

# TSHUVAH SHMUZ 5770 LIMITING BELIEFS

## Background

In this *posuk*, Moshe Rabbeinu sets before the Jewish people the categories of human growth and accomplishments:

1. To fear HASHEM
2. To go in all of His ways
3. To love HASHEM
4. To serve Him with all of your heart and soul

Each category is a world in and of itself and would take man a lifetime to accomplish. Together, these four groupings comprise all of service to HASHEM and are the measure of the perfection of the human.

Yet amazingly, when Moshe introduces these concepts to the Jewish nation, he begins with an expression of, “What does HASHEM ask from you, **but this?**” as if to imply that it is but a small request. The Gemara in *Brachos* is troubled by this and asks, “Is fear of HASHEM a **small** thing?” The Gemara answers, “Yes, to Moshe it was a small thing. To a poor man, even small items seem valuable. However, to a wealthy man, even vast sums seem small.” Since Moshe had attained such spiritual perfection, these things seemed simple to him; hence, he uses the expression, “What does HASHEM want from you **but this?**”

## Questions

The difficulty with this Gemara is that it implies that Moshe is using himself as the standard of measurement for the average person. It’s as if he were implying, “If I can reach this, then so can you.” Yet we know that Moshe towered over every other human ever created. He reached dizzying heights of perfection that no other human before or after will attain. After eighty years of unparalleled growth, he spent forty days without food, drink, or sleep, and was taught the entire Torah by HASHEM. For the next forty years, he engaged in teaching that Torah to the Jewish people. At this point in his life, he is a giant of a man, and in no way can he be compared to the typical person. So while these things may not have seemed lofty to him, to his audience they were gargantuan! Why would Moshe use his own experiences as the measuring rod against which the average person should compare himself?

### ספר דברים פרק י

ועתה ישראל מה ידוד אלהיך שאל מעמך כי אם ליראה את ידוד אלהיך ללכת בכל דרכיו ולאהבה אתו ולעבד את ידוד אלהיך בכל לבבך ובכל נפשך

*“And now, Yisroel, what is HASHEM your G-d asking of you? Merely to fear HASHEM, to go in all of His ways, to love Him, and serve Him with all of your heart and soul.”*

### תלמוד בבלי מסכת ברכות דף לג/ב

ואמר רבי חנינא הכל בידי שמים חוץ מיראת שמים שנאמר ועתה ישראל מה ה' אלהיך שואל מעמך כי אם ליראה אטו יראת שמים מילתא זוטרתא היא והאמר רבי חנינא משום רבי שמעון בן יוחי אין לו להקדוש ברוך הוא בבית גנזיו אלא אוצר של יראת שמים שנאמר יראת ה' היא אוצר

אין לגבי משה מילתא זוטרתא היא דאמר רבי חנינא משל לאדם שמבקשים ממנו כלי גדול ויש לו דומה עליו ככלי קטן קטן ואין לו דומה עליו ככלי גדול