

The *Mesilas Yesharim* taught us that the entire reason for creation is to give us a chance to grow, to accomplish. This world is the gym, the world to come's the spa and he explained to us in the first *perek* that the *ikkur metzius ho'adam*, the main functionality, the main purpose of a person in this world is *lukayem mitzvahs* to fulfill *mitzvahs*, *vulavod* and to serve Hashem, *vulamod bunisayon*, to withstand *nisyonos*.

That's the reason I was put into this world, to overcome challenges, to grow, to change the essence of me forever I am what I shaped myself into, for eternity I am what I became, this world is just the grand opportunity to grow and to accomplish and we're put through many, many situations.

The first rung on the ladder of growth, the *Mesilas Yesharim* explained to us is *zehirus*, watchfulness. Being alert, being aware, just being cognizant of the fact that there will be a time when my actions will bring about the results, there'll be a time when I'll held, I'll be held accountable, there is a time when I'll leave this earth and I will be there exactly as I shaped myself into.

That awareness is *zehirus* and the fourth *perek* that we're now in deals with how does one get motivated to really be *zahir*. I understand the system, I understand what's needed, the *cheshbon hanefesh*, the sitting down afterwards, meaning not just being alert at the time, but afterwards reviewing my day, reviewing my time, but what's going to give me the push, the motivation?

And the *Mesilas Yesharim* explained to us that the main motivation is the *limud hatorah*, nothing but that spiritual nourishment, nothing but that energizing force, that rocket fuel for the soul, learning *Torah* is the greatest spiritual nourishment and without it I will not succeed.

But even with that alone it's not sufficient, I also have to focus on the *chomer ho'avodah*, the gravity of the *avodas Hashem*, *vu'omek hadin* and the depth of judgment upon me. And the *Mesilas Yesharim* explained to us that there are three groups of people who that will inspire.

The *shleimei hadas* are the people who are in the ultimate level of clarity, they get it. They understand that who they are is what they shape themselves into and that cognition alone, that *shleimus*, perfection is the greatest thing a person could ever aspire to and more than that, any lack of perfection will be a part of me forever.

The *shleimei hadas* are on a level that they clearly see the world to come, they see themselves there and they clearly see the results of their actions and that alone is the greatest motivation, I will be forever what I shaped myself into. But understanding how very, very fine every detail is, that's what motivates the *shleimei hadas*.

There's a group below them who are motivated by social markers, just like in this world I take it very seriously, when people dishonor me, they treat me improperly, so too in the world to come when I understand I'm not alone but it's rather social and my position, my rank will be exactly what I created for myself, I may not need to be on top but I certainly can't be below, that motivation will drive me to excel, to work on myself.

But in this session we're going to deal with what the *Mesilas Yesharim* calls for the *hamon am*, for the regular, common folk, maybe you and I.

He says "*or lukol hamon*" what is the inspiration that the regular person will take, "*vu'inyan haschar vu'onesh atzmam*" in regards to the reward and the punishment themselves, "*burov omeq hadin ad hechan magia*" when the person sees the depth of judgment, how exacting, how specific, how demanding the *Torah* is, and explains the *Mesilas Yesharim*, "*Rouy luhizdadeah*

*lischaro tamid*” if we really understood the gravity of our actions, we understood the consequences, it’s worthy that we should tremble and be constantly filled with fear “*ki mi yamod buyom hadin*” who is it who will actually withstand the day of judgment, “*vuyitzadok lifnei boro*” and who is it who will be purely righteous, in front of Hashem when Hashem’s judgment is so demanding and goes into every specific and every action.

And I’d like to focus on this concept today, what is that *harah*, what is the inspiration the depth of judgment, the gravity of *avodah*, how does that apply to us?

So to begin this let me share with you an interesting observation. Quite a number of years ago when we were first in Rochester, we lived in an apartment there and I was really in *Kolel*, I was giving the eleventh grade *shiur* sort of on the side but in any case there were quite a number of couples in this apartment complex and I approached the owner of the complex because a number of us wanted to put an *eruv* up around the area so that we could carry little kids etc.

So I sat down with the owner and he was very polite and we discussed and then I explained to him it’s a *halachik* boundary, it surrounds the area and it allows those who are inside it to, to carry and it allows it take our children out etc.

He was very patient and very, very polite and after I explained to him the details he said well unbeknownst to you we actually do have such a boundary. I said to myself, an *eruv*, what? Huh? And he said oh yes, why underground there is electric cables running all around the complex so you don’t have to worry.

And it took me quite a while to explain to this man that electric wires are nice but an *eruv* has very, very specific and exact *halachos*. And if you study any area of *halachah* you’ll see that there are painstaking details, extraordinarily specific, the word is punctilious, if you study any

area of *halachah* you'll see that it's extremely exacting, *lulav* and *esrog*, two or three spots on an *esrog, passul*. If the *lulav* is split, well it depends how, where, to what extent.

*Mishnayos, Gemaras* you could spend a year, certainly learning the *halachos*, you could probably spend more in one small area of *halachah*.

Miss one detail, one little thing and you did nothing. You count forty six days of the *omer* but miss one, according to most *rishonim* you did not fulfill the *mitzvas asef du'orysa*.

So here's the question why is there such painstaking detail, he's a good guy, he tried. He had a little spot on the *esrog*, little split in the *lulav*, okay forty six days, forty seven days, what are you making such a fuss of the tiny, tiny minutia, what are you getting all bent out of shape over?

And I'd like to share with you a perspective that may help to explain this a little bit. Electricity is something that we take for granted. We plug in the radio, plug in the lamp, it lights up the room. We take it as a given. But electricity a hundred and fifty years ago, didn't exist in this country.

While it existed it certainly wasn't something that people used and people lived by lamp, they worked during the day, at night they were inside, they had maybe kerosene, they had candle light but electricity in the early nineteen hundreds basically wasn't used in the United States of America. But around the late eighteen hundreds, 1901, 1902, electricity began becoming a part of the American scene. But it started only in the big cities, few blocks would have electricity, and they'd run wires, they'd run poles.

In any case Roscat Smith lived around the Monsey Sothern area and he was working as an eighteen year old in a steam generator that generated electricity. How do you make electricity? You need energy to make the energy, many such small companies began in that time period and

they would burn coal to create steam, the steam would turn the turbines and that's how they generated electricity.

In any case he was working there for a few years and he was a very handy fellow, mechanically oriented and he sort of studied the process and he decided at the tender young age of twenty one, to start his own company and he started his own company, he began a generator and in Monroe, New York he began trying to sell electricity.

And here was the problem none of the farmhouses had wiring, none of the farmhouses had electrify. So incumbent upon any electric company was the demand to also bring the electricity to the customer. So he began buying lumber, putting up poles, laying the wires and he began setting up various farms and various homes with electricity. Initially with just a light, before you know it he had a prosperous company providing electricity, in fact Orange and Rockland which is today the provider in the Monsey area was founded initially by Roscat Smith.

I want you to imagine that it's 1910 and he's got his steam generator going and there are poles up in different places and he's putting in electricity to the different places. Now by the way keep in mind it's only from five pm to six pm that electricity is provided because you can't run the steam generator twenty four hours a day exactly.

In any case, imagine that Roscat Smith hires a new man, this man has never worked with electricity before and Roscat Smith says listen very carefully, whatever you do, whatever you touch, you must be wearing these boots. These are the boots, as long as you touch anything wearing these boots, you're safe. If you touch a conductor, if you touch a post, anything that you touch without these boots on, I don't know what the results will be. Please be careful.

So anyway the fellow, not knowing much about electricity dutifully follows and he wears these boots everyday and he sometimes unhooks wires, sometimes connects wires, sometimes when the steam generator becomes slow he adds more fuel to it and then hooks it up. Various things he's putting back and forth and back and forth.

In any case he's working for six months and after a while he wears a hole in these boots and he wears another hole in it and before you know it the boots are basically worthless. He says to himself, my goodness, Roscat Smith, the one who started this company, warned me never touch anything that conducts electricity, whatever that means, without wearing these boots but these boots are shot. So being a very, very dutiful fellow he goes to a shoemaker and busy himself a pair of thick, thick leather boots, puts them on and touches one of the metal components from the steam generator.

It ends very, very badly.

You see if you don't understand electricity, you don't understand what grounding means, you don't understand the difference between wearing leather boots or rubber boots, you don't understand the principles and therefore you have to be very, very careful to only do as instructed.

If you'd like to understand the punctiliousness of *halachah*, its' really quite simple, just try dropping your cell phone in the bath tub one day and suddenly it no longer functions. But why? All the components are there, I dried it out, I put rice in and I did, it's perfect, what's the problem?

If you don't understand the mechanics, you're not going to understand how delicate the system, you're not going to understand how precise it is. But the reason why *halachah* is so specific, and

there are so many painstaking details is because we're accomplishing tremendous, tremendous things and it has to be exact or guess what? It doesn't work.

One little connection broken and your cell phone doesn't speak to the satellite, it doesn't connect to the cell phone, it just doesn't work. And what the *Mesilas Yesharim* is sharing with us is one of the basics, is to focus on the specific demands of *halachah*, the particular details and when we see how exacting, we begin to realize we're dealing with something from a totally different realm.

We may not get it, we may not understand it but much like electricity, you could accomplish worlds but you have to abide by the rules that's exactly what the point here is.

But there's another element to it you see it's not just the *chomer ho'avodah* it's not just the severity, the seriousness of it, it's the *omek hadin*, the depth of judgment. And the *Mesilas Yesharim* lays out for us many, many examples where great people as in Avraham, Yitzchak, Yakov were held accountable for what sound like minutia, what sounds like tiny, tiny little details.

Yosef had to spend another two years in prison, why because he asked the *sar hamashkim*, please remember me. For you and I there would have been nothing wrong, for a man on his level of *bitachon*, to ask someone who's not reliable to bail him out, shows a certain he's desperate straits, he's in trouble. If you know Hashem is here and you know Hashem's always with you how could you feel desperation. On his *madregah*, on Yosef's level it was somewhat of a lack of *bitachon* and because of that he had to spend another two years in prison.

But here's the *Mesilas Yesharim*'s point, when you find great, great *chassidim*, great, great righteous people and they're punished *kechut hasara*, like the hairbreadth, you have to ask

yourself why, it almost doesn't sound appropriate and even if that doesn't move you, let's focus on one very basic issue:

There is an entire sequence of punishments laid out in the *Torah* and as a matter of fact there's a pecking order, there's an exact graduating level. There's an *asei*, if you don't put on *tzitzis*, you don't wear *tefillin*, if you're *muvatel asei*, if you violate, don't do an *asei*, no direct punishment, you lost the opportunity, you're not allowed to, you're considered violating the *Torah* but there's no direct punishment.

Above that, are *lo saseis*. A *lo sasei*, any negative prohibition in the *Torah* carries one punishment, *malkus*, basically whipping. In a public square they take off your shirt and you receive thirty nine lashes. A doctor has to be on call to make sure that you can survive it. But that means any *lo sasei*. Any negative prohibition in the *Torah*, if you violate it with *eidim*, with witnesses and *hasrah*, warning etc., the effective correct punishment is *malkus*.

What that means is you speak *lashon hara*, effectively that is the punishment that warrants, that's appropriate. For technical reasons it doesn't have a *mysah* so you're not going to get *malkus* but the Chafetz Chaim explains to us that in reality if you speak one word of *lashon hara*, it is worthy, it's appropriate that punishment for that single, not a whole story, one little part, one little defaming part of a story about another Jew.

And at a certain point you're going to say, wait a minute doesn't sound like the punishment fits the crime. But it gets a lot worse. You see there are also *lo saseis*, negative prohibitions that are more severe, that carry *kores*. If you eat *chametz* on *pesach*, eat a *kezayis* of *chametz* of *pesach* you're *chayav kares*.

What is *kares*? It's a debate amongst the *rishonim*, either you die at fifty or at sixty or part of your *neshamah* gets cut off, but it's very, very severe. But before we ask the major question, let's go up a level. Above that is *misas beis din*. If you go ahead and smoke a cigar on *Shabbos*, you decided that's it, I'm done with this stuff, light up a cigar, bingo, you are *chayav misah, beis din* is obligated to kill you. You've lost your lease on life.

And if you think about it, there are four types of *misas beis din* one more severe than the other, and the question is gee golly why? It sure doesn't seem that the punishment fits the crime, it sure doesn't seem appropriate?

But if you don't appreciate the question yet, let's focus on it a little bit more. If you take the most merciful, kindly, loving individual you could ever find. Find me that *tzaddik*, the pure loving, giving kindly *tzaddik*, take that love multiply it by ten thousand, ten thousand, ten thousand times, you will not equal the love that Hashem has for any one of His creations.

The *Chovos Halevavos* says that Hashem's love is infinite, beyond any human comprehension, so many more times exponentially larger than any loving, giving, kindly person you've ever can imagine, certainly ever experienced.

So here's the question, if Hashem is so full of love, of *rachamim*, of mercy and love, why are there such severe punishments, my goodness it doesn't really seem to fit?

And to understand this I'd like to share with you a perspective. When the US mint began operations, they were printing coins, the penny, the nickel, the dime. In the first three years of operation, the US mint printed one million coins. A million coins.

Right after the revolutionary war they began and they produced in three years, a million coins.

The mint today does not produce a million coins in three years, it produces one million coins in a half hour. Production today has so outstripped anything of three hundred years ago, of two hundred years ago that it's in a totally different realm.

And the energy source of most of it is that medium called electricity. Electricity is a powerful, powerful force that runs our factories, that brings energy, that produces things that are beyond our imagination. In the 1830s to bring forth a hundred bushels, a hundred bushels of wheat, it took about three hundred man hours. You had people standing there, planting the seed by hand, harvesting it with a sickle. Grinding, it took three hundred hours of men's labor, to produce a hundred bushels.

As of 1975 there was no longer ratio, it then took three hours. What used to take three hundred hours, is now done by one man, driving a combine, harvesting, laying seed, whatever is involved and it's all done by machine and these machines are powered by it might be petroleum, it might be gasoline, but by and large the production in the world today is powered by electricity.

My grandfather had a factory. My grandfather in Berlin employed six men and I asked my father what they produced and they managed to produce a nice sum, they would produce ten suits, twenty suits, a week.

Factories in China today produce that in a second. They produce thousands and thousands of suits a day. And you could watch these huge, huge factories, machine after machine, when the foreman turns on the switch and the machinery goes into operation because electricity is a powerful, powerful force when you understand how to harness it.

We are much like a man who's living in the seventeenth century and we've never experienced electricity, we don't understand its power, but we also don't understand the downside. You see electricity is a powerful, powerful force and it could produce things of unimaginable proportions. But if you stick your finger in the socket, it singes your hair and it's so ironic that so many times we forget this basic. We think what's my *davening*, my learning, what is it anyway? And we don't understand the super power, the energizing force that it produces in this world, in the upper worlds. We're like that primitive man who doesn't understand the power of electricity and maybe he will wear the boots, maybe he won't wear the boots, what's the difference anyway?

And despite our getting shocked, despite our hair sizzling, we don't get it. Time after time we make that mistake. But I think what the *Mesilas Yescharim* is sharing with us is the gravity of the *avodah*. How much we could accomplish, and sometimes you have to see the downside, sometimes you have to see what a human being looks like when he touches the third rail. Sometimes when you see the consequence, the results, you begin to realize, oh my goodness, we're dealing with a powerful, powerful force and if you study the punishments of the *Torah*, it's not because Hashem is not merciful, not because Hashem is not kindly, quite the opposite, Hashem is more loving, more kindly, more giving than anyone you could ever envision or imagine, but you also have to understand that you're dealing with powerful forces.

You're dealing with a power that can change the world. And you are the operator of that machine. What you could accomplish with your words, with your deeds is astonishing. But if you touched the wire, and you're not wearing boots, if you miss a detail in it, it has very serious consequences. The machinery doesn't work unless everything is put together properly, that is the *chomer* of the *avodah*, the painstaking detail.

You have to have every single wire attached and it's got to be done just right. But when you see the *omek hadin*, when you see what happens if you touched the wire and you're not careful, that's when you begin to realize we're dealing with something of a totally different dimension, a totally different world.

And I believe that's what the *Mesilas Yesharim* is sharing with us. That this can be a powerful motivating force if we focus on it. However, before you go get all depressed and nervous and say oh my goodness, dealing with such severe punishments and such seriousness, I want to share with you very, very important perspective.

The *Gemara* tells us that there are four men in the history of human kind, there are four men who never sinned. Four men who entered this earth, pure, lived their life in exactly that state, never sinned and left this life completely untainted by sin.

Who are those four men? Binyamin, the son of Yakov; Amram, the father of Moshe; Yishai, the father of David and Kilav ben David, Kilav the son of David. Four men who never sinned.

And now I'll share with you the observation. These four men were great, very great I'm sure but if you think about it, they're not in the all-star category. In the annals of history, the greatest human beings who ever lived are in order: Moshe, Ahron, Avraham, Yitzchak, Yakov, David, Shlomo, there might be some debate as exactly the order, but the seven all-time greats do not include anyone from the list of four people who never sinned.

Now isn't that strange? Four people never sinned, never sinned in their entire life and yet they're not in the annals of the ultimate greats, as a matter of fact they're not even close, they're not even in the league of the *avos*, they're not even within miles. Now how could that be, that doesn't make sense, they never sinned, that means they were, they were perfect *tzaddikim* right?

And I'd like to share with you a observation that Rabbi Dviritz, my *rebbe*, *rosh yeshivah* of Rochester shared with us and that is the real greatness of a human isn't not sinning, it's what you accomplish. That you can't sin, the *Torah* warns you not to and the *Torah* says can't and therefore you can't do it, but you don't become truly great by not sinning, you become truly great by accomplishing, by doing.

You can't sin, because Hashem said not to and it damages your soul and you can't do it, but the true greatness of the person's not by avoiding sin, it's by doing, by accomplishing, by accomplishing worlds, by changing the world I live in, but that's by doing *mitzvahs*, it's the positive actions that really have the impact and as great as people who weren't sin were, they were nowhere near the *avos*.

And I have a *mashal* that I think well defines it. Imagine you have a beautiful, beautiful diamond, ten karats. Big, gorgeous, it sparkles, the fire, the clarity, it's incredible. But you put it under a loupe and you see right there, center of the diamond there's a speck, a black speck, it's a flaw. Oh my goodness the diamond is flawed, forget it. Trash it.

Naturally that would be pretty foolish because the fact that the diamond has the flaw is the proof that it's real and the fact that it has the flaw doesn't make it worthless, quite the opposite, the fact that it has the flaw, proves to me that it's real and it's not a cubic zirconium or a moistenite.

Avraham *Avinu* was a man of incredible stature, two hundred karats, beautiful, shining, glorious, with a very, very tiny flaw. He made certain mistakes, they were part of him. For eternity he's this brilliant giants of giants with a tiny little flaw. And every one of the *avos* had flaws, it doesn't make them worthless, it doesn't make them to nothing, quite the opposite, it proves that they were real human beings.

And as great as these four people never sinned, they never became that two hundred karat, they might have been a perfect ten karat, maybe even twenty karat diamond but a two hundred karat diamond albeit with a flaw is so much more precious, so much more valuable and the mistake that most people make is they mess up and they say the words 'I am a failure, look I failed. I failed, I am a failure'.

And that recognition that I failed, doesn't mean I am a failure is a very hard one to make. I failed meaning I messed up, yes I failed in this area but I am a human being with many strengths and many talents, I failed in this area, that doesn't make me a failure.

I failed, I'm going to confront it, I'm going to deal with it but that doesn't make me as an entity, as a totality, a failure. But understanding that it is true that I will likely mess up, I don't realize the power of electricity, I may touch the wire without realizing and I may have things that I can fix up, but I can still accomplish words and you have to very, very much focus on the *chomer ho'avodah*, the gravity, the accomplishments, I can do. Yes you have to be very careful not to touch the wire, Hashem warns us not to do things and we take it very, very seriously, but the bigger focus should be on what I can accomplish, what I can do.

And there's one more step in that observation that I think is very important to understand. The *mishnah* tells us that Hashem works *middah kneged middah*, measure for measure. Even though there's no *schar*, there's no reward in this world, there are certain actions that a person does that has impact in this world.

It's not the reward, but it's a tangential and one of the results of your actions is the way that Hashem acts with you in this world and certain activities, more consequently. In any case the *mishnah* brings us some examples of Hashem working *middah kneged middah*, the *mishnah* tells

us, Shimshon, as great as he was, he went after his eyes, he was punished that way, the *Plishtim* poked out his eyes.

Avshalom, Avshalom was *nisgaeh*, he had arrogance because of his long hair, his beauty. He ended up running from his father's men. His hair got caught in the tree and that's how he hung, that was his demise.

Measure for measure. And then the *mishnah* tells us not just on punishments, on the good as well. For instance, says the *mishnah*, Miriam, she waited for her brother, when Moshe was put into the Nile, Miriam waited "*vatitatzav achosah merachok*" she waited, because she waited, many years later she was paid back.

When she spoke *lashon hara* about Moshe in the *midbar* she was sent outside the *machaneh*, outside the encampment and the entire Jewish nation stopped and they waited for her in respect for seven days. Because she waited *shah achas*, because she waited one hour for her brother, she's paid back that the Jewish nation as an entity, waited in respect for her, for seven days.

And if you look in that *Gemara*, you look in *Tosfos* particular, *Tosfos* raises a very real problem. He says, I don't understand, we know that when Hashem pays back the *middah tovah*, the good, the reward is five hundred times the punishments. The reward for something that someone does is five hundred times what they have done. The punishment is in direct consequence to what you did, the reward is five hundred times.

If in fact this was the direct consequence of Miriam's waiting, so do the maths, says *Tosfos*. She waited one hour, well one hour times five hundred is five hundred hours, there are only a hundred and sixty eight hours in a week, it's not one week, it's actually three plus weeks. How does the *Gemara* say it's *middah kneged middah* if she's being paid back for that one hour she

waited, she'd have to be paid back five hundred hours, they'd have to wait for her twenty one days not for seven days?

Says *Tosfos* it must be the *Gemara* says *shah achas*, it doesn't mean an hour, she waited a certain amount of time, fifteen or twenty minutes, if you do the maths, if she waited fifteen or twenty minutes for Moshe, she's been paid back five hundred times, she's paid back with one week.

And I'd like to share with you what I take from that *Tosfos*. What *Tosfos* is saying is that five hundred to one is literal. Five hundred to one means whatever I do, Hashem pays to me back five hundred times the reward. And what that means in plain simple language is any word of learning, any time I did a *chessed*, any time I helped somebody, any time I didn't speak *lashon hara* which is in itself a *mitzvah*, not doing an *averah*, is itself a *mitzvah*, if I resist it, if I held back, any time I worked on myself, the reward is astonishing. Granted the punishments are in direct measure and I have to be aware of that and I have to be alert to the fact that there are very real consequences to my actions, but even more importantly, I have to be aware of the incredible value of every *mitzvah*, whatever envisionment I have of it, whatever imagination I could form in my mind's eye, five hundred times the reward to what I've done.

And when you begin to realize that you begin to realize oh my goodness this opportunity called life, let's go, let's accomplish, let's do. What the *Mesilas Yesharim* is sharing with us is that for even the common folk, even you and I this is a powerful motivating system, why?

Because when I study the details of the *halachah*, when I study how painstaking the *Torah* is, I begin to realize we're dealing with something with totally different world, we're dealing with computers, we're dealing with cell phones, we're dealing with electrical circuits because the

extraordinary punctiliousness, the extraordinary detail that the *Torah* puts into it, is because it's a very exact system.

But it's not because Hashem is cruel or mean, *chas veshalom* in any sense, quite the opposite. It's because Hashem afforded us this opportunity to use this powerful thing called life. But much like a man from a hundred or two hundred years ago, doesn't understand the power of electricity, we don't understand the dangers. We don't understand the consequences, so we touch the third rail, we do things that are foolish, that are very, very damaging to us.

What the *Mesilas Yesharim* is sharing with us, we have to avoid that. We have to run from that, but at the end of the day the four greatest people are not the four greatest people that didn't sin. The greatest of the greats are not necessarily the people who didn't sin, the *avos* were far greater, the *avos* were the ones who accomplished, who changed because they understood this power. We have this huge, huge powerful force called life, it's far more powerful than any machinery, any factory we can envision, when we understand that we begin to understand the value of life.

And I want to close with one very important question that I think you should ask yourself daily. When you put your head down on that pillow, a very important question I think you should ask yourself is how did I do today? How did I do? How did I do today at this thing called life?

I was in this marketplace, this fair, I could accomplish worlds, I could gather together so much, how did I do today? What did I accomplish? What did I do? What did I gather? Diamonds at my beck and call, riches, emeralds, right there for the taking, what did I accomplish? What did I do?

And you should make an inventory. What great things did I accomplish, obviously what things I have to miss, do I have to avoid in the future, and ultimately that is the *cheshbon hanefesh*. We sit down to a *cheshbon hanefesh*, yes I have to avoid and take stock of what I did wrong and

figure out ways to correct it, but I should also take stock of what I accomplished, what I acquired, look what I did, look what's in my basket for eternity.

When a person focuses on the *chomer ho'avodah*, the seriousness of the *avodah*, the *omek hadin*, the depth of judgment, the exactness of it and then you understand that the reward is five hundred times, punishment is one for one, reward is five hundred to one, you begin to understand the potential, the ability, you begin to be motivated and you begin to do that difficult thing called changing, growing and accomplishing our mission in creation.