei chaveiro b'rabim" is he does it simply. "Hamitkated b'kelon chaveiro" is more one who is a manipulator, he knows that his honor is there by putting down that person. He asks that person a question in public that the other won't be able to answer, to show how smart he is. The Rambam explained it further in Hilchot Deot, that he holds onto comparing himself with that person. He says like this, "that one is weak, and through that I become great," yes.

"**Hamevazeh talmidei chachamim**" — one who disgraces Torah scholars. "**Hamevazeh rabotav**" — one who disgraces his teachers. Just as we learned in Hilchot Talmud Torah (Laws of Torah Study), that there is honor for Torah scholars, and there is even more honor for one's teacher, yes? It's not the same thing. "Hamevazeh rabotav," and "**hamevazeh et hamo'adot**" — one who disgraces the festivals or Chol HaMoed (intermediate days of festivals).

You know what that means? He doesn't take Yom Tov seriously. He doesn't go to shul on Chol HaMoed. He conducts himself like it's a weekday. He is disgracing... he is not honoring, the opposite of honoring Yom Tov. He doesn't take Yom Tov seriously enough. Two weeks before Pesach, "ah, we have Pesach." We don't fulfill the transgression, thank God, but...

And **mechalel et hakodashim** (one who desecrates holy things). It's interesting, the last four are, one disgraces important things, things that deserve great honor. The opposite of honor. The last four, I mean the first four is, one doesn't conduct oneself with a person with derech eretz (proper conduct), with the basic honor that is due to another person, where here is full the Gemara's of embarrassing people and of putting down people. And the second four are people who deserve a greater level of... people or things that deserve a greater level of honor. There is a mitzvah of honoring a Torah scholar, there is an even greater mitzvah of honoring one's teacher, there is a mitzvah of honoring Yom Tov, there is a mitzvah of honoring holy things, being sanctified, holding holy things sacred. The last four are, one weakens things that deserve honor.

Weakening the Almighty Himself we already had in the previous ones, truly in "ein lahem chelek l'olam haba." These are things that it's not the honor of Hashem or honor of the Torah, but it's things that... It's interesting, yes, because honor of the Almighty or of the Torah itself or of prophecy was truly in "ein lahem chelek l'olam haba." These things, honor is due. A mo'ed (festival) is also something that the Torah sanctified, or holy things. It's not the same severity, but it's very severe, and it's in the category of "ein lahem chelek l'olam haba."

And it could be that the group is also similar to one who separates from the community, "ein lo chelek l'olam haba." He does it only to certain individuals. He loves the Jews, but each Jew singly he can call by bad names, embarrass. A very beautiful structure he made for the entire topic of the essence of the matter of honor, giving the proper respect and seriousness to things that deserve respect. Very beautiful.

**Discussion: What Comes Into Teshuva — All These Things or Only the Last?**

**Speaker 2:**

Ah, now I understand. What comes into teshuva? All these things, the heretics. Is he speaking about all or only the last?

**Speaker 1:**

All, all, all. All those that were said that they have no portion in the World to Come, the heretics, the apostates, all of them have no portion in the World to Come, if they died without doing teshuva, when they died without doing teshuva. **"Aval im shav meirish'o"** (but if he returns from his wickedness), but if he did teshuva from his wickedness, from one of the things that were counted there, from the 24 or from the 8, and he did teshuva, **"harei zeh mibnei olam haba"** (behold he is from the children of the World to Come), he is indeed from the people who receive the World to Come. **"She'ein lecha davar she'omed bifnei hateshuva"** (for there is nothing that stands before teshuva), there is no thing whatsoever that stands against teshuva. **"Afilu kafar ba'ikar kol yamav"** (even if he denied the fundamental all his days), even if one was a denier of the fundamental his entire life, even one of the fundamentals that he counted earlier, he doesn't believe in the Almighty.

**Explanation of "Kofer Ba'ikar" — The Worst of the Heretics**

I remember that there is a commentator who understands that "kofer ba'ikar" means specifically the heretic, or the one who says there is no Almighty. In Yesodei HaTorah (Foundations of Torah) chapter 1 it said, **"mi she'eino ma'amin b'zeh harei zeh kofer ba'ikar"** (one who doesn't believe in this is a denier of the fundamental), such language was there. "Kofer ba'ikar" is the worst, this is one of the fundamentals. The Rambam said in Yesodei HaTorah chapter 1, let's see... I want to tell you if it said in chapter 2 the prohibition of saying there are two. Ah, "kofer ba'ikar," here. **"Umi shema'aleh al da'ato sheyesh shem eloha acher chutz mizeh, over b'lo ta'aseh, shene'emar lo yihyeh lecha elohim acherim al panai, v'chofer ba'ikar, shezeh ha'ikar hagadol shehakol talui bo."** (And one who brings to mind that there is another god besides Him, transgresses a negative commandment, as it says 'You shall have no other gods before Me,' and denies the fundamental, for this is the great fundamental upon which everything depends.) "Kofer ba'ikar" means he says there is no God, that there is one besides Him. It's essentially one of the four heretics that we counted earlier. Or even the first, the worst of the heretics. This is the fundamental, the great fundamental is the existence of Hashem, that the Almighty is one and there is no second to Him.

**Teshuva in One's Old Age — Even for a Denier of the Fundamental**

**"Afilu kafar ba'ikar kol yamav, uva'acharonah shav"** (even if he denied the fundamental all his days, and in the end he returned), "ba'acharonah" means the last of his days, "shav," he withdrew and did teshuva, **"yesh lo chelek l'olam haba, shene'emar 'shalom shalom larachok v'lakarov"** (he has a portion in the World to Come, as it says "peace, peace to the far and to the near"). What is the meaning of this? "Larachok v'lakarov" is interpreted as one who was far and became near. So it says in the holy Zohar this week in Parashat Vayikra. **"Amar Hashem urefativo"** (says Hashem, and I will heal him), says the Almighty, I will also heal him, healing of the soul. His soul was very sick, almost died, almost lost the portion in the World to Come, but since it was among us he was exempt, and the Almighty is merciful and gracious and He accepts him in teshuva.

I think that what the Gemara says here also goes up on the same reasoning. The Gemara says that the knowledge was very sick, this is seemingly the matter of "ein lecha chelek l'olam haba," that he won't be able to live in that world of knowledge.

It became a bit mixed up, let me say it over briefly. We spoke about what? That even if he denies the entire Torah... one second, I have some problem with the audio, I'm holding it in the middle of fixing, it's cutting off for me.

In any case we said that even if he denies the entire Torah, the Rambam struggles, how can he have a portion in the World to Come? But the Almighty is merciful and gracious and He accepts him in teshuva, especially if he did teshuva properly and he appeased his friend.

But here you ask a question, what is the difference between a friend or one who appeased everyone? How can this be? Even if he indeed appeased everyone, we know that the Rambam says that it can be for that one specific matter, but the Rambam says that essentially if he appeases, he forgives him.

You know what? Perhaps one can say like this, true his teshuva is difficult, but we're speaking if he did teshuva.

The Rambam wants to say here that one can do teshuva, if he indeed appeased everyone. It doesn't mean that it can't be, it only means that it's difficult. True, it's difficult because of all these reasons, but seemingly this last chapter also, when the Rambam speaks there of the matter of teshuva, he doesn't mean that it's an impediment, impediment only means that it's difficult. Let's see.

### **Halacha 27: We Accept All Who Return — Whether Openly or Secretly**

The Rambam speaks here of wicked people and transgressors and apostates. Transgressors, these are the apostates that we just counted briefly. Even apostates, yes, apostates too. Transgressors means seemingly against people, these are those who steal another's money and such transgressors, these are those who do transgressions brazenly. And apostates is what he counted briefly.

**"Bein shechazru biteshuva b'galui"** (whether they returned in teshuva openly), whether they did teshuva openly, **"bein shechazru b'matmuniyot"** (whether they returned secretly), whether they did teshuva secretly, I mean he speaks here of the matter of "shuvu banim shovavim" (return wayward children). That this is a Gemara, he brings a proof from a verse in Yirmiyahu (Jeremiah). Yes, this is a verse in Yirmiyahu, the language "shechazru b'matmuniyot" comes from the verse **"shuvu banim shovavim"** (return wayward children).

He says like this, "shovavim" means a trouble-maker, a "shovav," like one who wanders. He says, even a wayward judge, like... now when he is a "shovav," he is still called "shovavim." Even if he is a wayward judge, like... and still... simply in public he still looks like a "shovav," but he still looks like a transgressor. Why does he still look like a transgressor? Why does he still look like a "shovav" and lowly in his eyes?

"Bilvad shelo yihyeh b'gilui, kevel am va'edah" (only that it not be openly, before the entire people and congregation).

### **Discussion: Contradiction with Hilchot Avodah Zarah — "Heretics We Never Accept Them in Teshuva"**

Do you remember that we learned earlier that we don't accept... it was... it said "minim ein mekablin otan biteshuva l'olam" (heretics we never accept them in teshuva). Do you remember such language? Yes. How was it said exactly in Avodah Zarah? It was such language, "minim ein mekablin otan biteshuva l'olam." Yes. Do you remember such language? Yes. Something I remember such language. Here, it seems in Avodah Zarah chapter 2, **"chayinu minim miYisrael ein mekablin otan biteshuva l'olam, shene'emar 'kol ba'eha lo yeshuvun"** (namely heretics from Israel we never accept them in teshuva, as it says 'all who come to her will not return').

Do you know what the explanation is? How does it fit with what it says here? Yes, I can be. I remember that they said an explanation that what it says "ein mekablin" means that the court doesn't accept. They don't go before Egyptians as a matter. And here what it says "mekablin" means that the Almighty accepts, and he has a portion in the World to Come. Yes, he goes a whole fact that he has a portion before the Almighty, true? "Ein mekablin otan biteshuva" — it's... in short, I will look here, I will see. I was, I didn't see that he should explain it.

Anyways, one must see the tremendous... finish for me the greatness of the power of teshuva. Ah, very good. Because seemingly this is the practical difference of the entire matter of teshuva, certainly. Openly one understands explicitly, that first of all one must know that there are such transgressions that are indeed very terrible. And secondly one sees that even one of these transgressions, if one wants very strongly to do teshuva, even if one was a denier an entire life, one always has a chance in one's old age to come out a denier, and he has a portion in the World to Come. Done.