

# PARSHAS SHELACH



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## PART 1 - KAVOD IS THE BIGGEST MOTIVATOR PART 2 - LIMUD HATORAH ON SHABBOS

### WHAT WAS THE CHEIT OF THE MERAGLIM

The first part of the *parshah* discusses the *cheit hameraglim*. This *cheit* is one of the central sins that Klal Yisrael transgressed, and is one of the central *aveiros* that appear in the *Torah hakedoshah*. We are suffering for all these years due to this *cheit*, and this *galus* which we find ourselves in began with this *cheit*.

In *Tehillim perek kuf vav*, starting with *passuk chaf daled*, it says: וימאסו בארץ חמדה, they detested the wonderful land, לא האמינו לדברו, they didn't trust Hashem, וירגנו באהליהם, and they complained in their tents, 'לא שמעו בקול ה', they didn't listen to the *kol Hashem*, וישא ידו להם, Hashem lifted up His hand, להפיל אותם במדבר, to destroy them in the *midbar*, ולקח את זרעם בגוים, and to make their children fall among the nations, ולזרותם בארצות, and to scatter them among the lands. You hear that amazing thing? So this *cheit hameraglim* is not what they refer to as small potatoes.

Now what is the *ikar cheit* of the *meraglim*? Everybody will give you all kinds of stories. What's the *ikar cheit*? Where is the first place that you look? Right where the Torah talks about it. So turn to *perek yud daled, passuk yud alef*. Over there it says: ויאמר ה' אל משה, Hashem says to Moshe, עד אנה ינאצני העם הזה, how far will this nation anger Me, ועד אנה, and how far will they go, לא יאמינו לי, they won't trust Me, בכל האותות, in spite of all the miracles, אשר עשיתי בקרבם, which I have performed for them in their midst. Rashi says: בשביל כל הניסים שעשיתי להם היה להם להאמין, because of all the miracles that I have performed for them, they should have believed, שהיכולת בידי לקיים הבטחתי, that I have the ability to fulfill My promise. When Hashem performs miracles for a person and that person doesn't have *emunah* in Hashem after those miracles, that upsets Hashem. When you behold miracles - and every one of us has had miracles - you'd better believe in Hashem and not say, "Well, that can't happen. Oh, this can't happen." It could happen.

So the main *cheit* the Torah tells us about the *meraglim* was that because they gave a negative report about Eretz Yisrael, they caused the Bnei Yisrael not to believe, they weakened their belief in the *koach* of Hashem to bequeath to them the *aretz*. And it repeats that in *perek Tehillim* we just mentioned: וימאסו בארץ חמדה לא האמינו לדברו. That's something that angers Hashem, when somebody says you can't rely on miracles. It's a very big thing. We have to be very careful that a person is not transgressing what it says in the *passuk* פותח את ידך ומשביע לכל חי רצון, that Hashem provides *parnassah* for people.

### EVEN TZADDIKIM LIKE THE MERAGLIM CAN FALL

Now, what we need to understand today is that the *meraglim* were from the *chashuvei ha'eidah*. They saw all the *nissim* of Hashem, and they saw all the *niflaos*. The Yam Suf. The *midbar*. *Matan Torah*. And the Torah itself testifies in the beginning of the *parshah* המה בני ישראל ראשי בני ישראל, כולם אנשים ראשי בני ישראל. Rashi says what does כולם אנשים mean? Rashi says כל אנשים שבמקרא is a *lashon* of *chashivus*. ואותה שעה כשרים היו, at the time that they were chosen, they were *kesheirim*. So, what do you see from here? It's *shayach* to be such a great person and still have a *nefilah* and sin in such a severe way. The question is, how did it happen? There's a *Chazal* brought down in the *Zohar*. It says like this: כולם צדיקים היו, כולם הם לקחו להם, but they chose for themselves לטובתם, for their own benefit, an עצה רעה, the wrong counsel, bad counsel.

Asks the *Zohar*, למה נטלו עצה זו, why did they choose this *eitzah*? They thought: אם יכנסו ישראל לארץ, if Klal Yisrael will enter Eretz Yisrael, יעבירו אתנו מלהיות ראשים, our term will be over. We won't be the *roshei ha'eidah* anymore since, for the next step of Klal Yisrael being in Eretz Yisrael, Moshe will appoint other leaders. We were *zocheh* to be the leaders in the *midbar*, but in Eretz Yisrael, where it's a new *matzav*, they're going to have new leaders. And because of that they chose a bad *eitzah* and they died and all those who were *mekabel divreihem* died also.

You hear that? That means the *meraglim* became aware, *beruach kadsham*, that in Eretz Yisrael they wouldn't be *roshim*. They wanted to be *roshim*, and could not accept the fact that they were going to lose their positions. Therefore, they didn't want to shorten the stay in the *midbar*. They wanted to lengthen the stay in the *midbar*. What's the rush? Why should we run to Eretz Yisrael? It's good in the *midbar*. They were *finer Yidden oichet*. There were *heilege menschen* in the *midbar*. They didn't want to do anything other than learn Torah and do mitzvos. They had no *da'agos*. And because of this they wanted to instill *yi'ush* in the nation, they wanted to move them, to change their minds from wanting to enter into a battle for Eretz Yisrael.

### KAVOD IS THE GREATEST MOTIVATOR

Now, what's the *pashute* understanding of this *Zohar*? So we take a look in the *Mesillas Yesharim*, the *Ramchal*. The *Ramchal*, in *perek yud alef*, talks about what it was about. He says הכבוד הוא הדוחק, the thing that is *dochek* a *mentsch* is *kavod*. He says *kavod* makes a person even act like an *anav*. You could see an *anav*, a guy acting in *gantze anivus*, and you say, "Wow, what an *anav*." The guy is *manash* such a *moradige anav*. And the *Mesillas Yesharim* says that the whole thing that's motivating him is *kavod*. You hear that? He says like this, כי אי אפשר לו לסבול, it's impossible for a person to be *sovel* עצמו, and to see himself מחבירו, in a position מחבירו. Sometimes, you have a guy who tells you, "You know, I really don't care. I don't want to be in the leadership."

I don't mind being behind the eight ball." You've got to tell the guy that the *Mesillas Yesharim* is *makchish* you. He says: אי אפשר לו לסבול. He says the *kavod* is *dochek*, it drives a person יותר מכל התשוקות וההמדות שבעולם, that *kavod* is *dochek* a person more than all the *teshukos* and the *chamados* in the world. You hear that? The greatest motivator and drive that a person has is *kavod*. And he says, it's impossible for a person to see himself פחות מהבירו. Even if life would be easier if he stayed lower than his friend, it doesn't make a difference. People are driven. And here's a guy who says, "I want to make a living. I want to have some money in my pocket." Ask the guy, "Why do you want that? What is the source?" You know what the average guy is going to say to you? "I want to live comfortably." Now most people who chase money work very hard. It doesn't come easy. It's a very hard life. And the *emes* is that his answer is *sheker*. You want to know what drives a person? *Kavod*. You know why a person wants to have a lot of money? Because then people think he's a somebody. He says if there wasn't the *dochek* of *kavod*, a person would be very happy to eat whatever was available, to wear whatever he could to cover himself up, to live in a house that would protect him from the elements, and he would work as easily as possible, and he would never toil to have *ashirus*. But you know what is the biggest drive that pushes him? That he might get caught being lower than his friend. That's the drive. And because of that, there's no end to all the person's toil.

The Ramchal says that is what caused the *meraglim*, according to *Chazal*, שיצאו דיבה על הארץ, to be *motzi dibah al ha'aretz*, וגרמו להם, and that caused them *misah*, ולכל דורם, and brought *misah* to their entire generation. Why? מיראתם, because of their fear, פן ימעט כבודם בכניסת הארץ שלא יהיו הם נשיאים לישראל ויעמדו אחרים במקומם, that they wouldn't be the *nesi'im* of Klal Yisrael and others would take their place, and their positions would be gone. It's mind-boggling how *kavod* drives a person.

### ACCEPT THAT WE ALL NEED KAVOD

Now, I want to tell you something. Knowing this psychology, you will know how to talk to yourself. You go to many people who like to say that they're not looking for *kavod*. They say they're going to find *kavod* through other areas of their life. One tries *kavod* through *gelt*. I once had a guy tell me, "You sit and learn. I'm going to make the money. We'll see later who has more *kavod*, me or you. If I'll be a *chashuve gvir*, I'm going to get a lot more *kavod* than you." It's amazing.

A person has to understand that there are many people who are in learning and find it not easy for them to be *matzliach*. They don't drive themselves to be *matzliach*, and they will tell you, "I don't think I really want this." That's a denial of the *emes* because a person wants *kavod*. Everybody wants *kavod*. *Kavod* is a most powerful and wonderful motivator. My Zeida (Rav Avigdor Miller) used to say, "If you look in the mirror, you should look at yourself and say as follows, 'I want *kavod*.' That's what you should say. And say as follows, 'I want to be a somebody, because that's the only *kavod* I'm going to value, by being a somebody.'"

Now there are small *kavods*. There's one guy who has a nicer picket fence than his friend, and there's one guy who has a nicer, bigger house than his friend. One guy has a better, nicer garden than his friend, and one guy has better everything than his friend. Everybody wants to have the real *kavod*, and the real *kavod* is the *kavod haTorah*. It's *pashut* amazing. The *meraglim* understood, they were *gedolei olam*. They knew what it meant to lead Klal Yisrael that they shouldn't want to go to Eretz Yisrael. *Pashut*. They caused the death of the *gantze velt*, the *gantze dor*, just that they should not lose their jobs, and then they lost everything.

### IDENTIFY AND REMOVE PERSONAL NEGIOS

We have to understand two things. Number one: people will destroy the world for *kavod*, and number two, with all the choices we face in our lives, we have to try to identify, acknowledge and remove all personal *negios* and make an honest accounting.

Now there's no question about it that the *cheshbon* of the *meraglim* was *leshem shamayim* because they knew that they would be on a higher *madreigah* in the *midbar* as leaders than if they would be in Eretz Yisrael. Sure. It wasn't *stam gruber kavod* they wanted to be looked up to. They wanted to be more *matzliach*. They wanted to have more *hatzlachah*. They wanted more *aliyah*. They knew entering Eretz Yisrael meant there are going to be wars. People are going to have to work. The whole system of *shteiging* is going to change. Here you're going to be buried in the *yeshivah*, the greatest *yeshivah*, in this bubble. You're away from the world. You're *muvdal* from *umos haolam*. There's no question that they held it would be better for Klal Yisrael also to be in this situation as long as possible, but the mindset caused tremendous havoc. It was a tremendous train wreck.

But on the other hand, the *Mesillas Yesharim* writes elsewhere that *kavod* is one of the most powerful motivators for *hatzlachah*. My Zeida used to say that *kavod* is like dynamite. All the highways in America are thanks to the great gift of dynamite. The great gift of dynamite. He used to say all the skyscrapers are the result of the gift of dynamite. Without dynamite, they'd still be working on the highway outside of New York trying to chisel out that little highway there. With dynamite, they could blow up mountain after mountain, *achat, shtayim, shelosh*, 1, 2, 3. But dynamite must be used in the right way. If a person uses dynamite the wrong way, then *chas veshalom*. He said over a story. A guy was angry. He came home one day, and his wife changed the locks on the door. She didn't want him home. So he went to his truck, pulled out a stick of dynamite, and stuck it in the mail chute, the hole in the door where you push the mail through. He stuck it in the door, lit it, and ran, and his house was destroyed. That's how he paid his wife back. My Zeida used to say that's the danger of dynamite.

### KAVOD THAT CAN IMPROVE A PERSON

The *Mesillas Yesharim* says that *kavod* is one of the greatest motivators for *hatzlachah*. But not *kavod hamedumah* (imaginary honor). *Kavod ha'amiti*. When a person has a lot of money, no one has real *kavod* for him. People are *chonef* him because they want to get his money, or there are a lot of *geshmake zachen* as a result. It doesn't make the person *be'etzem* a better person.

A person has to want *kavod*, and you have to tell yourself: "I want to be a somebody. I want to be a somebody in the eyes of Hashem, so when it comes to the next world, in the *makom* where they give out *kavod ha'amiti*, I don't want to be ashamed. I want to be something."

In the next world, shrugging is not going to help. It's not going to help you to say, "Oh, I don't really care about *kavod*." The *Mesillas Yesharim* says in the next world, you're going to burn with jealousy. In the next world, you're going to see all your *shtusim* and all your denials. People make denials. It's called self-denial when people deny that they want *kavod*. I've heard this from many

people. They say, "I don't really care about getting *kavod*. I'm not a *kavod* seeker." But that same person is driven to seek *kavod* in other areas.

### SO THAT'S THE FIRST LESSON.

Now, here's a person who wakes up one day and he's not in the mood of learning. It happens. Or the guy comes to a *sugya* which is a little difficult and he has to toil a little bit. He has to put in a little extra effort. So you know what he thinks? "I'm going to let it go." Or he says to himself, "No, no, this is *kavod*." If I know this *sugya*, I'm going to feel like I accomplished something. And if I know this *sugya* because I worked on it and then I got it, that's going to be *kavod amiti*. That's *kavod*. You have to say, "I'm going to do this."

You also have a person who is sometimes asked to do something, but because he's not being offered the leadership of that program, he's only being asked to help out, so he answers, "I'm not that kind of guy. I don't like to mix in." They say, "It's such a big *mitzvah*." "I don't like to mix in. I like to be low-key." All the guy really means is: I'd love to do this, but because you didn't choose me to be the head or the leader of this project, therefore, I won't subjugate myself. I never act subservient to others when they're doing a wonderful good deed. A person has to know what's motivating him. Here is a person who turns down a *shidduch* for some stupid reason, and makes up an excuse, and all that means is *kavod*. Here's a guy who wants to get money for a *shidduch*. Why do you want money for a *shidduch*? He says, "I'm just thinking about my learning." It really could be it just means *kavod*. Now, there are ways to tell. One of the ways to tell is if a person wants everybody to know that with his *shidduch*, he hit the jackpot. Or, he would prefer a *shidduch* that no one should know he got any money. Everybody thinks he got nothing, but really he got something. If it's the latter, that means that person wants money in order to learn. But if a person wants people to be aware of the fact that he hit the jackpot, so then that person is definitely looking for the *kavod* and is not looking to learn. He's looking for self-value and is making a wrong *cheshbon*.

Anticipating reduced *kavod* in the future was at the core of *cheit hameraglim*. They decided to convince *Klal Yisrael* that it was better to stay in the *midbar* than to go into Eretz Yisrael. Not only are we still feeling the effects of the *cheit hameraglim*, we also still have to adjust our relationship with *kavod*. Everybody wants to have *kavod*. The reality is that *kavod* motivates us to do most of what we do, from *limud haTorah* to earning *parnassah*. The greatest and truest *kavod* we can have in this world is *kavod haTorah*. A person should say, "I want to be a somebody in Torah." "I want to be a somebody in the eyes of Hashem, and in the Next World when there is real, everlasting *kavod*." The opposite of this is when people say, "I don't want to have *kavod*," and they use that as an excuse not to push themselves to the max in their learning and *avodas Hashem*. With other types of *kavod* we should make sure not to have too many *negios*, and instead be motivated to do things *l'shem shamayim*. This week, I will (*bli neder*) do an exercise in focusing on the right kind of *kavod*, such as standing in front of the mirror and saying, "I want *kavod*. It suits me to have *kavod* in the eyes of Hashem for learning Torah!"

## PART 2 - LIMUD HATORAH ON SHABBOS

There is a famous *chiddush* from R' Yisrael Salanter (Ohr Yisroel) but its *shaychus* to Shabbos is less known.<sup>1</sup>

The Shaarei Teshuvah (3:14) writes that the *aveirah* of *bitul Torah* is *chamur mi'kol*.<sup>2</sup> Now, if that's so, *bitul Torah* on Shabbos is definitely *chamur she'b'chamuros* because לא ניתנו שבתות אלא לעסוק בהן תורה. R' Yisrael, however, was *posei'ach* for us a *pesach* of *teshuvah*. He revealed to us how every one of us has the ability to walk through the *shaarei teshuvah* and to be called - somewhat of a '*baal teshuvah*' and to be *zocheh* to *mechilas avonos* and to *selichah* and *kaparah*. R' Yisrael was *mechadesh a mehalech nifla*, an amazing *mehalech* of *teshuvah*.

### REALIZING THAT THERE IS A NEED TO CHANGE

One of the most difficult things about the process called *teshuvah* is that most people realize that we are *shakua* in some *chet* - whether it be *bitul Torah*, *lashon hora*, *bitul avodah*, *chessed*, *yiras Shamayim*, whatever it may be. And we feel overwhelmed because it's such a *regilus*, and it's so embedded within us that we *pashut* don't begin to see a way out.

If you go to the average yeshiva man and ask him, "How do you deal with *bitul Torah*?" He raises his hands and says, "I don't. I accepted the fact that there are some *masmidim*, and then there are those who are not *masmidim*." "Have you ever thought about making a *cheshbon*? What are you doing about it?" "I thought about it, I *klap al chet* on Yom Kippur, but that is all I can do."

What about *lashon horah*? A person says, "Yeah, I'm not the Chofetz Chaim type." You have certain types, they call them 'Harrys' or maybe frummies. They like to learn '*halachos-a-day*.' They like the Manchester Rosh Yeshivah's idea, he *shetls tsu* to that *tzidkus*. And they get the little calendars - those are the calendar-type of people, and they carry it in their pocket, they check off the boxes." He says, "I'm not that type of guy, I'm an *ehrlliche normale mensch*, I'm not into that kind of stuff."

<sup>1</sup> הן יסודי ימי התשובה, קבלת עזיבת החטא, והיא הקשה מכל העבודות שבימים הפפורים הבא עלינו לטובה, והקבדה מכל היא עון גדול, אשר קפה מלאה עולות מי מקטרג בראש גדול, והאדם צריך לחפש לעשות תשובה לכל הפחות. בחלק היותר חמור, והוא לפי הנושא והנשוא, לפי הנושא הוא כל מה שנקל לפי שהאדם להשמר מעברה הוא יותר חמור, ועניו גדול יותר, כמאמרם ז"ל מנחות דף מ"ג קשה עניו של לבן יותר מעניו של תכלת כו' עין שם - לפי הנשוא קשה יותר גדול מהעני כו'. וכן בשאר עברות, כמו בטול תורה החמורה מכל. כמבאר בשערי תשובה בשם הספרי עין שם, אשר חלק היותר חמור בעון הגדול הלזה, הוא לפי הנושא והנשוא, לפי הנושא כל מה שיותר נקל להאדם ללמוד לפי העת כמו בשבת כו', לפי המצב עת הפניה כו' העניו יותר גדול - לפי הנשוא עניו בטול הלמוד הנצרך להאדם למעשה, אם לידע בעצמו מזה איך לעשות, או לידע על ידי זה איך לשאל מגדול ממנו איך לעשות כו', וכן בכל התורה והמצוה זה הפקל לכל פרט בטול התורה והמצוה, אם במעשה אם בשב ואל תעשה, ועיש האדם בעברו עליהם, אכן מה שייתר נקל לפני האדם לקיים, ועניו יותר ויותר. והאדם צריך לחפש דרכיו לעשות קבלה חזקה, כמעט בכל פרטי עניו, להשמר לכל הפחות את אשר נקל לפניו בכל פרטי התורה והמצוה, ובה יש דרך אשר יקיים מצות התשובה ברב חלקי עולותיו, כי הרבוי בהעולות אינם הולכים אחר הכמות - לפי המנין - רק לפי האיכות, (עין רמב"ם הלכות תשובה פ"ג) הינו מה שנקל לפני האדם לקיים, עברה אחת חמור יותר ממנה עברתו אשר קבל לפניו, וכן באותה עברה עזמה חלק קטן ממנה הנקל לפני האדם לקיים, יותר חמור ועניו גדול מהרבה חלקים אשר בהעברה אשר קבל לקיים. כמו במצות למוד התורה, נקל מאד לאדם גם מי שהוא שכתן גדול, לחזר הרבה פעמים על לשון זארגאן (מוטטער שפראך) לאט לאט למודו בגמרא וכיצא, כמעט רק; דיעת השכל לבד - בלי אין עתותיו בידו לחזר הרבה לידע בעל פה, למען לא יבטלנו הרבה מלמודו העקרית. לא כן איש הסותר, אשר אם יחזר רק איזה פעמים על הדור בקלמו בשעה הפניה לפניו, כמעט רק היום לפניו לחזר כמה פעמים במחשבתו. (אור ישראל מכתב ט"ו, וע"ע במכתב ו, ומכתב ח)

<sup>2</sup> ויש אנשים רבים בהמון העם חושבים כי אין עקר האבדון והפסד הנפש זולתי בעברות שיש בהם מעשה. וכי אין אבדון נפש אל האיש אשר הוא טהור מחטאו במעשה ובדרך, והעברות לא הלק וחדל מעשות מצות ומעשים טובים. על כן אנו חייבי להודיע תועי רוח בינה כי אמרו רבותינו זכרונם לברכה ותר הקב"ה על ע"ז וגלוי עריות ושפיכות דמים ולא ותר על עון בטול תורה. ואמרו קשם שלמנו תורה גדול מכל המצות קר עני המבטלה גדול מכל העברות. ואמרו (במדבר ט"ו:ל"א) כי דבר ה' בזה ואת מצותו הפר נאמר על מי שאפשר לו לעסוק בתורה ואינו עוסק. וכבר זכרנו לך כל אלה בשער התורה.

And people can go through their entire life, and they never do *teshuvah*. And *pashut*, the *chet* becomes *kaveid meod meod*. And it is *azah am haaratzus*! Like the Shaarei Teshuvah of Rabbeinu Yonah says: A person who has a *chet* and doesn't want to let go of that *chet*, that's a *siman* of an *emese am haaretz*. The guy is an *emese* ignorant person. You know why he is ignorant? Because there exists something that is so important for him, and he doesn't seek any *chochmah* or try to help himself.

### R' YISRAEL'S ANALYSIS OF AVEIROS

So, R' Yisrael taught us a *norahdika mehalech* on how to become a *baal teshuvah*. He said every single *aveirah* is divided into many different *chalakim*. Every *aveirah* generally has two basic parts: There are the difficult challenges to overcome, and there are easier challenges.

For example, there is a person who talks *lashon horah*. There is *lashon horah* that is the ultimate *hock*. A guy comes to you: "Did you hear what that guy's wife did? Did you hear what the Rosh Yeshiva did?" And then you have the *lashon horah* that doesn't really interest you, but you get involved in it anyway.

### HOW EASY IS IT TO OVERCOME A SIN?

There is a guy who is not *shomer* his *einayim*, he doesn't guard his eyes. He's sitting by the beach, *nebach*, he got dropped on the beach, and he is not *shomer* his *einayim*. He is facing a big challenge. And then you have a guy who is walking down a street and it's more or less a *reine ort* (clean place) but the guy is stretching his neck, looking around, maybe he'll find something, "*Ulai efsher* there is a..." That is not a big *yetzer hora*, that's a small *yetzer hora*. So, R' Yisrael told us that you should not think that both *aveiros* are the same! He has to know that there is a *chiluk gadol* between the *onesh* of a person who ignores a challenge that is *kaveid* and a person who ignores a challenge that's *kal*. If you ignore a challenge that's *koveid*, a challenge that is difficult to overcome, there's an *oneish*, but the *oneish* is a limited *oneish* because it's *kaveid*, it's very difficult not to do the *aveirah*. And then you have a person who faces a challenge that's *kal*, one that's easy to overcome, but he ignores the challenge. He could easily overcome it, but he doesn't. You know what? That *onesh* is going to be *harbeh me'od me'od*, very, very great! There is no question about it.

R' Yisrael came and was *mechadesh* to us - what's worse, a person who steals a nickel, or a person who steals ten thousand dollars? If somebody steals ten thousand dollars from a yeshiva *pushke*, and someone else takes out a nickel, what is worse? *Zogt* R' Yisrael, the guy who steals ten thousand dollars is a lot better off than the guy who steals a *nickel*. Because the guy who stole ten thousand dollars, you know what kind of a *nisayon* that is?! Ten thousand dollars! That's a serious chunk of change that could make a serious dent in my life. That's a very difficult thing to overcome. The opportunities that develop in a person's mind, the *dimyon*, is *gevaldig*. But for a lousy, *narishe* nickel you're a *ganev*? The *pshat* is you are *mezalzel* in the *issur* of *ganeivah* (i.e. you are insulting the prohibition). If you had such an easy challenge, and you took the lousy *nickel* anyway. For that, you're going to pay a much higher price.

### HOW EASY IS IT TO DO A MITZVAH?

He says that when a person does not do a *mitzvah* when it's easier to be *mekayem* the *mitzvah*, that person is going to be held much more accountable than a person who doesn't do a *mitzvah* when it's harder. That's why the Gemara in Menachos (43b) says, גדול עונשו של לבן יותר מעונשו של תכלת. A guy who doesn't wear לבן in his *tzitzis*, is going to be held much more accountable and be punished much more than the guy who doesn't wear תכלת. Because לבן - white *tzitzis*, are common. Go into every bookstore, there are white *tzitzis* available. תכלת is *darf mein zuchen*, you need to seek it out - it's harder to come across. It's hard to find. So the *oneish* for not wearing תכלת is not as harsh; for that, you'd have to pay much less because it's harder to do.

*L'fi zeh*, *zogt* R' Yisrael, a person can sometimes do the same *aveirah*, at two different times, and the *onesh* will be thousands of degrees different. *De zelbe chet*. You know why? Because it depends on how difficult it was for the person to hold himself back from doing the *aveirah*.

### A GREAT STRATEGY FOR DOING TESHUVAH

R' Yisrael says: *Mah meod atikkin hadevarim halalu b'aseres yemei teshuvah*, he says, to find a *shtickle*, *ketzas*, עזיבת הקטא. You want to come to Yom Kippur and be a *shtickele* a *baal teshuvah*. So the first thing you do, he says, is you look for the places where it's easier for you to hold yourself back, where it's not so difficult for you.

You find a *derech*, he says. R' Yisroel writes that a person should look into all his *inyanim* and check to see, *vos iz kal?* What is easy for me to withstand? What can I give up easily? And what's not easy? He says, that way a person will be able to be *mekabel* upon himself a *kabbalah shel kayamah* (a lasting resolution) and he'll be able to *shomer* himself. Nu?

### IT'S EASIER TO LEARN TORAH ON SHABBOS

Now, R' Yisrael gives an example. It's a very interesting one. You know what the example is? *Limud haTorah b'Shabbos*. Apparently, in his time, it was also a *shtickel* challenge. He says: Shabbos is a time when a person has nothing on his mind. Shabbos is a time when a person is *panuy*, he's free. He has no work to do, he has no *ol* of *parnassah*, he doesn't have to go shopping, he doesn't have to fix his car, he doesn't have to fix his house, he has *gohr nisht*. He says in that situation, it is much easier to fulfill the *mitzvah* of *talmud Torah* because he has much less challenges against that.

Let's say you have a *bachur* who could come and sit and learn for some time before Shabbos, but he doesn't show up at all. He sleeps the whole day *noch mittog*. Or whatever else he's doing. He's definitely not preparing for Shabbos like he could.

A guy has a whole Shabbos and there is time to learn. Make a *cheshbon*, how much does a guy need to sleep already? There is time in the day. Then you come, and you can't sit? And you don't even attempt to sit? What are you coming for? What do you do? Whatever you do, you don't learn on Shabbos. You could learn, but you don't. That *aveirah*, Rav Yisrael Salanter says, is much more *chamur*, because it was much easier to overcome.

## IT'S EASIER, YET THE *SCHAR* IS GREATER

And you have to know there is a bigger *chiddush* also. And the bigger *chiddush* is, you would think that generally when you have less of a challenge, so the *schar* of the *mitzvah* should be much less also. It says *lfum tzaarah agrah*, it depends on the challenge a person has in doing a *mitzvah*. If you have a challenge, there is more *schar*; if you have less of a challenge, there is less *schar*. So you would think that for learning on Shabbos, you'd get much less *schar*. *Obber* we're told *nisht azoy*.

R' Elya Lopian said that he spent Shabbos with the Chofetz Chaim (Lev Eliyahu, vol 1, p.69).<sup>3</sup> And the Chofetz Chaim spoke about how great learning Torah on Shabbos is. Each word of Torah is worth 613 *mitzvos*, he said. You know what that is?! That's mind-boggling! So here, a guy is sitting by a goldmine. A goldmine! And he has twenty-five hours to seize the opportunity!

I don't expect you to be on my Zeida's *madreigah*. My Zeida (Rav Avigdor Miller) once told me that in the seven years he was in Slabodka, he never ate cholent. He never ate cholent! What's the *pshat*?! He said that the cholent made him tired, and he didn't want to diminish his ability to learn. So I said, "What did you eat?" He said, "I ate two cooked eggs from the cholent." That was his Shabbos *seudah*. And that way, he was able to sit and learn for hours and hours. I'm not saying that we should be *mevatel* the *mitzvah* of *cholent*, that I'm not expecting. That's from the "*chamuros*." I'm not expecting you to give that up.

## EACH PERSON SHOULD MAKE A *CHESHBON*

But a person should make a *cheshbon*. What do you hold, *b'emes*, is easy for you to learn on Shabbos? How many hours do you believe you can give for learning during this twenty-five-hour period? Ask yourself before Shabbos, what do you hold is *kal*, and at what point does it become hard? Make a *cheshbon*. You think you can't learn two hours on *Shabbos b'kalus*? Two hours on Shabbos. It is from the *kalos*. It is a *davar kal me'od*. For some people, three hours, for some people four hours. And if you break it up, you *chap arein* much more.

A guy could come half an hour or forty-five minutes before *davening* in the morning. Is it *azoy shver* to come at a quarter to eight in the morning? You come a whole week at 7:15, sometimes you come late - 7:20, 7:25. To me, if you can get up early on Shabbos, you'll *chap arein*. If a person makes a *cheshbon* of the *devarim kalim*, he can *chap arein*.

When I undertook many years ago to start being *shomer Shabbos* the way *Hashem* wants - by utilizing the time correctly - I *takke* remember thinking that it's really not *shayech*. I remember clearly struggling with the thought: Shabbos is a *tog fun menuchah*, it's a day of rest. You learn a whole week, it's *azei shver*. On Shabbos, one day, you want to have a break, you want to be '*poreik ol*' on Shabbos. You want to put your head down. You want to be able to sit and either *shlof* or read the Yated for two-three hours, or the Hamodia. If you are a greater *mensch*, you have the *Mishpachah*, whatever you have. *Kol echad v'echad* whatever his *perikas ol* is. I remember thinking: Is it *shayech*?

And I remember looking around me, and everybody was in the same boat. Maybe some young guy, some young *masmidim*, young people. I remember thinking: What's the *pshat*? Do you know what I realized? It's just *hergel*, it was just a *hergel me'od* - a powerful habit.

I remember the hardest *seeder* in the yeshiva. I went to a yeshiva that had a *seeder* right after *davening*. And the Rosh Yeshiva was tough and he held that no *bachur* could make *kiddush* before the *seeder*. It was an hour-long *seeder*. He made you sit there, and he just insisted on it strongly. So some guys snuck out into a room they used to prepare before Shabbos, everybody had their way to get around it.

And then they had these afternoon *sedarim*. And *Mincha* in yeshivah. I remember as a *bachur* thinking - *masai yavo yom*, and I will become a *yungerman*, and I won't *daven* in the yeshiva. I remember when I first came to Telz, I was dreading that there was no late *minyana* for *Mincha*. If you come from Eretz Yisrael, there's no Friday either - not Friday and not Shabbos. It doesn't even enter people's minds. You have to make that *cheshbon* yourself. And you can start learning on Shabbos.

## LEARNING IS EASIER ON SHABBOS

And I'll tell you the *emes* is, it's easier on Shabbos. I'm telling you! I have tested this out very *shtark* - it's much easier on Shabbos to learn than it is on a weekday. You have much fewer challenges. You have a lot of assistance on Shabbos.

But at least, let's start committing ourselves to the *kallos* of Shabbos, when it's not so challenging, so we're not carrying this baggage of the *chamuros*. And if you *chap arein* learning on Shabbos, it's a thousand times greater.

Hakodosh Boruch Hu should help us become *baalei teshuvah*. At least, *b'bechinas hakallos*, like R' Yisrael says.

<sup>3</sup> מובא בס' לב אליהו, מעשים והנהגות, רשימה ה, ז"ל: ר' אליהו אמר פעם ששמע מהחפץ חיים ז"ל (כשהיה אצלו פעם בש"ק) את החשבון הזה: שקולה שבת - נגד כל התורה כולה, לכן כל מצוה שעושים בשבת - שוה תרי"ג. לפי הגר"א שכל אות בדברי תורה ובלמוד התורה היא מצוה - כשעושים זאת בשבת מכפילים כל אות ואות במספר שש מאות ושלוש עשרה - אם כן כשאדם יושב ולומד בשבת הרי אין סוף למצוות שיכול להוסיף על חשבונו, ובמיוחד בימי הסליחות - כשאדם חייב לחפש זכויות להטות את כף המאזנים לטובה, וכו'.