

Dialectic restricting temperance to pleasures of body and to sense of touch (NE III.10) - Transcript

This transcript was automatically generated and is not authoritative

Shiur Overview

Comprehensive Argument Flow Summary: Philosophical Class on Temperance/Sophrosyne

Opening Context

The class will work through material together rather than assigning private reading, building on previous sessions that ended with a historical note.

Part I: Review of Terminology and Conceptual Foundations

I. The Greek Virtue of Sophrosyne and Its Translations

A. Multiple Latin Translations

There exists a virtue called "sophrosyne" in Greek, translated as "temperance." Cicero (or similar Latin authors) provided four different Latin translations, with uncertainty about which is correct:

1. Temperance
2. Moderation
3. Modesty
4. Frugality

B. Hebrew/Jewish Equivalent

Associated Hebrew terms include:

discussed previously - (צניעות) **Tzniut** -

Rambam's Arabic translation also - (פרישות) **Perishut** - rendered this way

Biblical word, very important - (קדושה) **Kedusha** -

C. The Term "Kedusha" and Its Complexity

Chazal/Midrash explicitly translated Kedusha as Perishut. However, both terms have dual meanings:

- **Technical/Halakhic meaning:** e.g., Rambam says Perishut means making a vow not to touch things that are Tumah (impure)

- **Ethical/Virtue meaning:** Being a certain kind of person

[Side Digression: Rambam's Understanding of Tumah]

Rambam distinguishes between halakhic Tumah/Taharah and ethical impurity. Many forms of Tumah are "purely formal" or "nominalistic" - impure simply because the law declares them so. But there is also "real Tumah" - Rambam explains this in a dedicated chapter.

D. Perishut's Multiple Meanings

- **Narrow meaning:** "Lifrosh min ha'aveira" - separating from what the law prohibits

- **Broader ethical meaning:** An attribute of being a certain kind of person

- **Political meaning:** The group called "Perushim" (Pharisees) - with various sub-types, some criticized by the Sages

E. Key Claim About Jewish Virtue

Kedusha/Perishut IS a basic Jewish virtue, contrary to those who might claim otherwise. One simply needs to know the proper translation to recognize this.

II. The Dual Nature of Virtues: Broad vs. Restricted Meanings

A. General Principle

All virtues (or at least many) that receive formal names have both broader meanings and more restricted meanings.

B. Why Virtues Have Broad Meanings: The Unity of Virtues Thesis

The Socratic/Aristotelian Argument

All virtues are unified - you cannot truly have one without having all.

Reason 1: All virtues require practical wisdom (phronesis). Once you have practical wisdom, you know what to do in all situations. This is "the kind of argument Socrates liked to make."

Reason 2: Virtues are about "kinds of persons," not "kinds of actions." Becoming the kind of person needed to be just, chaste, generous, etc. is sufficient to become a fully good person. Humans are unified beings (some more, some less). Therefore, the character transformation required for one virtue transforms the whole person.

[Note: The Chazon Ish agrees with this unity thesis, with some allowance for differences, but not perfect possession of one virtue without all others]

C. Examples of Broad vs. Restricted Meanings

- **Kedusha Example:** Restricted (Halakhic) meaning involves "three and a half mitzvot" - no concept of virtue at all. Broad meaning encompasses the full ethical/character dimension.

- **Sophrosyne/Temperance Example:** Aristotle greatly restricted the meaning to something very specific. Plato (Republic) explicitly gave it a broader meaning. Socrates (Charmides dialogue) goes through 6-7 different definitions, seeming to drive toward "wisdom" or "knowledge," ending in a question rather than conclusion, demonstrating the virtue's "very broad reach."

III. Today's Focus: Aristotle's Restriction of Sophrosyne

A. The Task

Previous approaches showed how the virtue can be made very broad. Today's approach is the opposite - examining how Aristotle restricted it.

B. Why This Matters

Understanding both sides is necessary:

1. To understand thinkers like the Rambam
2. To understand the reality itself

C. Aristotle's Philosophical Method: Restriction and Distinction

The Concept of "Qua" (Greek: ἕν)

Aristotle originated what might humorously be called the "two dinim theory":

- **Litvish term:** "Din" (legal category/aspect)
- **Chassidic term:** "Bechina" (aspect, literally "test" or "judgment")
- **Latin/English:** "Qua" = "as" or "under the aspect of"
- Example: "Person qua eating person" vs. person in other aspects

[Side Digression: Clarification on "Relation"]

"Qua" does NOT mean "as it relates to." Relation is only ONE of Aristotle's categories (ways of predicating things). There are other predicates besides relations.

Part II: Methodological Foundations - Division as Philosophical Method

IV. The Aristotelian/Platonic Method of Division

A. Division and Collection

The method being employed is called "division" - one of Plato's main ways of learning. Plato's formulation: All learning consists of "division and collection" - breaking things apart and putting them back together. "Putting back together" means putting things into categories, finding unity between things AND finding separation between things. One process goes "up," one goes "down" - same kind of work in opposite directions.

V. Extended Digression: The Nature of Philosophy Itself

A. Philosophy as Clarifying Confusions

Philosophy is about clarifying confusions. Conditions for doing philosophy:

- If you're not confused, you shouldn't come
- If you're "too confused" (everything is chaos), you're not really confused either
- Proper state: "Suffering through your confusions" - actually being confused in a productive way

B. Philosophy as Parasitic on Prior Conceptions

Philosophy (especially moral/ethical philosophy) is "parasitic" on:

- Original conceptions
- Intuitions (modern philosophical terminology)
- Education and habituation
- Being taught from youth to respect certain habits

All humans are cultured/habituated - "none of us are monkey people that live in the jungle."

C. Philosophy as Dialectical Work with Contradictions

Philosophy works by bumping into contradictions in things we "really really really believe" and using them to generate truth. "All philosophy is dialectical." We already believe/think certain things. Thinking is not subjective ("not about me") - it's about how "the world seems to me." Cannot simply "not think" as Descartes thought possible. Philosophy clarifies what we already think.

D. The Problem of Socialization and Contradictions

Well-socialized people are skilled at jumping between contradictory positions without noticing. Being "cultured" or "socialized" often means knowing when to shift between contradictions seamlessly. People notice contradictions easily in political opponents but not in themselves or shared assumptions. Philosophers might be characterized as people who are "not socialized well" (acknowledged as cynical view). Positively framed: Philosophers see opinions as "small portals into reality" given by education, and seek to make those opinions better - ideally into knowledge.

VI. Elaboration on the Division Method

A. Purpose of Splitting/Division

Not arbitrary - not splitting because there are "too many" or "too few" categories. The real problem: Normal/everyday language doesn't have enough words for what we need to understand. Counter-intuitive claim: The world is actually MORE SIMPLE than everyday words suggest. Modern people say "complex" but really things are more "distinct" (which means simpler). Everyday words are what "complex" things - they contaminate understanding.

B. Philosophy as Purification

Like a chemist purifying elements - trying to get at the element itself without contamination. What contaminates thoughts: Other thoughts. Most concepts are "dirty" - mixed with other things that may be true elsewhere but don't belong in this particular inquiry. Goal: Distinguish concepts to get at what we're really trying to understand.

VII. Student Interjection: Is All Knowledge Dialectical?

A. Student's Challenge

Some knowledge seems non-dialectical and "infertile" - we learn things just by observing them. Can observation serve as foundation for learning more?

B. Response

Experience is one source of knowledge - "nobody ever disagreed with that." But experience is also confused because "you don't know what to see." You must learn how to see things. The stage after experience is "experiencing things better."

Crucial distinction:

- Experience doesn't STOP thought - it only STARTS thought
- Experience gives more questions, more things to take into account
- Experience is not a "solution to the problem of needing to think"

Philosophy is "theoretical work," not "empirical work." Even "natural philosophy" - understanding won't come from empirical work alone.

Part III: The Problem of Temperance in Contemporary Context

VIII. The Contemporary Cultural Problem

A. Setting Up the Inquiry

The subject is the virtue called "temperance." The goal is to think about what it's really about, showing this addresses a

"real problem that we have" - not just giving a "drush" (homily).

B. Diagnosis of Secular Education

"Our culture is very messed up." If you live in NY/NJ in 2026 and attend a non-religious school, you probably never heard of this virtue. Not just unfamiliar with the word, but never EXPERIENCED it. Consequence: Lack of "starting points from which to start the inquiry." Public schools teach people to "eat and fres [indulge] all day and night."

C. The Problem Even with Religious Education (Lakewood Context)

Initial gratitude for receiving Torah education, specifically growing up in Lakewood, because it provides habituation to certain virtues like temperance. The complication: Growing up in Lakewood "doesn't help enough." Reason: Temperance gets taught as a "religious virtue" - a "fake virtue" in the students' minds. Students don't really believe it's genuinely good.

IX. The Problem with Religious Education on Temperance

A. The Underlying Belief Taught

If not for divine punishment (Gehennem), everyone would be extreme hedonists. "Is that what your Mashgiach taught you?" - implying this is the implicit message. Connection to Divine Command Theory: The belief that without God's commands, the only good would be pursuing pleasure ("eating pizza").

B. Consequence of This Teaching

Students aren't taught that temperance is genuinely *good* - sometimes taught the opposite. Partial mitigation: Despite lacking proper habituation, there's still some recognition of "beauty," "correctness," or "human goodness" in temperance. This recognition is theoretical rather than habituated.

X. Critique of "Sophisticated Modern Jewish Teachers"

A. The Anti-Asceticism Movement

Certain teachers' position: "Torah is pro-hedonism" / "Jews don't have to be ascetic." Their claim: Asceticism is Christian, not Jewish; Torah is *for* bodily pleasures. Attributed to "Cool mashgiachs" (not "old mashgiachs").

B. Analysis of This Position

These teachers absorbed two things uncritically:

1. Democratic/cultural values (characterized as "undifferentiated hedonism" - "whatever floats your boat")
2. The teaching that Torah opposes this

Their solution: Make Torah match modern values.

C. Critique of Misusing Rambam

[Side Digression - Extended Polemic]

The misreading: Claiming Rambam teaches that one should accept cultural beliefs uncritically while keeping Torah commands. "Being a sophisticated modern Jew means making the shidduch between the New York Times editorial page and the Vayikra Kedoshim." Verdict: "That's nonsense. That's just dumb." The irony: Even from a secular perspective ("b'tor goy") this is offensive - why accept everything culture says uncritically? The one benefit of counterculture: Ability to question cultural assumptions rather than automatically accepting them. Accusation: These "sophisticated cool

mashgiachs" give up the one reason to be Jewish (critical distance from dominant culture).

XI. The Actual Yeshiva Teaching on Pleasure

A. Traditional Yeshiva Position

Litvish terminology: "Gashmius" (physicality/material pleasure) "is not a thing" - meaning physical pleasure isn't valued. There IS some virtue taught against excessive pleasure-seeking.

B. The Apparent Contradiction in Yeshiva Teaching

First teaching: Don't pursue pleasure too much; don't live just to enjoy food and sex.

Second teaching (next day): The "geshmak" (pleasure/taste) of learning Torah - described as good as "the Rish's cold seltzer, even better."

Chassidish version: Teaching about having pleasure in something about God.

C. The Confusion This Creates

The question posed to mashgiachs: "Should we seek pleasure or should we not seek pleasure? You're contradicting yourself!"

Typical response: "It's a machlokes" (disagreement) or "It's kosher" (permitted).

Critique: This doesn't solve the problem, just restates it.

[Side Digression - Anecdote]

Story referenced: Someone came to "the Heilige Rebbe" with exactly this confusion. Another story: A misnaged came to a rebbe saying he feels bad all the time about his thoughts. Point: This confusion is real and widespread.

XII. Attempted Solutions to the Pleasure Problem

A. First (Rejected) Solution: Deny the Distinction

Position: The distinction between good and bad pleasures is nonsense. "Everyone has their pleasure. You like toys. I like pizza. I'm not better than you." Even some Gemara learners give up on the problem and accept this leveling.

B. Second Solution: John Stuart Mill's "Higher and Lower Pleasures"

[Side Digression - Philosophical Background]

Mill's problem: He couldn't imagine anything good besides pleasure, but was educated as a British gentleman. His cultural training: A gentleman doesn't just pursue base pleasures; he "enjoys finer things in life." His solution: There are "higher pleasures" and "lower pleasures." Critique: "Like there's some people that are more equal than others" (Animal Farm reference). This was Mill's way of saving traditional distinctions "without having words for anything without your pleasure." Acknowledgment: Mill tried to justify and explain this.

XIII. Preview of the Actual Solution

A. Scope Limitation

The full "problem of pleasure" won't be solved today. Aristotle had much more to say about pleasure than what's on the source sheet. This topic needs much more discussion.

B. The "Simple Teretz" (Resolution) Being Offered

Method: "We have to make more dinim" (more distinctions) - same method discussed before. The key insight: It's "cute" to use the same word "pleasure" for different things, but problematic.

Examples of different "pleasures":

- Oneg Shabbos (pleasure of Sabbath) - with question of whether it's gashmius or ruchnius
- Oneg of svara (pleasure of logical insight in learning)
- Oneg of pizza

Critique of conflation: Just because they share the same word doesn't mean they're the same thing.

Part IV: The Problem of Equivocation and Framing the Inquiry

XIV. The "Oneg" (Pleasure) Problem Illustrated

A. Three Types of Responses to Apparent Contradiction

1. **First response:** "It's the same thing" - claiming all these pleasures are identical
2. **Second response:** "I don't know" - intellectual surrender
3. **Third response:** "Yeah, but I can't explain it" - acknowledging difference but refusing to articulate it

Critique: This third response is a "cute way of escaping problems and not thinking."

B. The Deeper Consequence

This confusion splits us from thinking and explaining. Result: We lose "clear access to the world through our thoughts." Anthropological claim: We are "beings that think" - this confusion undermines our nature. Modern problem: Modern people are especially stuck due to "poverty of words and concepts and metaphysics."

[Side note]: Today's discussion is "not against modern metaphysics" - that would be "too broad." Not everything gets solved by critiquing modernity.

C. The Linguistic Solution and Its Limits

Concession: Even Hebrew words take on many different meanings - "you have to say that." One option: Make up new words (e.g., "boinik," "oinik," "shmoinik"). Why this fails: "That's not very useful. That's just a play." The real requirement: "You have to explain what you mean" - adding more words for clarification is necessary anyway.

XV. Setting Up the Main Inquiry: What is Temperance?

A. The Task Ahead

"We're going to do a long process of dialectic here." Goal: "Try to figure out what we even mean when we phrase this thing called temperance." Reference to Rambam: The definition being worked toward echoes Rambam's formulation in many places. Reference to Aristotle: This chapter is "basically Aristotle deriving the final definition."

B. Initial Agreement on Definition

Starting point: Temperance means "the correct" or "the mean condition regarding pleasures."

XVI. How "Mean" (Middle) Already Partially Solves the Problem

A. The Significance of Virtue Being a Mean

"Saying that it's a mean already solved a lot" - possibly "half of my problem, or all of it maybe." Listed as "one solution" alongside "stop being modern people" as another general solution.

B. Student Interaction: Explaining How Mean is a Solution

Student's attempt: "It depends on what you're calibrating it against."

Clarification: Not about calibration - "mean" means "correct," "the middle way means the correct way, the right way."

XVII. Critical Distinction: Two Different Questions

A. What We Are NOT Discussing Today

Question 1 (NOT today's topic): "Is pleasure the end, the goal of life?"

Alternative formulations:

- "What is the telos of a human life?"
- "What should I dedicate my life to?"
- "What is my life organized around? What judges it, what's the criteria?"

Where that question belongs:

- In Aristotle: Subject of Book 1 of Nicomachean Ethics
- In Rambam: Subject of "Agdomets" (introduction) of Perush HaMishnah
- The candidates: "In some sense all the vices and virtues can be candidates for that"
- Hedonism: One position that pleasure IS the end

B. Why These Questions Get Confused

Connection acknowledged: "Of course it's connected because whatever the end of everything is, is going to tell us how much of anything to do based on how to get to it."

Terminological confusion: "Mean" (middle) vs. "end" (goal) - "we should use a different word because it's confusing us."

C. What We ARE Discussing Today

Question 2 (TODAY's topic): "The correct way of behaving in regards to this area of life called pleasures."

Assumption: "Let's assume we already know what life is for - it's for happiness."

Bracketed question: "What happiness is anyway" - not addressing this either.

Focus: "This specific virtue as a virtue, just to talk about a virtue, one of the good middos."

XVIII. Clarification on "Oneg" in Jewish Books

A. The L'Saneg L'Hashem Problem

Student raises: "L'saneg l'Hashem" (to have pleasure in God) seems to say pleasure is the goal.

Response: "L'saneg l'Hashem is the wrong formulation." Better formulation: "To be happy with knowing God." Clarification: "Oneg is not precise" in that context. Where this belongs: "The discussion of eudaimonia and all of that. Completeness."

B. How Jewish Books Use "Oneg"

"In Jewish books, often they use Oneg in that sense but they don't really mean pleasure." Related question: "Will you have

pleasure? Yes, you will have pleasure, but that's not the goal - it's just something that comes along with the goal."

XIX. Restating the Principle: All Virtues Are Means

A. The Rule

"All virtues are means. All virtues means having the correct. None of the virtues means no virtue."

Self-critique: "Really, we're saying it backwards. We should derive it somehow."

Concession: "We gave some reasons to thinking this."

B. Application to Temperance

Example: "Whenever we talk about and we praise not enjoying pizza too much, we don't mean not enjoying it at all."

What we DO mean: "Not enjoying the wrong things or in the wrong times or in the wrong ways or in the wrong amounts."

XX. Student Dialogue: Does "Mean" Solve the Problem?

A. Student's Objection

Challenge: "I don't know what it means when you say enjoy it in just the right way, the right time."

Practical response: "Not eating too much pizza and not too little pizza."

B. Student's Deeper Confusion: Eating vs. Enjoying

Student: "That's not enjoying, it's just eating."

Response: "No, no, no, it's enjoying."

C. Clarification: Virtues Are Actions

Key principle: "Remember that we remember all virtues are actions."

Implication: We're never talking about internal states alone.

Student pushback: "You've been appreciating" [suggesting internal dimension].

Acknowledgment: "That's the internal, but I can't talk about all the internal all the time."

D. Partial Resolution

"That already solves one solution." Clarification: "He [Aristotle] is talking about not eating too much pizza." Scope: "We're still talking about things that give you pleasure."

XXI. Refocusing the Discussion

A. What We're NOT Talking About

- "Pleasure in the broadest sense of like, I hold that this is God" - "That's not interesting to talk about. That's way too great to talk about."

- Whether "taste buds are working correctly" in a purely physiological sense

B. What We ARE Talking About

Focus: "The correct behavior relative to pleasures. That's all."

Clarification: "Eating for pleasure. The correct amount of that."

Emphasis: "We're talking exactly about that. Nothing more complicated than that. Very simple."

C. What Distinguishes Virtues from Each Other

Principle: "What cuts virtues one from the other is the thing they're about."

Clarification: "All virtues are likings - that's not interesting."

What matters: "The kind of things that we're doing."

Part V: The Dialectical Process - Restricting the Domain of Temperance

XXII. Clarifying the Scope: Pleasure as the Domain

A. Restatement of Focus

The discussion is specifically about pleasure - activities people do for pleasure. The Question: How much pleasure? How much pizza to eat, how much money to make/give - finding the mean.

Key Clarification: This is NOT about health considerations.

- Student objection: "You still shouldn't be doing too much of it" (from health perspective)

- Response: "You're talking about health, I'm not talking about health, I'm talking about pleasure"

- There is a correct way to relate to pleasure *precisely as pleasure* - independent of health concerns

B. Distinguishing from Other Obligations

There are obligations to eat (inyan to eat) that have nothing to do with pleasure. Those are not the subject of today's discussion. Focus: The relationship to pleasure itself - do you like too much pleasure? Too little pleasure?

XXIII. The Core Problem Restated (Mekasha)

A. The Contradiction We Face

We contradict ourselves - we sometimes praise certain pleasures and sometimes condemn them. Both exist: Things people enjoy, and some are good, some are bad. Implication: We should stop saying pleasures are categorically bad.

XXIV. First Attempted Solution: The Middle Ground Approach

A. Proposed Solution

Pleasures are neither good nor bad inherently. Some pleasures are good, some are bad. The virtue exists in *knowing* which pleasures are good and which are bad.

B. Why This Solution Fails

It's too broad - doesn't give us a specific virtue to discuss. "Virtue exists of knowing how to live" is true but way too general. We need to identify a *specific area* for the virtue.

C. Alternative Suggestion from Student

Student Proposal: The virtue might be "the refinement of pleasure."

Response: This might be true, but it's a different level of analysis. That would be about the *nature* of the virtue (what to eat, which pleasures are refined). We're still at the higher level of *restricting the area* first. Nature of virtue comes after we've identified the specific domain.

XXV. The Problem of Love of Learning (Ta'ayah #1)

A. The Challenge

Question: Shouldn't you moderate your love of learning too?

Observation: We don't think love of learning should be moderated.

This creates a problem: If temperance applies to all pleasures, why not intellectual pleasure?

B. Attempted Responses

Student Suggestion: Maybe the mean for learning is "all the way to one side."

Rejection: That's not how it works - if there's no mean, it's not what we're discussing.

Key Historical Point: The Mashgiach (religious supervisor) from earlier discussion would never have applied his framework about pleasure to the pleasure of learning. "It's a whole different thing" - "B'dochnias" (obvious/self-evident).

C. The Simple Solution Emerging

We don't have to make pleasures into different categories. Instead: We need to *define* what temperance is about more precisely. Refinement: Instead of saying it's about "pleasure," say it's about "a certain kind of pleasure."

XXVI. Proof from the Other Direction (Ta'ayah #2): Schmoozing**A. The Schmoozing Example**

Question: What about someone who takes too much pleasure in schmoozing/talking (called "hacking" in Yeshiva)?

Is he a "baltaivah" (person of excessive desire)?

Answer: No, he's not - the Mashgiach wouldn't call him that.

B. Personal Illustration

"I take pleasure in schmoozing a lot more than in eating."
"When I don't have anyone I want to shmooze with, then that's when I eat." "It's only when you leave that I start to eat."

Point: Schmoozing is a bigger pleasure for some people than eating, yet it's not called "taiva."

C. The Linguistic Evidence

The term "baltaivah" is not used to describe excessive schmoozing. Even the Mashgiach, if asked, would be confused by the question - "he'd never thought of this question."

Implication: The concept of taiva has implicit boundaries that exclude certain pleasures.

XXVII. Further Counter-Examples**A. Excessive Grief (Ta'ayah #3)**

Case: Someone who cries too much about his mother's or wife's death.

Question: Is he a baltaivah? (It's gashmius/physical after all)

Answer: No one would say his problem is being a baltaivah.

- Maybe he's depressed

- Maybe he doesn't believe in Hashem's judgment

- But NOT that he's intemperate

Student Objection: "Of course they would - it's fun to cry."

Response: Even if criticized for crying too much, it's a different kind of problem - "not intemperate."

B. Scratching an Itch

Scratching when itchy is pleasurable. Described as "A grubba taiva" (coarse desire) - but this is because of confusion with something else. This conflation is a mistake.

C. The Confusion Problem (Side Digression)

The Faulty Logic: People make calculations like "What's the difference between hugging your friend and hugging [inappropriately]? Both are pleasurable."

Strong Response: "No, there is a difference. Human beings are more simple than that."

Warning: "People that make this kind of cheshbonis (calculations), they end up in these kind of places."

Clarification: It's not "more dachas" (subtle) - it's *different*.

XXVIII. The Emerging Definition: Bodily Pleasures**A. First Refinement**

Conclusion: The domain of temperance (midas hataivah) is NOT about all kinds of human pleasures.

Correction: "Let's stop saying that, that's a mistake, that's way too broad."

New Definition: Specifically about *pleasures of the body*.

Caveat: "It's still not refined enough, but we can start here."

B. The Kavod (Honor) Example - Final Proof

Case: Someone who likes kavod (honor/prestige) too much.

Question: Is he a baltaivah?

Answer: No - he's "baal kavod" (person of honor-seeking).

The Traditional Triad: Kina (jealousy), Taiva (desire), Kavod (honor) - three *different* things.

Key Point: Kavod is very pleasurable - "some people go to great lengths for kavod, give up all their taivas for kavod."

But: That's not being a "baal taiva" - it's a categorically different vice.

Part VI: First Restriction - Bodily Pleasures vs. Soul Pleasures**XXIX. Distinguishing Taiva (Desire/Appetite) from Other Character Traits****A. Kavod (Honor) as a Separate Category**

Someone who excessively pursues kavod (honor) is NOT considered "baal taiva" (a person of excessive appetite/desire).

Three Distinct Categories Identified:

- Kinah (jealousy/envy)

- Taiva (bodily desire/appetite)

- Kavod (honor/glory)

These are fundamentally different things, not species of the same genus. Some people give up all their taivas (bodily pleasures) for kavod - this demonstrates they are separate drives.

Quoted Principle: "Yesh l'chodim she-moinah chovav oliv megufa, yesh l'chodim she-kvodah chovav oliv me-moinah" (Some people value money more than themselves, some value honor more than money)

B. The Problem with Overly Broad Definitions

You COULD define "baal taiva" broadly as "too much about yourself" or "too much about your body." But making things broader hurts more than it helps for practical purposes. If you want to WORK on a middah (character trait), or have CLARITY about it, you should restrict the definition.

XXX. First Restriction: Bodily Pleasures vs. Pleasures of the Soul**A. The Restriction Stated**

Restriction #1: Temperance concerns bodily pleasures, NOT pleasures of the soul.

Important Caveat: You don't need to believe in a literal soul for this distinction to work. This is NOT dependent on heavy metaphysics. The distinction is practical/phenomenological.

B. Critique of Reductive Materialism (Dopamine Talk)

[Side Digression - Polemic]

Modern "dopamine" discourse is problematic. Claims about Dopamine:

- "Nobody ever saw it" - it's a theoretical construct
- It's a "weird, half-ways, quarter-proven hypothesis"
- It doesn't explain most of what it's supposed to explain
- It's "an invention" that people accept uncritically

Why This Matters: This reductive thinking causes people to conflate different things. Liking kavod is NOT the same as liking gelt (money). These have DIFFERENT OBJECTS and DIFFERENT PARTS of the person that enjoy them.

C. The Proper Way to Distinguish

- Kavod: Pertains to how OTHER PEOPLE treat you
- Gelt (money): Pertains to your relation to wealth/possessions
- Each domain has its own character

Key Principle: "It's still more different than it's similar" - even if there's some common substrate.

D. Concession to Physical Dependency

Acknowledged: Someone clinically depressed or with physical deficiency might not be able to enjoy learning. But this doesn't collapse the distinction - "It's still a different kind of thing."

Analogy Given:

- Do you need a body to enjoy kavod? Possibly
- Do you need a body to enjoy learning? Possibly (while embodied)
- "I've never learned with anyone that's not in a body"
- Exception: Malach (angel) - proves you don't NEED a body to learn
- But while IN a body, you do need it (when tired, can't learn)

E. The Methodological Error to Avoid

Key Insight: "One of the reasons we get stuck is because instead of thinking about what things ARE, we think about what MAKES THEM WORK."

Analogy: Saying all houses are the same because they all need foundations.

- True but not interesting
- What you ENJOY is the air conditioning, not the foundation
- Even if the foundation breaking stops the AC, they're still different things

F. Examples of Non-Bodily Pleasures (Excluded from Temperance)

- Loving to learn
- Loving to think
- Loving to talk
- Loving to have honor
- Enjoying kavod

G. Conclusion of First Restriction

When discussing temperance (prishus, zahidas, Zucht), we ONLY discuss pleasures of the body, not pleasures of the soul.

Kavod belongs to the soul, not the body - "figure out exactly where it belongs, not to what we're talking about."

XXXI. Clarification: Body Means Senses

Student Question/Suggestion: When you say "body," do we mean "senses"?

Response: "Yeah, you could say we mean senses at this point."

XXXII. Extended Digression: Is Sleep a Taiva/Pleasure?

A. The Question Raised

Student Challenge: Would sleep be a taiva? It's bodily.

B. Arguments Against Sleep as Pleasure/Taiva

1. **You're not present:** "You don't enjoy sleep" - you're not there when sleeping

2. **Pleasure requires activity:** "Pleasure is when you're doing something" - sleep is the opposite of doing

3. **Connection to Depression:** On a "Tannius chart," excessive sleep relates to depression. Depression is NOT a pleasure by definition. Saying "I enjoy being depressed" is "an artifact of language"

4. **Linguistic Evidence:** Someone who sleeps too much is called "LAZY," not "pleasure seeker." This is a different character flaw (laziness vs. taiva)

C. Partial Concession

Sleeping for a half hour might feel like bodily pleasure. Maybe it's a "social pleasure" or "pleasure of the mind." Resting on couch: Possibly different from sleep.

D. The Caricature Argument

Student Point: Excessive sleep is "part of the same caricature" as other indulgences.

Response: It's associated with the same bad character type, BUT it's still categorized differently (laziness).

E. Personal View

"If you ask me, sleep is a pleasure of the mind, not of the body." Comparison: Like being drunk (uncertain categorization). Phenomenological Point: "Pleasure is when you're going to sleep, when you wake up, but when you're sleeping it's not."

F. Brief Sub-Digression: Is Dreaming a Pleasure?

Answer: Yes, but not of the body - same category as thinking.

G. Analysis of the "Sloth" Character

The Sloth: Someone who "just sleeps and eats all day."

Analysis:

- The sleeping part = laziness
- The eating part = also laziness (nothing else to do)
- Could also be "bad middos going together" (like good middos go together)
- Being "uncontrolled" leads to all kinds of things

H. Methodological Point Restated

Temperance is "a lot more limited" than general self-control. Benefit of Restriction: "This is what allows us to have a shiur on each thing separately." Otherwise: "My shiur would finish very quickly."

Part VII: Further Restriction - Narrowing to Certain Senses

XXXIII. Transition: Further Restriction to Certain Senses

A. Preview of Next Step

Aristotle's Method: After restricting to bodily pleasures, he further restricts to CERTAIN senses.

Question Posed: Do we mean ALL bodily pleasures? All five senses?

XXXIV. Examining Whether Sight Constitutes a Bodily Pleasure (Taiva)

A. The Case of Visual Beauty

Opening Question: Is someone who enjoys beautiful scenery or art a "baal taiva"?

Student Objection: Sight is a sense, so shouldn't visual pleasure count?

Key Distinction Raised: "Eyes don't have pleasure" - the pleasure of seeing beautiful things is not the same as physical sensation in the eyes.

- Analogy offered: The mouth having pleasure from conversation (schmoozing) - the mouth is just a tool, the pleasure is in the give-and-take, not the physical sensation

- Writing/typing achieves the same schmoozing pleasure without the mouth

B. Student Pushback on Imagination vs. Seeing

Student Argument: You can't enjoy scenery without eyes; imagination is not the same.

Concession: There is a real difference between imagined pleasure and sensory pleasure.

Technical Distinction Introduced: Touch and taste work by direct contact; sight, hearing, and smell work at a distance. "Aristotle was impressed by that" distinction.

XXXV. The Mashgiach Test: How Religious Authorities Actually Categorize These Pleasures

A. Movies as a Test Case

Observation: A Mashgiach (religious supervisor) doesn't call someone who watches movies a "baal taiva."

Alternative Terms Used: "Bittul Torah" (wasting Torah study time), "bittul zman" (wasting time), "goyish" (non-Jewish behavior).

Key Point: These are different categories of criticism, NOT taiva.

B. Scenic Trips and Concerts

Nobody calls someone "baal taiva" for:

- Going on trips to see scenery
- Loving beautiful music
- Attending concerts

C. How Respected Figures Are Described

Illustrative Examples:

- If a Rebbe sees a beautiful mountain and says "Mah Rabu Maasecha Hashem" (How great are Your works, God) - this is seen as a GOOD thing
- If a Rebbe enjoys a piece of chazanus (cantorial music) or classical music - this is not considered a sakana (danger)

- Contrast: If you say the Rebbe "really liked a kugel" - he's "allowed to," but nobody respects him for it

Conclusion: We don't say enjoying beauty is "too much pleasure" in the way we do with bodily pleasures.

XXXVI. Addressing Potential Counterexamples

A. Clinical Cases

Student Objection: There are people who experience aesthetic/intellectual/visual pleasures to a point where it harms their life.

Dismissal: "Clinical situations don't count."

Provocative Claim: "We don't believe in clinical situations, only moral situations."

Elaboration: Clinical just means "it harms your life, which means you don't work for capitalism well enough, which is not very interesting."

Clarification: The discussion is about "normal people" and "normal situations."

B. Important Qualification

NOT Claiming: That you can't enjoy music or beautiful things "too much."

IS Claiming: When that problem occurs, it's NOT an issue of temperance - it would be "some other issue which maybe we'll find a new name for."

Alternative Categories:

- Bittul zman (wasting time)
- Competition with learning ("your head is about songs or it's about learning")
- These are different problems with different solutions

C. The Virtue Separation Principle

"There's a reason why we separate the virtues into different things. We shouldn't confuse these things either."

XXXVII. Brief Digression: Phones and Touch

Student Question: What about the pleasure of touching your phone all day?

Playful Response: This might actually relate to Aristotle's concern because it involves touch. "The people who make phones make sure that they feel pleasant to touch."

Quickly Dismissed: "That was just a nice way of me... It's not even..."

XXXVIII. Eliminating Smell as a Primary Taiva

A. The Challah-Smelling Test

Question: Is someone who loves smelling fresh challah a "baal taiva"?

Answer: Only "secondarily" - he smells the challah but wants to EAT the challah. "He's not really about the challah" (the smell).

B. The Animal Criterion

Key Definition: One definition of what's bad about taiva is "that's what animals do."

Animal Example: A lion smells a zebra - does he think "ah, good smell"? No, he thinks "good meat."

Distinction:

- "If you say good meat, then you're a chai (animal)"
- "If you say good smell, then you can make a bracha" (blessing on pleasant smells)

C. Perfume Connoisseurs

Question: Is a perfume connoisseur (oud, saffron, etc.) a baal taiva?

Answer: No, unless it's connected to something sexual.

Insight: "All the connoisseurs are trying to take the taiva out of it. That's what the whole chochma of being a connoisseur of anything is."

Clarification: The taiva of smell is specifically "I smell an animal that I like to eat. Like what an animal would do."

XXXIX. The Final Narrowing: Only Touch Remains

A. Summary of Elimination

Result: Only two senses remain - touch and taste.

Further Elimination: Even taste is "not really a problem."

Final Answer: Only TOUCH.

B. Why Taste Doesn't Count

Claim: "Animals don't taste their food."

- They might respond to sweetness, but they don't have "taste as a kind of judgment"

Key Distinction: Fresser vs. Taster

- A "fresser" (glutton) just consumes
- A "taster" enjoys the judgment of food - "this is... I get the stickle" (the subtle point)
- The taster's pleasure is "not a pleasure of the senses, the pleasure of the judgment"

C. Evidence That Tasting ≠ Taiva

Practical Point: Wine tasters spit out the wine.

- If you actually eat/drink too much, you lose sensitivity
- "It's the taam" (the taste/judgment) that matters

Callback: "That's what I was telling you all the way in the beginning. It depends on the second bite and the next bite."

D. How Authorities View Tasting

Observation: "People actually baal taiva don't like that" (refined tasting).

Qualification: "Some Mashgiach might call it baal taiva, the Rambam might call it baal taiva for other reasons, but Aristotle didn't call this baal taiva."

XL. Aristotle's Definition of the Baal Taiva

A. The Rambam's Characterization

Rambam's View: Taiva is "sechila" (foolish/dumb).

Why Foolish?: The area of pleasure is tiny - "like 3 inches, from your tongue until here."

The Underlying Point: The pleasure is specifically in the physical contact/sensation, not in judgment.

B. Aristotle's Illustrative Story

The Story: Aristotle heard of a person who was exactly the kind of bad person being discussed.

The Person's Tefillah (Prayer): "Please make my tongue as long as a crane's" (a bird with a very long tongue).

The Logic: Since all the pleasure is in the touching of food on the tongue, a longer tongue = more pleasure.

What This Reveals: The baal taiva's pleasure is purely in physical contact, not in taste as judgment.

[Platonic Reference - Side Digression]

Plato would say such a person would be reincarnated as a crane. Source: "The Myth of Er" - everyone receives reincarnation according to what they truly desired in life. Implication: Your dominant pleasures determine your spiritual trajectory.

C. Talmudic Support

Gemara on the Parah: Referenced as parallel teaching ("he amaveh v'amash te'amah").

Point: This person's entire hope and pleasure was focused on the physical touch sensation, not anything beyond it.

Part VIII: The Final Definition - Touch as the Domain of Temperance

XLI. The Core Argument: Touch Pleasure as Uniquely Animal

A. Why Touch is Problematic

Key Claim: The pleasure of touch is "the exact pleasure that only animals have."

Clarification: Not that ONLY animals have it, but that we "share it entirely with animals."

Contrast with Taste: Even taste pleasures aren't fully shared with animals.

- Animals don't appreciate aged wine or refined flavors
- Animals have "the touch of the taste, not the taste of the taste"
- Animals lack "the judgment of the taste"

B. Terminology Clarification

"Animal-ish": The Hebrew term for this quality.

Application: People who are "slaves to the sense of touch" are the most animal-like.

This explains: Why this particular domain is the subject of temperance/the midah.

XLII. Aristotle's Famous Statement on Touch

A. The Quote

Statement: "The sense of touch is a disgrace to humans."

Source Note: This doesn't literally appear in this chapter "at least not in our version."

Pedagogical Point: "This whole sheet was in order to get you to understand that statement."

B. Correct Interpretation

NOT saying: Touch itself is disgraceful.

IS saying: Living BY the sense of touch, or being "too much into" touch pleasures, is disgraceful.

Reason: These are precisely the pleasures animals have.

Connection to Function Argument: References back to "Bakwan" (Book One) - humans should do specifically human things.

XLIII. Objection: What About Human Touch Pleasures?

A. Aristotle's Own Question

Examples Raised: Exercise, massages - these involve touch but seem distinctly human.

Observation: "Nobody said you're a baal taiva if you like massages too much."

B. Methodological Clarification (Important Digression)

"Animals don't do that" - What it DOESN'T mean:

- Not an empirical claim you can disprove by finding an animal example online

- Similar to "body vs. mind" - not about brain scans showing neurons

What it DOES mean: A conceptual/categorical distinction, not a zoological one.

XLIV. Summary of What Has Been Gained**A. Restriction of Domain**

Temperance concerns: Pleasures of the sense of touch.

Specifically: Food and sex ("those are basically the pleasures of the sense of touch").

Excluded from this category (though may have their own problems):

- Scratching yourself

- Enjoying massages

- Exercise

- Enjoying a wedding

- Other touch-related activities

B. Critical Clarification: The Problem is NOT Pleasure Itself**Student Question**

Challenge: The wine taster - isn't the pleasure itself still pleasure?

Response

Reframing: "Our problem is not pleasure. Our problem is really more being like an animal."

Key Statement: "There isn't something wrong with pleasure. Not even wrong. We're not even talking about this."

Clarification: When we use the word "pleasure" in this context, we don't mean pleasure per se is the issue.

XLV. Why Categorical Distinctions Matter**A. What This Analysis is NOT Saying**

- The excluded categories (kavod, schmoozing, etc.) are all good

- There are no virtues/means regarding them

- Explicitly stated: "There are middos for kavod. There are middos for schmoozing too much."

B. Why Separate Them Anyway

Practical Reason: "You just get confused" if you lump them together.

Methodological Reason: Different domains "need different rules" and "different wisdom to see the situation correctly morally."

Purpose of splitting middos: Otherwise could just follow Socrates' view that there's only one virtue (being good/knowing what to do).

C. The Cars Analogy (Reference to Previous Shiur)

Aristotle's Point: Knowing "the Good" abstractly won't help you make a car.

Application: You have to learn about each specific domain.

XLVI. Concluding Statement**A. Practical Stakes**

Claim: "By not having correct words you also mess up your life."

Therefore: Precise understanding of what temperance addresses is essential.

B. Final Definition

What we're talking about: Exactly the pleasures of touch (food and sex).

Closing: "Hashem should help us."

Key Philosophical Achievements of This Class

1. **Established terminological foundations** across Greek, Latin, Hebrew, and Arabic for understanding temperance/sophrosyne

2. **Articulated the unity of virtues thesis** while explaining why individual virtues still need separate treatment

3. **Explained the philosophical method of division** as essential for moral clarity

4. **Diagnosed contemporary problems** with both secular and religious education regarding temperance

5. **Systematically restricted the domain** of temperance from "all pleasures" to specifically "pleasures of touch"

6. **Grounded the touch restriction** in the animal/human distinction from Aristotle's function argument

7. **Clarified that pleasure itself is not the problem** - being animal-like is

8. **Explained Aristotle's famous "disgrace" quote** in proper context

9. **Justified the entire taxonomic exercise** - different domains need different moral wisdom

10. **Distinguished conceptual categories from empirical claims** about animal behavior

| Full Transcript**Aristotle's Restriction of Temperance (Sophrosyne): From Broad Virtue to Specific Definition****Chapter 1: Introduction and Review of Previous Session****Setting the Stage for Today's Learning**

Alright, we're good. Everybody's settled now. We're gonna do something very simple and learn. Yeah, we finished last week like this. I'll try to tell you, I'll try to do something—what we're gonna try to do is read, or at least pretend to do it inside. I can't actually read words if no one wants to read text. They

could do that under private personal time because we don't get together to read a text, as shown.

But last week we finished off with this historical note which we thought might help us understand some things—also historical right, which ,[heilige Torah: the holy Torah] הייליגע תורה in the is very important. But let's save that for the end today instead .of the beginning. We'll try

Chapter 2: The Virtue of Sophrosyne and Its Multiple Translations

The Problem of Translation: Cicero's Four Options

What we finished off with was that there's such a virtue called sophrosyne*, or translated here as* [Yevonish: Greek] יוֹנוּיָהּ in Cicero, or—[chokhmim: sages] הכמים "temperance." And the Kicker, or whoever you want to say his name—wrote that he has four different Latin translations for this word, and he's not sure which one is correct. And one of them is where we get the .word "temperance" from

Anyways, temperance, moderation, modesty, frugality—those are his four options for translating it, four Latin words. But in English they're these words. So in essence, it may be all kinds of things—quiet, there's a lot of different words translated with it.

Hebrew Equivalents : צניעות, פרישות, and קדושה

But there's—and in Hebrew, as we discussed, translated as This was how we discussed .[tzniut: modesty/chastity] צניעות that, and I remember we discussed it. And the seems to have also translated it as [Rambam: Maimonides] פרישות .in Arabic, or right [perishut: abstinence/separation]

Seems like .[perishut] פרישות And sometimes, sometimes as our sages of the ancient period liked to call something like this has also a technical meaning for them— פרישות although , פרישות meaning, not a [halakhic: pertaining to Jewish law] הלכה'דיקע a .virtue meaning—so it's more complicated

What other word do I have for this ? קדושה [kedusha: holiness] ,[kedusha: holiness] The הזויל right? Very important word, biblical word [Midrash: rabbinic commentary] the ,[Chazal: the Sages] מדרש explicitly translated as פרישות .

The Dual Meanings: Halakhic and Ethical

And just like פרישות like the halakhic meaning—like פרישות And just like —[nedarim siyag: vows as a fence] נדרים סיגל Rambam says you won't touch [edeh: vow] עדה means if you make an פרישות And the .[tumah: ritual impurity] טומאה things that are tumah v'taharah: impurity] וטהרה Rambam understands the halakhic one, as not the same as the ethical ,[and purity ?one, right

There's קדושה'ס מצוות [kedusha's mitzvos: holiness] and טומאה'ס עבירות [commandments which just means doing bad things. And even ,[transgressions are just what people [tumot: impurities] טומאות many nowadays call—how do they call it? No, other people call it the I forgot the word. Purely טומאה Rambam's understanding of , טומאה because the law says that it's טומאה formal, right? It's right? Nominalistic, nominal. That's how people say it. The Rambam himself says things that almost say the word The Rambam explains this .טומאה "nominal." But there is real .in a chapter about this

Summary of Terminology

In any case, what I'm telling you—this is just my list of words so we know what we're talking about, and then we'll be able to say, we'll try to find out what we're talking about.

in the Torah, and it seems to קדושה There's something called have many meanings, just like this word that we're talking and we discussed last week in passing the Rambam's ,[Torah] s'[Ramban: Nachmanides] רמב"ן interpretation of this, and the interpretation of this, which argues with the Rambam's Sifri:] ספרי or מדרש interpretation of it, is basing itself on a and other [halakhic midrash on Numbers and Deuteronomy מדרשים many פרישות as the word קדושה that translate the word

I don't think , פרישות And the Torah doesn't say the word the verb exists, but not in this register, ,[I'hafrish: to separate] .not in this context

The Multiple Meanings of פרישות

could mean, again, the same—it has the two פרישות And lifrosh min] לפרוש מן העבירה meanings. It could mean just lifrosh] לפרוש מן or ,[ha'veira: to separate from transgression to separate yourself from something—[min: to separate from .that the law does, the law you

And it sometimes has also this broader ethical meaning. In this ethical—when I say ethical, I mean the human meaning, right? The sense of an attribute of a human being, being the parush: separated/abstinent] פרוש kind of person called the .[one

Of course, it also has a political meaning. There was this group and there's ,[Perushim: Pharisees] פרושים of people called that they don't פרושים many kinds of them. There's kinds of that פרושים like. The Talmud itself says that there's a list of bad .they don't like, and so on

But in any case, it seems they've interpreted this as the word in the Torah, which is why we know that this is a very קדושה basic virtue for Jews—unlike someone who would tell you that ?it's not. It is. You just have to know the translation, right

Chapter 3: The Broad and Restricted Meanings of Virtues

Introduction to the Problem

Okay, so I gave you some words throwing around so you could associate it with things. But now, as we discussed, like many virtues—maybe like all virtues, all virtues that end up having a name like this—but at least many of them, they have both broader and more restricted meanings, right?

The Unity of Virtues: Why Broad Meanings Exist

Broader meanings meaning something like: since all virtues are really about what kind of a person you are, and since all virtues are unified—as Socrates liked to argue, and Aristotle agrees with in some sense (and they're not, but he still agrees) —everyone agrees all virtues are unified, right? You can't really have one without the other.

We've discussed some reasons for this at different times. You probably know why. Not yeah, you could have—the Chazon Ish: Rabbi Avraham Yeshaya Karelitz, major 20th] also agrees with this, right? You [century halakhic authority could have—there could be differences, but you can't have one .perfectly without having all of them

Reasons for the Unity of Virtues

And that is because—well, one reason would be because you need wisdom, you need φρόνησις [phronesis: practical wisdom] for all of them. And once you have practical wisdom, that means knowing what to do, so you know how to do all the time. That's the kind of arguments that Socrates used to like to make.

Another reason—what I'm talking about now—is that virtues are all kinds of people, right? And therefore, the kind of person—or which doesn't—like, you can close my door, that would be nice.

Something like: the kind of being, becoming or being the kind of person that it takes to be a just person, or a chaste person, or a giving person, and so on—sort of means enough to become that kind of person. It's enough to make you into a fully good person, because it's the kind of person. It's not a kind of thing that a person does.

People are really unified things. One of the interesting things about humans is that they're unified in many ways. Some people are less unified, some more. But that's—again, let's go back to where I am.

The Dual Nature of Virtue Terms

So therefore, all virtues have this—like, they become, sometimes start off with—again, we're not interested in the history—but they have sometimes very broad meanings and sometimes very restricted meanings, okay?

Litvak: Lithuanian-style Jew, often associated] ליטוואק Like, a means three and a half קדושה will say [with strict halakhic focus That's a restricted meaning. [mitsvos: commandments] מצוות .okay? It doesn't even have the concept of virtue

Aristotle vs. Plato on Sophrosyne

But Aristotle, we remember—and this is what we're going to read today—Aristotle restricted greatly the meaning of *sophrosyne*, of temperance, to mean something very specific.

In Plato, we have more broad meanings. Plato explicitly gave it a more broad meaning in the *Republic* [Plato's dialogue on justice and the ideal state].

Socrates, in other places like in the *Charmides* [Plato's dialogue specifically examining the virtue of sophrosyne], which is all about the virtue of *sophrosyne*, goes through six or five or six or seven different definitions of it. But he probably is trying to get it somewhere, although it doesn't end in a conclusion—exclusion—like the Socratic dialogues. They end in a question. But he seems to be trying to get to wisdom somehow, or to knowledge somehow.

But in any case, if you read that dialogue, you'll see that it has a very broad reach. It's a very broad virtue. And that's one reason. There's other reasons, as we'll get to, how we could make it into a very broad thing.

Chapter 4: Today's Focus—Aristotle's Restriction of Sophrosyne

The Task at Hand

Okay, but today we're focusing on the other side of this. And you have to know this, both in order to understand things that people like the Rambam and everything else understand, and just to understand the reality.

So yeah, you could do everything, you do everything. Now we're gonna do the opposite thing, okay? Because this is—I

have to learn something today. So that's for telling you stories and speeches. You have to actually learn something, right? Very good.

Aristotle's Method: Restriction and Distinction

Aristotle took [heilige: holy] הייליגע So we have to see how the .this word and very much restricted it

And you'll remember that Aristotle's way of doing philosophy is restricting things, right? He was the first originator of the theory," right? [dinim: legal categories/aspects] דינים "two because ליטוואקס [din] דין Known before they invented the word can't conceptualize any differentiation in the world if [Litvaks] de'ah din: the] דעה דין because they're from the, דין, it's not ?Otherwise, how do you call it. [opinion of strict law

[Chassidus: Hasidic philosophy] חסידות How do they call it in דינים? Two בהינה [bechinos: aspects/dimensions] בהינה. The two is a philosophical term. It means literally like a [bechina] like a test. When looking at this aspect— בהינה judgment, like a no, but that's not a—it's not a measure, a just—okay, it doesn't .matter. The etymology is not important here

The Concept of "Qua"

Aristotle called this, very famously, *qua*, right? Aristotle didn't say *qua*—he said it in Greek—but that's how it gets translated from Latin into English. *Qua* means "as," right? Or "under the aspect of," right?

Person as an eating person. A person as he is, not as relates to. Relation is only one—only one of the categories. As he is. Not relate, no. Not as it relates to something.

Relation is one way in which you could separate things. You could say, well, this is about the relation itself. But don't say—that's why I think people get—people know—we're not talking either. But don't say it's [shiur: lesson] שיעור about—it's not my relation, because relation is just only one way we can talk about the world. That's not the only way. There's only one—I don't talk about the world only one part of things, only one .aspect of things

or one category, בהינה One way of talking about things, or one is right—one statement that we say about other things, right? A predicate is a relation. But there's other predicates in the .world besides relations

Relations, okay. So don't say relation. What it is, okay? So, but that's not—this is not my point right now. That's—let's go. We may restrict from there, right? That's too broad. We have to restrict a little more and understand that the way Aristotle—and this is called the—

[Transcript continues in subsequent chunks]

Chapter 5: Philosophical Method and the Inquiry into Temperance

Division as Philosophical Method

The Platonic Method of Division and Collection

But there's other predicates in the world besides relations, okay? So don't say relation. What it is, okay? But that's not my point right now. Let's restrict from there, right? That's too broad. We have to restrict a little more and understand that the way Aristotle—and this is called division, right, and it was one of Plato's main ways of learning called division. Plato said that all of learning is division and collection, right? Or breaking things apart and putting them back together. No, not the same thing. Putting things into categories, finding the

unity between things and finding the separation between things, which is the same kind of work. One is going up, one is going down. You should know all these things already.

The Nature of Philosophy

Philosophy as Clarifying Confusions

The point is that philosophy is about clarifying our confusions. Remember? Remember? I'm doing a bit on its side. Philosophy is about clarifying your confusions—if you're not confused you should not come, and if you're too confused then you're not confused either, you're just like everything's a... began. Philosophy is about suffering through your confusions, right? Actually being confused, right?

Philosophy as Parasitic on Prior Conceptions

What this means—that like I say always—philosophy is parasitic on original conceptions. And how do we call it?

Student: Intuitions.

Instructor: Nowadays, philosophers like to talk about intuitions. I have a whole sheet about intuitions and why it's a weird thing. Come to a different sheet.

Philosophers are, philosophy is, or Aristotle would say, philosophy—or specifically moral ethical philosophy—is parasitic. I'm calling it parasitic. It's not really, but it's necessary. It's a condition for doing philosophy is parasitic on your education, right? And your habituation, on being taught from youth to be habituated and to respect certain habits. Of course we're all habituated, we're all live in a culture, we're not—none of us are monkey people that live in the jungle—so we all respect certain things. I mean all cultures have, right?

Philosophy as Dialectical

And what is—last, for do I tell—the contradictions, right? Like Marx said, all right, all we do is bump into the contradictions and the things we really really really believe and use them to generate truth, right? Remember? All philosophy is dialectical, right? It means we already believe certain things, or already think certain things, but thinking is not about me, right? Thinking is about the world seems to me in a certain way, right? Can't just run away and say, don't think, like Descartes thought you could do. You can't do that, right? You already think anyways, all those things. And what philosophy is interested in is clarifying those things, right?

Everyone agrees if you're confused I'll unconfuse you. I'm not talking—I know, I know, wait, don't get confused, don't get off track. It's about—there's contradictions and we're trying to undo them—not undo them—use them to generate a more clear view on reality, right? That's what everyone's after anyways, right? Instead of being confused and being led astray by the words that we use.

The Problem of Socialization

And us people—most people in most cultures are very good, like being in some sense being cultured or being socialized is knowing when to jump from two contradictory positions and not realizing it, right? I'm not gonna elaborate on that either, you should probably know what I mean already, right? Because they're very well socialized people, they are good at saying the right things all the time without noticing that they keep on contradicting themselves, sometimes within the same sentence.

People are good at noticing it when it's on the other side of the political divide, but it doesn't matter, and there's things that

everyone agrees on that we play this game with. And philosophers are the kinds of people that are not socialized well—but that's a cynical view—but they're the kinds of people that think that it's great that we have all these opinions, great that we have all these small portals into reality, which were given by our education, which were given by our thoughts or innate or taught or beginning conceptions, our opinions, right? And now we're going to do some process to make those opinions better, right? Or to make them into knowledge hopefully, finally.

The Purpose of Division

Splitting for Clarity, Not Quantity

Now one of—there's different ways of doing this, different methods of doing this. One of the methods most loved by Aristotle was splitting things, right? Splitting things is not for the sake of splitting them because we—there's too many of them, there's too few of them, so we're going to split them. There aren't actually too few of them, just to be clear, right? We're not given enough words, right? Normal language or day-to-day language, what we can call, doesn't have enough words for most of the things we need to understand.

The world is more—nowadays people like saying complex—but really it's more simple than the everyday words are. The ones that are complexing it, right? Things are more distinct, which means more simple, than what we are taught to believe, than what everyday—what the beginning state of human beings generally is. But you don't see the simplicity of them before cleaning them, right?

Philosophy as Purification

We're cleaning—it's about like a purification process. You gotta unite in a similar way to how—in a similar way to how purification, like a chemist, purifies things, right? You purify an element. You're trying to get at the element in itself, right? Without all kinds of things that it's mixed in with, that it's contaminated with, right?

Now our thoughts are contaminated. What are they contaminated with? I'm talking about purification again. They're contaminated with other thoughts. That's why they're contaminated. Whenever we think about something, most of our concepts are dirty. They're dirty because they are mixed in with other things that we also think, that also are somehow true, but not over here. They don't belong here. They belong... I don't have to cut them up. I have to distinguish them in order to get at what we're really trying to get at.

Make sense? Very nice.

Interlude on Experience and Knowledge

Instructor: Now we're going to do an example of this, or a practice of this. Okay? Say there. And we're going to talk about this thing called temperance. We're going to use this word for today. And try to think what it's about.

Student: Some knowledge is not necessarily dialectical, some of it is infertile, no? We sometimes learn things just by observing them take place, no?

Instructor: Maybe.

Student: Or at least we can use that as a foundation for learning more things?

Instructor: Maybe, yeah. Like gathering more facts. Maybe. Yeah. We're talking about understanding, though. Not about having lists of facts, right?

Student: Yeah, and I'm not talking about fact gathering per se.

Instructor: Yeah, for sure, experience is one of the sources of knowledge. Nobody ever disagreed with that. But experience is also confused, because you don't know what to see. You've got to learn how to see things. The stage after experience is experiencing things better. There isn't experience that stops thought. There's only experience that starts thought. Thank you, but that just makes us, gives us more questions, or gives us more things we need to take into account and so on, but it's not something that stops, not a solution to the problem of needing to think, it's something that gives you more things to think about.

Okay, so, but it's true, I don't disagree, but philosophy is not that, philosophy is the theoretical work, philosophy is not the empirical work. I mean, you could call it philosophy, like natural philosophy or whatever, but still, the understanding won't be there.

The Problem of Temperance in Contemporary Culture

Setting Up the Inquiry

Instructor: Okay. So, that makes sense? So, that's what we're going to be doing. I want to do something important and I also want to try to show while I'm doing it how this sounds a real drush:] דרוש problem that we have. We're not giving you a You probably have this problem. I'll tell .[homiletical discourse you the first problem that you have, okay? Let's give you the first problem. You can see it says on this first page that I gave you, but I'm not going to read stuff for you. I'm just going to .tell it to you by heart, as they say

The Cultural Deficit

Okay? You have a problem. What is your problem? Did you hear of this virtue? If you know, it's interesting—nowadays our culture is very messed up, so most people think that—what do most people think? So I'm very—like I said last year, she was by which we ,[Torah] תורה very thankful for having received the mean growing up in Lakewood, because then we have a habituation to certain virtues that we wouldn't have gotten .otherwise. Like, for example, the virtue of temperance

If you live in New York City, New Jersey state in 2026, and you go to a non-frum [non-religious] school, you probably never heard of this virtue, by which I mean you never experienced it, right? Like, you don't have a beginning for ourselves—that would do enough starting points from which to start the inquiry, the inquiry into it, because you never saw it, you were not taught that it's a good thing.

mashgiach: spiritual supervisor in a] משיגה Isn't that what your told you, that in public school they just teach you to [yeshiva eat and fress [Yiddish: to eat gluttonously] all day and night? By the way, it's true. It's not only the mashgiach told you. I've met those people. That's what they're taught. For the most .part

The Problem with Religious Education

Which means, like—what are you looking at me like this? I even know—the problem is that growing up in Lakewood doesn't help enough. Why? Because you get taught that it's a religious virtue. Which means a fake virtue, as everyone that

comes to my class knows. Right? So we don't really believe that it's a good thing. If we would have been going, would have been just chasing after peace—of course it's hard to state peace, although very few people are committed hedonists, you got to work a little bit and so on—but if we would have been, alright, everyone thinks—everyone in Lakewood thinks this—if Gehenna: hell/purgatory in] גיהנום we wouldn't have had a —to scare [Jewish thought

Chapter 6: The Problem of Pleasure: Religious Education, Cultural Critique, and the Need for Distinctions

The Problem with Religious Education on Temperance

The Lakewood Example: Religious Virtue as "Fake Virtue"

I even know, the problem is that growing up in Lakewood doesn't help enough. Why? Because you get taught that it's a religious virtue, which means a fake virtue as everyone that comes to my class knows. So we don't really believe that it's a good thing. If we would have been going, we would have been just chasing after peace. Of course it's hard to just eat pizza all day. Very few people are committed hedonists. You got to work a little bit and so on.

But if we would have been, everyone in Lakewood thinks if he Gehennom: Hell/purgatory in] גיהנום wouldn't have had a to scare us from it, we would have all been [Jewish eschatology mashgiach:] משגיח extreme hedonists, right? Is that what your taught you? Your mashgiach? [spiritual supervisor in a yeshiva ?Is that what he taught

That's what the Beelzebub believes, right? If not for God, for divine command, what the good would be? Eating pizza. Enjoying pizza. Right? Pizza is a code. Remember Pizzagate? Anyways.

The Consequence: Not Taught That Virtue Is Genuinely Good

Anyways, so, and since, my head is too crazy, but since God gave us a title, so we don't have it. Okay, so that's the problem with growing up in this kind of environment, that you're not entirely taught that these things are good, you're only taught that you're actually taught the opposite sometimes.

Okay, but still, I think, it's still, since virtuous habituation, it doesn't make so much of a difference. This is theoretical. You still see some beauty in it, or some correctness in it, or some goodness in it, some human goodness in it, I think, depending on—that's even weirder.

Critique of "Sophisticated Modern Jewish Teachers"

The Anti-Asceticism Movement

That you know, I know a bunch of teachers—not me, I'm in a big fight with those people, you don't even know who they are probably, it doesn't matter—I know a bunch of modern Jewish teachers who's big thing, because they know that Torah is pro-hedonism. Jewish Jews don't have to be ascetic. One of the primary matters and beliefs is that asceticism is Jewish.

Oh, the Christians invented asceticism, right? Being against bodily pleasures. The Torah is for bodily pleasures. Everyone knows a lot of mashgiachs now. Not the mashgiachs don't, the old mashgiachs don't say this, but the cool mashgiachs say ?[Nachon: Correct/right] נכון ?this, right

Diagnosis: Uncritical Absorption of Cultural Values

What does this mean? That these people grew up in this exact world, which taught them, so they believed exactly what they were taught, right? That they were taught that according—they

both, they assimilated the values, right? We call it values, or the virtues of democracy. The virtue of democracy is undifferentiated hedonism. We can't even tell you what pleasure is, right? Whatever floats your boat.

And they were taught that the Torah is against this. But then they decided, wait, the Rambam [Maimonides] told us we've got to make the Torah match with what we think, right? Instead of being critical and thinking, okay, but that doesn't mean you shouldn't accept everything your culture tells you uncritically.

The Misuse of Rambam

Oh no, but Rambam accepted everything his culture told him uncritically. That's what we learned from the Rambam, right? That you could be a modern religious Jew, right? Although he believed other things than we believe, so we're doing the same thing that he did in our context, right? You heard this direction already, right?

So the Rambam is the one that taught us that you should take some random commands from the Torah, but all your beliefs about reality should be taken from the New York Times editorial page. That's what we learned from the Rambam. And being a smart, sophisticated modern Jew means making the between the New York [shidduch: match/marriage] שידוך Vayikra Kedoshim:] ויקרא קדושים Times editorial page and the .[Leviticus chapter "Kedoshim"/Holiness

בטור Well, that's nonsense. That's just dumb. Like, wow, even b'tor] בטרור יהודי I'm offended, not [b'tor goy: as a non-Jew] גוי right? Why do you accept everything the ,[Yehudi: as a Jew ?culture tells you uncritically

The One Virtue of Counterculture

So, at least if there's one virtue in having a counterculture, it's to not do that, right? The whole reason to be not assimilated is that you should sometimes be able to say, well, yeah, the culture believes this, but I'm not sure I believe it. Maybe it's correct, I'm not sure. We should think about it, right? Only the one good thing. And these people, these sophisticated cool mashgiachs, they give up on the one reason to be Jewish.

So this is my hack where am I—getting into hacking on some random unnamed people who I'm not even giving you their names is no fun.

The Actual Yeshiva Teaching on Pleasure

The Traditional Position

Point is, my point is, back to where I'm standing, but we are at least, or it's not too old- [yeshiva] ישיבה taught—if you go to a fashioned, let's just see if I—I went to, your total and the Litvaks, they call ,[gashmius: physicality/materialism] it gashmius. The gashmius is not a thing, by which they mean gashmius pleasure, right? Not gashmius money. Money is... Anyways, it's not a thing. So there's some virtue against this, .right? That's the important thing

The Apparent Contradiction

Now, I have to tell you something very interesting. So I've spoken to many people that are smart about this. And one of the things that people are very confused. Now, people are very confused. Why are they confused? Because they see this. Okay, they see that it seems like—it's not—the question is how do we say what we see, right? How do we understand ourselves, right? Philosophy is about understanding ourselves. How do we understand ourselves?

We say we believe, and it's not good to pursue pleasure too much. This is how people say it. Okay, comes some genius and says, what do you mean there isn't much? Yeah, yes, that I say—address this is Aristotle and according to 2026 Lakewood.

Yes, today the mashgiach said that it's against pleasure, you הסלמי shouldn't be just living a life to enjoy food and sex doesn't [Haslami: possibly referring to a specific rabbi or text] say that word because he doesn't believe in it exists, but it .happens to be it does. And other things, and so on

drasha:] דרשה And then the next day he gave a whole geshmak: Yiddish -] געשמאק about the [sermon/discourse of learning. It's as good as the [taste/pleasure/enjoyment .Rish's cold seltzer, even better

And then the Chassidish mashgiach even gave a different drasha about—also like Litvak—that he read, and he read that it said that a person should have pleasure on something about God, I don't know what.

The Confusion This Creates

And you come to the mashgiach and you say, what's going on? Should we seek pleasure or should we not seek pleasure, huh? You're contradicting yourself!

What does it say? What does it say? What does it say?

Heilige Rebbe:] הייליגע רבי Or there's a guy that came to the true story—just this confusion. You're confused,—[Holy Rebbe right? There was a guy that came to—I hope you're confused, ?or you're not confused

Student: Stupid question.

Instructor: Why is it stupid? No, no, it's really a great question. But when you talk to them, they tell you, very good, it's amazing. Say that you're allowed. Okay, but did you solve the problem or did you just hold me the problem again, right? machlokes:] מחלוקת It's amazing. Oh, it's a .It's kosher .[disagreement/dispute

You got there—you got that you're contradicting yourself. Do [miser/misnaged: opponent of Chassidism] מיסער you know the that was a misnaged that came to the Rebbe and he told me that he needs to—being a rabbi, I feel like all the time is so—the other thought is having his own. I think you're right. Only thing, the only difference in this time, a lot of times is that for to get this time we have to give up an old other tithes, and then .the hunter could have said no, you don't have to. Anyways

Attempted Solutions to the Pleasure Problem

First Solution (Rejected): Deny the Distinction Entirely

here, right? A [baya: problem/difficulty] בעייה Point is there's a .very simple baya. Okay, very weird thing

Now what do I think? There's all—some people, I know some people that said, okay, so therefore we don't believe in this. that we [chilik: distinction/differentiation] חילוק This whole were taught—this is one silly way of resolving the tension. You .shouldn't seek pleasure. It's nonsense

People just decide that they like certain pleasures. Everyone has their pleasure. You like toys. I like pizza. I'm not better than you. You're not worse than me. I'm sorry. I'm not worse than you.

גמרא And sometimes the people that eat pizza, that learn they give up on this problem. They say, ,[Gemara: Talmud] .yeah, you're right

Second Solution: John Stuart Mill's Higher and Lower Pleasures

But, what's this guy's name? The English guy said, it's true, but there are higher pleasures and lower pleasures. Which philosopher said there are higher pleasures than our pleasures? God, he's so—no.

John Stuart Mill, who couldn't imagine anything good besides your pleasures, but he was educated as a good, what was he, Scottish, British, and he was taught that a gentleman doesn't just, what the guy said—but he enjoys finer things in life. So he came up with this thing.

Okay, look, there's lack of pleasures, but there's more complicated pleasures and less complicated pleasures. It's like there's some people that are more equal than others [reference to George Orwell's Animal Farm]. It's like there's a lot [B'erech: approximately/more or less].

So this was his way of saving the traditional thing that there are some pleasures that are bad without having words for anything without your pleasure. And saying this. Okay, so that's what some people seem to accept. Of course, he tried to justify it and explain it. I'm just giving you why he got into this problem.

Preview of the Instructor's Solution

Scope and Limitations

shiu:ר] שיור So it's a problem. I'm not going to give a of pleasure. Aristotle had many more things to [lesson/lecture say about pleasure than the trace sheet. But now I'm going to see a simple thing. Today we're going to learn a very simple thing that doesn't solve this whole problem of pleasure. The problem of pleasure is still bigger and we have to talk about this a lot more

Student: I think it's an accident of what you're doing.

Instructor: Yeah, yeah. Aristotle said things like that because super super veins. Well, yeah, it doesn't—it can be something called a higher pleasure in that regard. It's not worded by pleasure.

Student: Okay, so then pleasure is not a good.

Instructor: So wait, I'm talking about simpler. I have a simpler תירוצ [teretz: resolution/answer] even than that

The Method: Making Distinctions

I have a simpler teretz. My simpler teretz is going to be Aristotle. This is the kind of teretz that we said before. We [dinim: laws/categories/distinctions] דינים have to make more .We have one word, and you'll realize what we're doing

What I want to tell you, this mashgiach is that it's very cute to use the same word "pleasure" for both of these—in both of these mussar [ethical teachings]. Should have pleasure and pleasure and Shabbos. Okay, I know Shabbos we have to worry if I need Shabbos to the gashmius or your own is—they come, of [oneg: pleasure/delight] עונג whatever that means. And the and we ,[svara: logical reasoning/insight in Torah study] סברא also have the oneg of pizza

tirutz:] תירוצ I'm certain that since they're the same word, it's a .and the—I become them there ,[answer/resolution

Chapter 7: The Problem of Multiple Meanings and Framing the Inquiry on Temperance

The Problem of Equivocation: Multiple Uses of "Oneg" (Pleasure)

עונג We should have pleasure in Shabbos. We have to worry if is the [Oneg Shabbos: the pleasure/delight of the Sabbath] שבה ruchani:] רוחני or the [gashmi: physical/material] גשמי oneg:] עונג one, whatever that means. And the [spiritual .[svara: logical reasoning/intellectual insight] סברא of [pleasure of pizza. And since they're the [oneg] עונג And we also have the .[stira: contradiction] סתירה same word, it's a

Three Types of Responses to This Problem

And they say it's the same thing. A lot of people say, "I don't know." And the third kind of people say, "Yeah, but I can't explain it another way." Very cute way of escaping problems and not thinking. "Okay, we just believe it." It still feels different.

The Deeper Consequence: Split from Clear Thinking

So therefore we're split from thinking and explaining and having clear—a clear access to the world through our thoughts, which is what we are. Actually, people that—things, beings that think all kinds of different ways. You realize that is a very basic problem, and it's like one of those basic problems that modern people especially, because of their poverty of words and concepts and metaphysics, are really stuck about.

Today's sheet is not against modern metaphysics. I'm just saying that. It's too broad. I'm not sure. Not everything gets solved by doing that, but it's true. Alright?

The Linguistic Problem and Its Limits

So even Hebrew words take on many different meanings. The same one word takes on many meanings, obviously. You have to say that. We can just add more words. We don't have to make up new words. One word would be making up new words, which is not a very useful thing.

right? You'd have to say that ,[oneg] עונג No, let's say the word .[shm'oneg] שמעונג and [oneg] עונג and [b'oneg] בעונג really it is We could do that, but that's not very useful. That's just a play. You have to explain what you mean. So you have to anyways .add more words

Setting Up the Main Inquiry: Defining Temperance

Zog de] זאג דע האל לע גרעבע .So listen to what we're going to do And the Rambam .[haal le grebe - Yiddish phrase [Maimonides], it kind of echoes this definition in many places. What this chapter is basically Aristotle deriving the final definition, this definition

And let's start, let's say like this, let's do this big fat division. We're gonna do a long process of dialectic here. I'm gonna try to figure out what we even mean when we phrase this thing called temperance, which means—let's agree, let's admit that it or the mean [ken: measure/standard] כן means the correct ?condition, right? Mean condition regarding pleasures, right

How "Mean" Already Partially Solves the Problem

I'm asking: with this, every virtue is a mean. By the way, saying that it's a mean already solved a lot, right? Saying that it's a mean already solved half of my problem, or all of it maybe? That would be one solution, remember? Solution, one solution.

So besides for all the solutions to all problems in the world being "stop being modern people," another solution is to say

that everything is a mean and virtue, right? One of the solutions. The Rebbe seems to be very happy with the solution.

Student: Could you explain to me how it's a solution?

Instructor: Well, it depends on what you're calibrating it against.

Student: No, meaning not calibration. Meaning is correct.

Instructor: Yeah, correct. Middle way. The middle way means the correct way, right? The right way. In the first place, you have to assume that it's not an end.

Student: No, no, for sure. I don't mean that. That's why I'm saying that.

Critical Distinction: Two Different Questions

What We Are NOT Discussing Today

Really, what we're discussing right now—let's be very clear. Let's be very clear. Let's be very clear. There's one question that we're not talking about today, which is: is pleasure the end, the goal of life? We're not really talking about that.

Or another thing that we're confused—we don't think that it's the goal.

Student: Right, and the reason why... I think the happiness is the goal, not the...

Instructor: If you assume that it's an end, then you don't assume that there's...

Student: Right, right, very good. True.

The First Question: What is the Telos?

So let's be very clear. When we talk about... This is one... So let's talk about that also. One thing.

Number one, there is one question which is: What is the end? tachlis/telos: ultimate] תכלית What is the goal? What is the of a human life? One question. What should I [purpose/end ?dedicate my life to

Actually, how do I like saying it? What is my life organized around? What judges it? What's the criteria?

And over there, there's hedonism. In some sense, all the vices and the virtues can be candidates for that. And to decide which one really is the end is the subject of Book 1 [of Aristotle's Hakdamot:] Nicomachean Ethics] and the subject of Perush HaMishnah: פירוש המשנה] of Rambam and [Introduction .and so on [Rambam's Commentary on the Mishnah

That's one subject. We are not talking about that. We're not talking about that.

Why These Questions Get Confused

Sometimes we confuse these things. We talk about the virtue of temperance and we pretend we connect it—it's connected, of course it's connected, because whatever the end of everything is, is going to tell us how much of anything to do based on how to get to it, right?

But when I said "mean," I meant middle, right? In any case, I also mean—and that's kind of right, you're talking about mean as opposed to an end, right? But also, that's right, we should use a different word because it's confusing us.

But the point, important thing is: we're not talking about that, okay? We're not talking about that. Let's assume we already know what life is for, okay? It's for happiness. Question's just what happiness is anyway.

What We ARE Discussing Today

But our question is about this. Let's not talk about that. We're talking about this specific virtue as a virtue, just to talk about a As .[middos: character traits] מידות virtue, one of the good learning Torah as I get as I, and not being a—מידות many good and I get as I—forget, is ,[darshan: preacher/interpreter] דרשן that not the same? That ultimately they're all connected to this .one big goal of everything

Okay, but we're talking about this specifically. We're not talking about that. We're not going to solve that question. That question has to do more—

Clarification on "Oneg" in Jewish Books

להי לשנוג לה Like, when you ask the question, something like is the goal of [l'saneg l'Hashem: to have pleasure in God] everything, because that seems—the pleasure is the goal of .everything. That has to do with that discussion

is the wrong [l'saneg l'Hashem] להי לשנוג I think that formulation. It should be to be happy with knowing God. I is not precise, but that's different. That [oneg] עונג think that has to do with the discussion of eudaimonia [Greek: .happiness/flourishing] and all of that. Completeness .[Oneg]

in that sense, but [oneg] עונג In Jewish books, often they use they don't really mean pleasure. That's another issue. Then there's another question: will you have pleasure? Yes, you will have pleasure, but that's not the goal. It's just something that .comes along with the goal

Restating the Focus: Correct Behavior Regarding Pleasures

Now, what we're talking about now is the correct way of behaving in regards to this area of life called pleasures. So we already cut it off from one big problem that confuses us. I don't know.

So, okay. And now we said—remember that we said, I want to get back to what I said.

The Principle: All Virtues Are Means

We said that all virtues are means. All virtues means having the correct. None of the virtues means no virtue. This is like a rule. Really, we're saying it backwards. We should derive it somehow, right? We gave some reasons to thinking this.

But whenever we talk about and we praise not enjoying pizza too much, we don't mean not enjoying it at all. All we mean is not enjoying the wrong things, or in the wrong times, or in the wrong ways, or in the wrong amounts—things like that.

Student Dialogue: Does "Mean" Solve the Problem?

Student: What does that solve? It doesn't exactly solve the ...problem that we talked about. It doesn't exactly solve You're not listening to me. .[k'kisharon: as appropriate/fitting] ...What's the point? It doesn't exactly solve the problem

Instructor: I wasn't even looking in.

Student: I know, you're just pretending.

Instructor: No, no, I was thinking what you were saying.

Student: It doesn't... I don't know what it means when you say that enjoy it in just the right way, the right time. As we have it there. We're thinking very practically, not too great.

Instructor: I'm not thinking great, I just want to understand what that means.

Student: It means not eating too much pizza and not too little pizza.

Eating vs. Enjoying: A Clarification

Student: That's not enjoying, it's just eating.

Instructor: That is. No, no, no, it's enjoying. Whenever we talk about enjoying, remember that we remember all virtues are actions. We're never talking about the...

Student: You've been appreciating.

Instructor: No, no, no, that's the internal, but I can't talk about all the internal all the time. We're not right.

Student: That's what I'm asking.

Instructor: Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes. That already solves one solution. We're talking about the—no, he is talking about that, because he's actually talking about not eating too much pizza, right? Not eating too much pizza.

We're still talking about things that give you pleasure, things that—we'll say in a second what kind of pleasure—things that give you pleasure, okay?

You're bringing in a different distinction which is—let's leave it on the side. It's not—assume that I already know that, okay? Because it's not going to solve my specific issue that I have right now, okay? It's definitely not solving my issue.

Student: I'm trying to only talk about the pleasure that you're talking about. I just don't know.

Refocusing: What We Are and Are Not Discussing

Instructor: I'm talking specifically about the correct behavior relative to pleasures. That's all.

- **Not:** Pleasure in the broadest sense of like, "I hold that this is God." That's not interesting to talk about. That's way too great to talk about.

- **Not:** Taste buds in the sense that the taste buds are working correctly.

Student: Yes, the taste buds, that's why we call it pleasure, because the taste buds taste correctly. Or by the way, let's—

Instructor: We're not talking about taste. Let's try to start bigger than that, right?

Student: Who—where did we start talking about taste buds? Forget you. Taste buds is the sense, right? We're talking about the like. But—but we're still talking about the taste buds.

Instructor: We're talking about the behavior in certain years. Remember what defines—what cuts virtues one from the other is the thing they're about, right? Because all virtues are likings. That's not interesting, right? When we talk about liking, everything is liking or hating in that sense. Not talking about that. Talking about the kind of things that we're doing.

Now, this is the correct amount of eating. The correct amount of not eating in the sense of—when you have maybe in the essence of that, but eating in the sense of eating for pleasure. The correct amount of that. That's all. We're talking exactly about that. Nothing more complicated than that. Talking exactly about that. Very simple. Talking about or other pleasures.

Final Exchange: Practical Example

Now let's go back to where I was. Okay, either talking exactly about that, not about what you have to talk about. That's not

pleasure, that's liking. I'm talking about pleasure.

Student: What do you mean you could eat more pizza or less pizza? I don't understand the problem.

Instructor: You could—a good person, someone that has that, is not—not temperate, that is intemperate, he eats 10 bites of pizza. And someone that is temperate eats only 9 bites. I'm not sure I understand what your problem is.

Student: Or maybe you don't need it.

Instructor: He's saying if...

Student: I'm just confused, getting confused by words. I have no idea what the words are in your head, but it's very simple what I'm talking about. Very simple.

Instructor: But we're getting off topic, but it hasn't too many problems. I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

Chapter 8: Refining the Definition of Temperance: From Pleasure Generally to Bodily Pleasures

Clarifying the Scope of the Inquiry

Instructor: Same thing - how much pizza, how much money to give, how much money to make, how much pizza to eat, how not b'shut: the mean/middle] מוצע בשיש. much pizza not to eat Nothing more or less complicated than that. Okay? .[path Now, but let me... I don't know what problem you have. That is what pleasure... Pleasure is the area that I'm talking about. Should I say it a third time? Pleasure is the area that I'm talking about. I'm talking about this area of activities that give you pleasure - things that people do for pleasure. That's what I'm talking about. Nope, I have no idea what your issue is. .Okay

Student: You still shouldn't be doing too much of it, right?

Instructor: That's not the question that I have. That's not this work. That's a different problem. That's not how to do it.

Student: [Inaudible objection]

Instructor: No, because you're... I am talking about the pleasure. You're talking about health. I'm not talking about health. I'm talking about pleasure. There is a correct way to bring yourself in relation to pleasure - precisely to pleasure.

inyan:] ענין **Student:** I don't know what you mean. There's an .to eat not because of pleasure [obligation/reason

Instructor: Maybe. Nothing to do with what I'm talking to do other [inyan] ענין about today. People that... there's an things not because of pleasure - not talking about that today. Today I'm talking about pleasure. What's the problem? It's not accidental - it's what I'm talking about. Exactly what I'm noyah: the] נויא talking about. Talking about the of this automatically. I'm talking about that. [domain/subject Do you like too much pleasure? Do you like too little pleasure? I'm talking about that. I'll talk about anything else... Everything in the world is complicated. We're trying to simplify things, right? Talking about one day at a time. Everyone knows what pleasure is. We're talking about exactly .that

The Core Problem: Contradictory Attitudes Toward Pleasure

Instructor: And what our problem was - just that we contradict ourselves. That we sometimes praise certain mekasha: the] מקשה pleasures. Okay, that is the lo pachot] לא פחות ולא יותר .that I have today [difficulty/question

There's both pleasures - .[v'lo yoter: no less and no more things that people enjoy - and some of them are good and .some of them are bad

So what this means is that we should stop saying that pleasures are bad. Or that even... I guess one way of solving this would have been to say something like - that's why I started talking about the middle term, the mean. So one way of saying this would be like, well, pleasures are neither good or bad. Some pleasures are good, some pleasures are bad. And the virtue exists in knowing which pleasures are good and which pleasures are bad. Make sense?

That was a sort of... We could have sort of done that. I think that that would not be... I think the problem with that would be it's too broad. It's not giving us a virtue in the end. We don't have a virtue to talk about. It's a very general thing. Yeah, virtue exists of knowing what to live, how to live. That choice is true, but it's way too general. The whole point is a specific area.

Student: I think the virtue might be the refinement of pleasure. It's a different kind of...

Instructor: Yes, but let me give you another... Yes, let me give you... That might be true. I don't disagree with that. That might be true. But I'm still up to a higher level of questioning, right? It might be true because that's the virtue. In other words, that's that... And even after we'll restrict virtue to whatever area. Now we're just restricting it to an area. After we restrict it to a very specific area, we could say, and then what is good - which, how much to eat, yeah, the refined ones, and so on - that could be. But that doesn't... but "what to eat" is a conversation about the nature of the virtue, not the... it's not the science... no, it's... it's about the nature of... after we have a very specific one. But it's not going to solve the question of why isn't... isn't there even a question...

First Challenge: The Problem of Love of Learning

Instructor: Shouldn't... let's say something like this - why shouldn't you even moderate your love of learning? There isn't moderation in love of learning. If it's a virtue, it should have been moderate, for example. But we don't think it should be moderated about that.

Student: Some people think it shouldn't. It's a מחלוקת .[machlokes: dispute/disagreement]

Instructor: Aristotle thinks it shouldn't. It's a מחלוקת ...Not clear. But I can give you a different .[machlokes]

Student: Because that's how it is moderated?

Instructor: No, because love of learning is not... The answer is... The answer, the way to get out of this problem today, is תעיה that when we talk... Wait, wait, let me give you another teretz:] תירוץ before I give you a [ta'ayah: difficulty/challenge] תעיה okay? Let me give you another .[answer/resolution] .[ta'ayah]

Student: It could be that the mean of that is all the way to one side, but to say that it has... it's no mean, then it's an end, right?

Instructor: No, that's wrong. In any case, it's not... What you show from that is... we can have a discussion, but that's not the point. The point is that when people talk about being משגיח temperate, nobody that I know... Let's be clear - our that we talked [mashgiach: religious supervisor/ethical guide]

about five minutes... whenever, a half year ago, I don't know when - was not... he never would have imagined even applying his framework that he talks about pleasure to the pleasure of בדידות learning. It's a whole different thing. This is .That's the thing .[b'dochnias: obvious/self-evident]

Student: What do you mean? You said words that contradict each other.

Instructor: Okay, so obviously there's something going on we're trying to solve. And we can solve it in a very simple way. We don't have to make anything complicated. No, they're both pleasure. We don't have to make them into different things. I don't think we have to do that. We just have to refine this. We have to make a word. When we say the virtue of temperance, we have to define what it's about. And instead of saying it's pleasure, we should say it's about a certain kind of pleasure.

Second Challenge: The Schmoozing Example

Instructor: I can give you another proof from the other side of it. Okay, I could give you... gosh, this is a crazy, crazily broad word. We should stop here. Body pleasures. Yeah, yeah, that gashmius:] גשמיות would be better. Human body, not .in the terms of gosh [physicality/materialism]

I could give you a better way. Let me try to talk something, say something very simple. I could try to do it the other way around. I could say, how about someone that has to take too [schmoozing: chatting/socializing] שמועסינג much pleasure in and hacking? How do they call it in Yeshiva? Hacking. Okay, baal taiva: person of] בעל תאוה how about that guy? Is he also a says he's stopping [mashgiach] משיגח When ?[excessive desire he also means the guy that loves to ,[baal taiva] בעל תאוה such a שמועס ?right? Does he or doesn't he ,[shmooze]

He doesn't. Why not? He just takes pleasure. By the way, I take a lot more than in eating. [shmoozing] שמועסינג pleasure in with, [shmooze] שמועס When I don't have anyone I want to with [seudah: meal] סעודה then that's when I eat. You come to a me and I eat, you'll see I want to... It's only when you leave .[taiva: desire] תאוה that I start to eat. Because it's a bigger That's what I like more. Bigger pleasure. For some people. ...Right? So

Student: It's not really used to describe the...

Instructor: It's not. It's not. Even the ,[mashgiach] משיגח might get confused by my question, but it's not a If I ask him this question, he'd .[shem: clear/obvious term שמועס never thought of this question even, right? Why isn't the ?[taiva] תאוה said about [shmooze]

Third Challenge: Excessive Grief

Instructor: Ah, the problem is that you're too into How about someone that cries about .[gashmius: physicality] ?[baal taiva] בעל תאוה his mother's death too much? Is he also a baal] גשמיות isn't it? There's a big ,[gashmius] That's Okay, his mother... his wife... his wife died. And the .[taiva] right? He said ,[baal taiva] בעל תאוה guy's very sad. He's a huge ?what's a wife for - [gashmius] גשמיות .that his wife died

Generally, he wouldn't... even if the guy could be criticized for Maybe .[baal taiva] בעל תאוה crying too much, his problem isn't it's a problem that he's depressed. Maybe it's a problem that he doesn't believe in Hashem's judgment on him. Nobody would ?right ,[baal taiva] בעל תאוה say his problem is that he's

Student: What?

Instructor: Of course they would?

Student: They would? Yeah, it's fun to cry.

Instructor: Exactly, it's fun. Still wouldn't say that his He would say that he's a... that [baal taiva] בעל תאוה problem is he likes to cry too much - different kind of... not intemperate. He's not a... I don't know, whoever you call. In Yiddish, we say ...for this thing. I don't know if anyone [baal taiva] בעל תאוה

Student: It's not enjoyable.

Instructor: Meaning, it's not the same... People like it.

Digression: The Danger of Conflating Different Pleasures

Instructor: Okay, let's... Don't let him be itchy and scratch grubba taiva: coarse] תאוב גראבע himself. By the way, that's a גראבע It's a [taiva] תאוה That's the biggest. That's a big [desire because they made a good show between [grubba taiva] תאוה that and something else. Not really

[cheshbonos: calculations/reasonings] חשבונות No, no, no. The that said it, they thought that it's the same thing as something else. That's why. Also, I think it's a confusion. Yeah, yeah. It's because of these kind of [cheshbon] חשבון

from the [chilik: distinction] חילוק I'm serious. What's the [ra'abim dar] רעבים do to the [ra'abim: the hungry ones] Tell yourself that. This is pleasurable, that's pleasurable. Okay, this is not a [mitzvah: commandment] מצוה this is a but it's the same thing basically, right? What's [aveirah: sin] the difference in hugging your friend than hugging your... ?same kind, right

No, there is a difference. It happens to be. Human beings are more simple than that. But people that make this kind of they end up in these kind of places [cheshbonos] חשבונות

Student: No, I'm trying to say that it's more [dachas] דחס דיגים

Instructor: Not more [diggim: subtle/refined] דיגים

The Emerging Definition: Bodily Pleasures

Instructor: So we could just solve this by defining exactly what we're talking about. And we could try to define it even better. But one simple thing we could say is, saying that the midas hataivah: the trait of] מדה התאוה [noyah: domain] is not about all kinds of human pleasures. [desire/temperance .Let's stop saying that - that's a mistake, that's way too broad It's specifically about pleasures [gashmius: physicality] גשמיות of the body. We'll start here. It's not close. It's still not refined .enough. But we can start here

Fourth Challenge: The Kavod (Honor) Example

Instructor: For an example, even someone that likes too much, okay? Let's forget about [kavod: honor/prestige] bad, good things that we start getting confused about. What too much? Is he [kavod] כבוד about someone who likes baal kavod: person of honor-] בעל כבוד No, he's [baal taiva] kina, taiva, kavod: jealousy,] כבוד, תאוה, קנאה It's about [seeking [desire, honor ,It's three different things. Obviously, [baal kavod] בעל כבוד is not [baal taiva] בעל תאוה and [baal kina] is very pleasurable. Some people [kavod] כבוד right? Although like that guy, you give up - [kavod] כבוד go to great lengths for

Makes sense. [kavod] כבוד for [taivos: desires] תאוות all your [baal taivos] בעל תאוות But that's not being

Chapter 9: Distinguishing Bodily Pleasures from Soul Pleasures: The Scope of Temperance

Kavod (Honor) as a Separate Category from Taiva (Desire)

kavod:] כבוד **Instructor:** What about someone who likes taiva:] תאוה too much? Is he about [honor/glory davka:] דוקא [kavod] כבוד No, he's about [desire/appetite specifically there's three different things. Obviously, - [kavod: honor] כבוד is not about [taiva] תאוה and about [kinah] קנאה about is very pleasurable. [kavod] כבוד right? Although [kavod] כבוד Some people like

יש לאחדים שממונה חביב עליו מגופה, יש לאחדים שכבודה חביב עליו מממונה Yesh l'achadim she-monam chaviv alav mi-gufo, yesh] l'achadim she-kvodam chaviv alav mi-monam: Some people value their money more than their body, some people value whatever. Some people - [their honor more than their money like that guy who used the [kavod] כבוד go to great lengths for taavos:] תאוות right? You give up all your [rav: rabbi] רב Makes sense. But that's not [kavod] כבוד for [desires/pleasures being about [taiva] תאוה

The Problem with Overly Broad Definitions

When we talk, right, you could talk about as being about - having a very broad sense - you're too much about yourself, - [shiuir: class/lesson] שייעור too much about your body. But our is that always talking, making - [shiuir] שייעור there is doing things broader, hurts us more than it helps us, at least for middah:] מדה practical purposes. If you want to work on the not either you want to talk about it, you want [character trait .to have a clarity about it, you should restrict it more

First Restriction: Bodily Pleasures vs. Pleasures of the Soul

So let's do restriction number one. Restriction number one is: it's about bodily pleasures. It's not about pleasures of the soul.

The Metaphysical Question: Do You Need to Believe in a Soul?

Now remember, in order for this to make sense, you don't Maskilim:] משכים ?really have to believe in a soul, alright because then you - [Enlightenment-era Jewish intellectuals would say, "Oh, this is all just not - you need some metaphysics for this to work," and we have a problem if you're an extremity list. Like if you really think that all pleasure - nowadays with people talk about dopamine system, this should think of dopamine - you know, you know that nobody ever saw it? It's just fantasy that some neuroscience made up - [emunos: beliefs] אמונות and everyone believes that. Bunch of come on, we don't know that actually that's what causes pleasure. It's an invention. Nobody actually knows that. It's like a weird, half-ways, a quarter-proven hypothesis that doesn't - not even - explain most of what it's supposed to .explain. Yeah

Why Reductive "Dopamine Talk" Is Problematic

And it's crazy that we talk about it this way. Why is it crazy that we talk about it this way? Because this is what causes is the same as [kavod: honor] כבוד people to think that liking געלט [gelt: money (Yiddish)] געלט is something that pertains to how other people treat [Kavod] is something that pertains to your relation to [Gelt] געלט .you and [ashton] עשתון has to do with [Ashton] עשתון [?] and [Limud:] לימוד .other things have to do with other things These are [limud] לימוד has to do with [learning/study

different things. They have different objects and also different parts of the person that enjoy it. It's not the same kind of .thing

"Yeah, everything is just dopamine." No. By the way, how do you know that? Nobody knows that. Such as not knowing that, it doesn't help us to say that. But it's still more different than it's similar, right? You understand?

Concession: Physical Dependency Doesn't Collapse the Distinction

Maybe someone who's clinically depressed or has like a physical deficiency can't enjoy learning either. That could be. That doesn't make - that's not a problem for me, right? It goes about [shiuir] שייעור back - we're not going to have every questions of body and soul, but it's not a problem at all. It's .still a different kind of thing

Therefore, the way more and more people talk about it is: someone that likes to talk too much, takes a lot of pleasure in his faculty of speech, or seeming smart, or things like that - it's not about his body. We can still talk about his body. Does it ?[kavod] כבוד need a body? Do you need a body to enjoy Possibly. Do you need a body to enjoy learning? Possibly. As long as you're in a body, probably you do. At least I've never met anyone - I've never learned with anyone that's not in a מלאך אברהם body, or that wasn't ever in a body. That's for the .Okay .[(?) Malach Avriel: the angel Avriel/Gabriel]

obviously [Malach Avriel] מלאך אברהם Besides for that, the could learn. That proves that you don't need a body to learn. But while you're in a body, you do need a body. When you're tired, you can't learn. Although you don't learn with your body. .Okay, well that's complicated metaphysics

The Key Methodological Error to Avoid

But without that complicated metaphysics, it's still different. But I'm just reminding us of this because one of the reasons we get stuck is because instead of thinking about what things are, we think about what makes them work. It's like saying all houses are the same because all of them need bricks, cinder blocks on the bottom, or whatever they put on the bottom of houses nowadays. That's not interesting. It's true but not interesting, right? Trying to talk about the difference, right? What do you enjoy is the air condition, not the foundation - even if you need a foundation, even if the foundation breaks, the air can stop also to work.

Examples of Non-Bodily Pleasures Excluded from Temperance

So loving to learn, or loving to think, or loving to talk, or loving to have honor, or enjoying anything like that - is not the pleasure of the body in the relevant sense. Do you need a body for it? Metaphysical, physical questions for a doctor. But when we talk about pleasures of the body, we don't mean those.

Conclusion of the First Restriction

פרישות So finish, we solve the problem. Whenever we talk about זהירות - in this sense ,[prishus: abstinence/temperance] temperance, whatever you want to call ,[zahidas: asceticism] Aristotle - we only talk ,[Zucht: discipline (German)] ציכט ,it about pleasures of the body, not pleasures of the soul belongs to the soul, not to the body. Or figure it out [Kavod] exactly to where it belongs - not to what we're talking about. .The end. Not to the senses

Clarification: "Body" Means "Senses"

Student: Wait, we're going to talk about senses. Not to the senses. When you say body, we mean senses?

Instructor: Yeah, you could say we mean senses at this point. Yeah, we mean senses. Very good.

Extended Discussion: Is Sleep a Taiva?

And it's not - sleep is ?[taiva] תאוה **Student:** Sleep would be a ?[taiva] תאוה not a

Instructor: No. No, I don't think so. I think that's a very because you're not [taiva] תאוה weird thing to say. Sleep is not a .- you're not there when you're - you don't enjoy sleep

Student: Yeah.

Instructor: Firstly because of that. I don't think it makes sense to say that you enjoy sleep.

Student: No, actually, because reality is that I enjoy - I don't know, it's bothering me because of the way -

Instructor: I didn't say you don't enjoy it. You see, firstly, especially people who sleep like 12 hours a day - by the way, I don't think it's a pleasure. I think it's - I don't know. Firstly, like you're saying, it's like resting. It's the opposite of doing something. Pleasure is when you're doing something. It's that תניא pleasure. It has to do with like - if you go like in the chart, it would [Tanya: foundational Chabad Hasidic text] have to do with like depression. Is depression a pleasure? I mean, people could say, "I enjoy being depressed," but that's like just a weird artifact of language. Being depressed is not .enjoying anything. That's like the definition of it

Student: No, but sleeping for a half hour - that's a bodily pleasure.

Instructor: I don't think it's a pleasure. It's like a social pleasure maybe, to sleep.

Student: How about resting? You're never - yeah, all the guys - the garbage truck has to wake up and I'm here -

Instructor: No, but how about resting on the couch, not actually sleeping?

Student: Maybe it's a pleasure of the mind.

Instructor: In any case, sleep is for your - very good.

Rest Is Not One of the Senses

So rest - rest is not one of the senses. Rest is like - I'll tell you why sleep is not a pleasure. Okay, for different reasons. I don't think - maybe in this context - no, he's usually associated with the same sort of bad character in the sense that - you imagine the person -

Student: No, laziness.

Instructor: Someone who sleeps too much - let's be very clear. Someone who sleeps too much, we call them lazy. We don't call them pleasure seeker. We don't, right? We call them lazy. It's a different thing.

Student: But I'm not asking - no, it's part of the same caricature. I'm asking you to have the five senses. That's what I'm asking you for. No reserve on how much -

Instructor: Wait, wait. I'm asking you to have the five senses. That's what I'm trying to say.

The Instructor's Personal View on Sleep

Ah, sleep, in that sense, I don't think - by the way, if you ask me, sleep is a pleasure of the mind, just like - how do you call it? Being drunk is - okay, I don't know. I don't know.

Brief Digression: Is Dreaming a Pleasure?

Student: Is dreaming a pleasure? Like, is thinking a pleasure?

Instructor: Yeah, it's a pleasure, but not of the body. That's what we're talking about. There's social pleasures that have to do with other people. There's - okay.

Analysis of the "Sloth" Character

So how - where's the pleasure? Someone's like a sloth - that's a kind of laziness, like a species of laziness, like extreme laziness. Like he just sleeps and eats all day. The sleeping part is laziness, and the eating is also because of laziness - because middos:] מדות nothing, anything else. Okay, could be like bad also go together with each other, right? It's [character traits go together with each other. Okay. Like [middos] מדות like good not controlled as well - being uncontrolled leads to all kinds of .things

Methodological Point: Why Restriction Matters

What we're trying to specify - the virtue of temperance is having to correct - no, no, wait. So our self - temperance is a lot more limited. That's what I'm saying. If you make it "having the correct and not being - not letting your body control you" or something like that, for physical pleasures, not for other things - that will give them a different name. We'll talk about them separately. This is what allows us to have a שיעור on each thing separately. Otherwise my [shiur] שיעור .would finish very quickly [shiur]

Student: It's like saying - like, do you enjoy - okay, no, it seems that analysis to sleep, if you're applied to eating, would seem -

Instructor: But it wouldn't seem the same, right?

Student: Oh, it might, it might.

Instructor: Wait, wait, wait, wait, wait. Yes, yes, yes. Let's talk about that. Let's look at that. No problem. Yes, no, no. And there's nothing with eating, only with the pleasure of - doesn't ever take away [ta'am: taste] טעם eating, right? The

Student: Wait, exactly. So that's why - let's just - falling asleep -

Instructor: Let me, let me - okay, maybe Christmas - I don't see that it's pleasurable. I don't know what's pleasurable - falling asleep. I don't have what you're trying to say. I'm not trying - something sounds weird. Okay, let's not - this is not a I'm going to sleep. We got this very important - .[shiur] שיעור go to sleep. Not - I was here today. I was here today. It's about ?the general concept, okay

Second Restriction: Which Senses Are Relevant?

So now, let's talk about more things, okay? So now that we realize that this is just - you could see all of this as just a linguistic clarification even if you want. It just helps us work normally. Instead of pretending that when we say pleasure, we inhale all the pleasure, we know we're in bodily pleasure, okay?

Now let's make it even more restricted. Do we mean all bodily pleasures? Like let's say like this - like all of the senses.

Test Case: Visual Pleasures (Sight)

So I have some things that are not about - I've - okay, let's go .[(?) much gear: mental imagery/framework] גיר back to my that makes [much gear] גיר because in my head I have that [much gear] גיר sense. You maybe you have different .says different things

in my head - let's say someone that [much gear] גיר The likes the theater very much, or likes art. He likes art museums. He goes - art museums are a very weird way to experience art,

but anyways - someone who likes beautiful scenes. He goes on trips to see beautiful views, okay? Buildings - no, views. Nature, something like that, okay? He loves that. Is he about - .it's a pleasure of a sense - sense of sight, I guess

Test Case: Auditory Pleasures (Hearing)

How about someone who likes music very much?

Student: He doesn't enjoy the sensation of seeing. It's not because his eyes feel good.

Instructor: Well, I - by the way, it is. By the way, you don't hear people saying like, "It hurts my eyes to look at that."

Student: No, they don't mean their eyes. I don't know - seeing beautiful things helps your eyes?

Instructor: No, isn't it - I mean, help your eyes? It's - it says in the book - it's a -

Chapter 10: The Narrowing of Temperance: Why Only Touch Constitutes True Bodily Pleasure

Is Visual Beauty a Matter of Desire (Taiva)?

The Question of Sight as Bodily Pleasure

master of desire/one :בעל תאוה: **Student:** Is he a baal taiva too? It's a pleasure of a sense, sense of [controlled by desire sight, I guess. How about someone who likes music very ?much

Instructor: He doesn't enjoy the sensation of seeing. It's not because his eyes feel good.

Student: Well, I, by the way, it is, by the way. You don't hear people saying, like, it hurts my eyes to look at that?

Instructor: No, they don't mean their eyes. I don't know. Seeing beautiful things helps your eyes, no, isn't it? I mean, help your eyes. It's a beautiful thing to see. It's a beautiful sight.

Student: Yeah, I guess.

Instructor: Well, eyes are not things that have pleasure. So you realize that we're trying to get—we're getting at something very weird. Eyes don't have pleasure? It's like the mouth having pleasure with schmoozing [Yiddish: chatting, conversing]. It's like that.

Student: No, no, that's a tool. That's what he's saying.

Instructor: No, schmoozing is not in the mouth. It's in the give and take. It happens to be that you need a mouth. If it's in writing, when you post on the internet and you schmooze that way, it's the same schmoozing. Or fingers. Or if you have some other way to type, I don't know.

The Irreducibility of Visual Experience

Student: You can't enjoy scenery without eyes. There's no other way.

Instructor: In your imagination.

Student: Imagination is just like fake eyes, isn't it?

Instructor: Maybe. You can argue the fingers. But that's not the same. Imagination is one pleasure, and seeing things is seeing. You can't just imagine them and say I have the same thing. That's not true.

Student: Like, is it akin to—let's put it this way, I could draw a closer relation between the sensation of taste and touch than I could between touch and sight.

Instructor: Right, there's a difference. There's a difference in the way those senses work. That's true. They work by touch. sight and hearing [in contrast to :מה שאין כן: Mah she'ein kein

and smell work at the distance. Aristotle was impressed by .that

Student: Well, smelling, I'm saying, is a portion of it.

Instructor: It might be a kind of taste. Maybe not. Maybe it's different.

Student: I can even associate that more.

The Mashgiach Test - How Religious Authorities Actually Categorize Pleasures

Movies and Visual Entertainment

Instructor: Okay, the point is that for some funny reason, we don't talk about—I wonder why, I'm making you notice certain religious [משגיח: משיגיא] things. Nobody, I never, even a Mashgiach doesn't say that [supervisor/dean of students in a yeshiva watching movies, not talking about movies, the only purpose is to make you feel certain sensations. But, like, movies that have any beauty or any information in them or anything like that, no, he doesn't call them baal taiva. He calls it bittul Torah :[ביטול תורה: [neglecting Torah study :בטול זמן; [non-Jewish/gentile behavior :גוייש] goyish],[wasting time there's different pronouns with them, but not taiva, right? Like, no, baal taiva that kicks movies. Usually when a Mashgiach says movies, it just means this, but let's say they

!were actually watching movies. It's not that

It's about time that you go on trips, you go to look at the scenery. Nobody even says you're baal taiva for listening to concerts, do they? I love beautiful music.

How Respected Figures Are Described

Instructor: It's funny, like again, thinking about Mashgiach as an example, the people that the Mashgiach respect. Not all of them appreciate beautiful sites, but some of them do. And it's not seen as like, if you tell the Rebbe he really liked a kugel okay, you know, he's ,[traditional Jewish baked dish :קוגל] allowed to, but nobody says it as a—nobody respects him for .that

If you tell the Rebbe, he would see a beautiful mountain, he :[מה רבו מעשיך ה: "would say, "Mah rabu maasecha Hashem so ,[How great are Your works, O Lord" - Psalms 104:24] beautiful. He's like, that's a good thing, right? Or if the Rebbe of chazanus [Yiddish - a piece/bit :שטיקל] would hear a stickle because chazanus was invented more ,[cantorial music :הזנות] .than 50 years ago, so he's allowed to like it

Student: So, and they would say, classical music, right?

Instructor: They would say, wow, you would want to listen to it another 500 times, right? We don't think that's like a sakana general. Some people might. But, right, we ,[danger :סכנה] don't say it's about taiva. We don't say, you're too into it. I guess it could be too into it in other sense, like it takes up too much of your time or things like that. But it's not about—we don't talk about the pleasure being like too much. I don't think ?so. So, have you heard of anyone saying that

Student: Yes.

Instructor: What?

Student: Yes.

Instructor: Like who?

Student: I can think of a clinical situation.

Clinical vs. Moral Situations

Dismissing Clinical Cases

Instructor: Clinical situations don't count.

Student: Yes.

Instructor: We're talking about—because we don't believe in clinical situations, only moral situations. There's a kind of person who exists, who experiences aesthetic and intellectual and visual and all these pleasures to a point where it harms his life.

Student: Yeah, that's right.

Instructor: Clinical just means it harms your life, which means you don't work for capitalism well enough, which is not very interesting.

Student: No, no, I'm serious what I'm saying.

Instructor: No, because again, you're not talking about—we're talking about when the pleasure is too much, not when someone is like, he's too busy doing one thing but you have to do other things also. Okay, that's the problem. That's a question of time management or something like that. I don't think that—okay, the clinical situations don't count. We're not talking about Mashgiach and then it could anyway same thing doesn't matter in any way. We're not talking about kinds of situations like that. This book, this sheet, or this kind of shiur at least, is about normal people. It's about ,[lesson/class :שיעור] only moral situations, normal, normal, normal situations. .Everything, you could do everything

Important Qualification

Instructor: By the way, I didn't say, just to be very clear, I :[פתיש] didn't—when we say this, right, it says here in the fetish in this book that I'm [likely referring to a text or commentary reading, we're not saying that you can't enjoy music too much, or that you can't enjoy whatever beautiful things too much. Nobody is saying that. We're saying that when we have that problem, it wouldn't be an issue of temperance. It would be some other issue which maybe we'll find a new name for. Maybe it's not common enough to have a name. It would be a .different issue

Not a question of time. It would be a different question. Like I said, it could be a question of bittul zman. You shouldn't listen to music too much. It takes away your head from learning. No problem. There's a competition. Either your head is about songs or it's about learning. That's not a question of time. It's a different question. Different problem has different ways of working. There's differences in these things. There's a reason why we, for whichever reason, we separate the virtues into different things. We shouldn't confuse these things either. Okay?

Eliminating Smell as a Primary Taiva

The Challah-Smelling Test

Instructor: Even sense of smell isn't really about this.

Student: What about this virtue of, this pleasure of touching your phone all the day?

Instructor: I don't know which one that is. I think that's a sanctification [קידוש] sense. By the way, I have a kiddush .[blessing, often refers to a celebratory gathering with food You heard my shiur? I think touching your phone has to do with what Aristotle thinks is a problem. Because it has to do with a sense of touch. Do you know that the people who make ?phones make sure that they feel pleasant to touch

Student: Okay, so, yeah, of course.

Instructor: Doesn't work. No, no, no, that doesn't... Okay, let's not... That was just a nice way of me... It's not even...

Student: How about someone that smells too much? He loves Is he .[traditional braided bread :הלה] to smell the fresh challah ?baal taiva

Instructor: In some sense, he is, secondarily. Like, he smells the challah, but he wants to eat the challah. He's not really about the challah [meaning: not about the smell of the challah].

The Animal Criterion

Yiddish - "Says the זאג דער רבי: **Instructor:** Zog der Rebbe this is like, let's say, an animal. An animal, for sure, ["Rebbe only has taivas. One of the definitions of what's bad about taiva is that's what animals do. They don't have shavamos They .[possibly referring to higher faculties/soul levels :שבמות] ?don't have shavamos, right

And a lion smells a cow or a zebra or whatever he's going to eat, right? Does he like to say, "Ah, good smell"? No, he's like, "Good meat." Different. If you say good meat, then you're a If you say good smell, then .[animal/living creature :חי] chai on pleasant smells. I [blessing :ברכה] you can make a bracha don't know if people call like a perfume connoisseur a baal .taiva

Student: No, it depends. If it's about like the person in a sexual way or something like that, then it might be about taiva. But if it's like—

Instructor: Like, yeah, all the connoisseurs are trying to take :הכמה] the taiva out of it. That's what the whole chochma of being a connoisseur of anything is. Take [wisdom/expertise .the taiva out of it

Student: No, I wouldn't say that. I'd say people who like smelling oud and smelling saffron and whatever.

Instructor: No, no, it's not. It's not taiva. It's not what we're talking about. Let's just say like...

Student: It's not the way the taiva is.

Instructor: Right. So you say, I don't know if you'd call that person baal taiva the same way you'd call somebody who likes to smell taiva.

Student: Right, right, right.

Instructor: We're not talking about... At least when we talk about taiva, at least when we talk about taiva, I smell an animal that I like to eat. Like what an animal would do. Things ?["?Yiddish - "Correct?/Agreed :שטימט] like that. Stimmt

The Final Narrowing - Only Touch Remains

Summary of Elimination

Instructor: So what are we left with? We're left with like what you people said. We're left with only two senses. Touch and taste. Okay? Now even taste is not really a problem. So we're left only with touch.

Student: Why not taste?

Instructor: Because animals don't taste their food. Did you know that animals don't taste their food? They might taste them in the sense of like if it's sweet, they eat it or something. But they don't have taste as a kind of judgment, which is a human thing, right?

The Fresser vs. Taster Distinction

Instructor: When you—a taster—there's a difference between and [Yiddish - glutton/one who devours food :פריסער] a fresser a taster. You have a taster, he likes the judgment of the food, like, "This is—I get the stickle" [the subtle point/nuance]. There's an issue as I get the stickle. That's his pleasure. So that's not a pleasure of the senses, the pleasure of the judgment. Now is it good or bad, another question

But the problem of—do you know that if you taste, if you take the people that taste the—can not eat too much, eat too much, you lose your sensitivity. You can't taste the thing.

Student: Right, it's like you really taste wine and spit it out.

Instructor: Right, you have to spit it out because it's the That's what I was telling you .[taste/flavor/reason :טעם] ta'am all the way in the beginning. It depends on the second bite and .the next bite

Student: Right.

Instructor: Yeah, but that's the taste. That's not what we're talking about.

Taste as Judgment, Not Sensation

Instructor: So taste is exactly the thing that animals don't do. Distinguishing flavors, it says like here. Like when you taste wines and people actually baal taiva don't like that. That's not what we call baal taiva. Some Mashgiach might call it baal might call it baal [Maimonides :רמב"ם] taiva. The Rambam taiva for other reasons, but the Aristotle didn't call this baal .taiva

Aristotle's Definition of the Baal Taiva

The Rambam's Characterization

Instructor: What is the baal taiva? He gives an example of baal taiva. It's what the Rambam said. Rambam said that he is [foolish/stupid desire :תאוה שכיילה] thinks that taiva sechila very dumb. Why? Because he made it for himself. Then I see .that Aristotle made it up

He said, why is it very dumb? Because where do you have the taiva sechila? How big is it? It's like 3 inches, like from your tongue until here [gesturing to throat]. Once it's here, it's very small. It doesn't make sense.

—no—[difficulty/question :קושיא] **Student:** The kasha

Instructor: His kasha—it—no, no, but what he's getting at, you see, you remember that philosophy is about figuring out what people mean when they say funny things, which is all of us, right?

The Story of the Crane

:משל] **Instructor:** So Aristotle says—he says a mashal listen, listen, no, I'm explaining what he—[parable/story means. Aristotle said that he heard a mashal of a person who was exactly the kind of bad person that we're talking about, He said, "Can you please .[prayer :תפילה] but he had a tefillah make my tongue as long as like the long—" how do you call the crane, like a bird that has a very long tongue that sticks out all ?the way

Student: Yeah, something, yeah.

Instructor: Why? Because he's like, that's my pleasure. So that's too long. I could [measure/amount :שיעור] it's a shiur only—only a little, thought of a lot. The whole pleasure is in the like touching of the food on the—on the taste was—this is —where the pleasure is. Like, so he's—his tefillah was

:גלגול] And Plato would say that he would become a gilgul
...in a crane because [reincarnation

[Recording ends]

Chapter 11: The Sense of Touch as the Defining Domain of Temperance and Its Animal Nature

The Anecdote of the Long Tongue: Illustrating Pure Touch Pleasure

The Story and Its Meaning

can you please ",[Ana Hashem: Please, God] 'אנא ה', He said make my tongue as long as like the long—how do you call it—a crane, like a bird that has a very long tongue that sticks out all .the way

Why? Because he's like, "That's my pleasure." So it's true that it's too long, like it's only a little. The whole pleasure is in the touching of the food on the taste buds—that's where the pleasure is. I'm like, hmmm.

Platonic Reference: The Myth of Er

was... and Plato would say that he [tefillah: prayer] תפילה So his back in a crane, [gilgul: reincarnation] גלגול would become a in what he really wants to in his גלגול because everyone gets a life. That's what it says in the Myth of Er [from Plato's .*Republic*, Book X]. You should read it

So if you eat, right? So if your pleasure isn't that, that's what you're going to become. So that brings out what we mean when we say intemperate.

Talmudic Support

says on [Gemara: Talmud] גמרא Or in the same way, like the ha amaveh] "הא מאוה ואמש טעמה", [parah: cow/heifer] פרה the ד and so on. Which means to say that this [v'amash te'amah his hope is—his whole pleasure wasn't this like ever ,[Yid: Jew] cut and this like three inches or whatever, if my inches—that .his thing was this, this touch

That's the kind of pleasure that we're against. That's at least is talking about. That's all [midah: character trait] מדה that this the pleasure of the sense of touch, and that's the exact pleasure .that only animals have

The Core Argument: Touch Pleasure as Uniquely Animal

Why Touch is Problematic

That's why it's a problem. Not only animals—that we share entirely with animals. Because even taste we don't share with animals, because animals don't drink old wine that like special —"I taste it"—that only people do that.

Animals, they have the sense—the pleasure of taste you could call it—of the touch of the taste, not the taste of the taste, not the judgment of the taste, only the touch of the taste.

The Animal-Like Quality

So that's what is animal-ish—stick—that's why this is there. That's why... let me... yeah, we just... we just playing because all food is about touch, that's why.

Well, sex is more directly about touch and food is more directly about taste, but it's really the touch of the taste, not the taste of the taste.

So that's why the people—the kind of people that we... the kind that they are the—[midah] מדה of people that have the bad Musselmen:] מוסלמים most animal-like, that we're like the most and philosophers, is precisely the people [a term used here .that are slaves to the sense of touch

Aristotle's Famous Statement on Touch

The Quote and Its Context

This is where we get the famous quote from Aristotle. This is the chapter—it doesn't literally say in this chapter, at least not in our version—that said that you should be ashamed of the sense of touch. I understand, very famous quote from Aristotle, wrote a few times: "The sense of touch is a disgrace to humans."

Correct Interpretation

By which it means it's a disgrace for humans to live by the sense of touch, or to be too much into the sense of touch—by which we mean pleasures of the sense of touch—because that is precisely the kind of pleasures that animals have.

And humans, of course, going back to the function argument humans ,[Sefer Aleph: Book One] ספר א' from Part One, from .are the kind of things that do specifically human things

Pedagogical Purpose

So now you understand. This whole sheet was in order to get you to understand that statement that you probably read shaveh:] שוה quoted somewhere. And if not, then it's kind of a that you don't know it, but anyways, [worthwhile/appropriate .now you do. And that is what it is

Objection: What About Human Touch Pleasures?

Aristotle's Own Question

Then Aristotle was like, wait, but I have some touch things that are human. Like for example, doing exercise or having a massage—that might be a human pleasure of the sense of touch, not an animal, because animals don't give massages.

baal taiva: one controlled by] בעל תאוה Nobody said you're a .if you like massages too much [desire

Methodological Clarification

—[Hamas—likely a place name or institution] חמס The kids at everything when we say "animals don't do that," we don't mean that you can't go on some website and say, "Do animals do this?" and say, "Yeah, we found the animal do that." That's .not what it means

It's like when we say, "Does the body do it or does the mind do it?" We don't mean to say, go make an x-ray of your brain and see if the neurons light up. That's not what I mean.

Now, in the same way, why not think about yourself at night?

Summary: What Has Been Gained

Restriction of Domain

So what we gain by all of this is to realize what exactly we mean when we talk about bad pleasures. Or we talk about—bad pleasure is not the correct word. We talk about the virtue of having the correct amount, or the correct relation, or the correct amount, or the correct time, and so on, of pleasures.

Or we mean it's precisely bad pleasures, and more precisely pleasures of the sense of touch—or neither get food and sex. Those are basically the pleasures of the sense of touch.

What Is Excluded

There isn't really—I know all the ones that I've heard of—like you said, scratching yourself. Aristotle said the scratching yourself isn't the problem, or at least not in the same kind of way. Like things like enjoying a massage, or exercising, or

enjoying the exercise, or enjoying this wedding, or things like that—come to the shirts, Mr. Problem. Eating—that's the problem.

Not this problem. There's might be problem. Nobody said there's no problem with any of those things, just to be clear. Just that's not what we're talking about. All we get to gain from this whole thing is to restrict it so we shouldn't get confused when we talk about—

Student Challenge: Isn't Pleasure Still Pleasure?

Student: But you said something else. No, I didn't say—I meant exactly this, but I can't—just one second. The taster that's tasting it, right? Yeah, right. He has a question. The taster that's tasting it—it's the pleasure of just the pleasure, right? The... I know you're calling it figuring it out, but it's that pleasure, pleasure per se.

Instructor: Nothing is wrong with pleasure. You see, now you could change it. We're not talking about pleasure. Our problem is not pleasure. Our problem is really more being like an animal. Not about pleasure. It's sort of up to animal that pleasure.

There isn't something wrong with pleasure. Not even wrong. We're not even like talking about this. We say the word "pleasure," but we don't mean that.

Why Categorical Distinctions Matter

What This Sheet Is NOT Saying

All of those things are different. This sheet is not saying that everything we just excluded is a good thing, or there's no mean כבוד for [middos: character traits] מדות about it. There are for schmoozing too much. מדות There are. [kavod: honor] .Those are important things

פרישות But don't talk about them under the same heading as [perishut: abstinence/temperance]

Why Separate Them

Why not? Because you just get confused. You try to apply the same rules here and there. They need different rules, or they need different wisdom to see the situation correctly morally. מדות That's the whole point of us splitting all the

Otherwise we could just do Socrates' thing and say there's only which is being a good person and knowing what ,מדא one good to do—which is true. But the point of all of this is like every .learning

The Cars Analogy

Like Aristotle says, by knowing what the Good is, you're not going to make any car. Although what makes good cars good is the Good—the idea of the Good could be—but you have to know about cars.

[shiur: lesson] שיעור The same thing. But you already heard my about cars and motorcycles and everything. I don't know, also because it's the שיעור everyone has to listen to the other meshalim:] משלים same thing with different .and I can't repeat ,[examples/parables

Concluding Statement

Point is, you have to learn. You have to learn about this specific thing. So, and otherwise you get confused. And they get—like I said in the beginning of the sheet—by not having correct words, you also mess up your life.

So therefore you got to know exactly what we're talking about. And what we're talking about is exactly this.

.should help us [Hashem: God] השם .And that's all