

In the fourth *perek*, the *Mesilas Yesharim* introduced us to the spiritual motivation. *Zehirus* is watchfulness, being on guard, being alert, but what's going to motivate me? So the basic underpinning of all of our motivation, is *limud hatorah*, learning, that's a spiritual nourishment but the *Mesilas Yesharim* explains that we need specific work and that's the *chomer ho'avdah*, the gravity of the *avodas Hashem* and the *omek hadin* and the depth of judgment.

If we contemplate this, if we study this, this will be a hugely propelling, galvanizing force. And the *Mesilas Yesharim* explained to us that there are three groups of people and each grouping will have a different element of that focus that will help them become motivated.

The *shleimei hadas*, these are the people who have total clarity of vision. They see the world to come, they see themselves there and therefore the greatest motivation for them is that single reality that perfection is the only thing that's worthy to strive for.

Who I am, is what I shape myself into for eternity and every little nuance makes such a difference but it's going to be me, I'll either be great, I'll either be stellar or I'll be mediocre or whatever but this understanding that *shleimus*, perfection is what we're here for and that it is the only thing that's truly is to strive for is what drives them, it's what motivates them and then more than anything realizing that any lack that I have is going to be a part of me for eternity, for the *shleimei hadas*, that's all they need to motivate them.

Underneath them, other lower level, more coming to the common man, to them the honor, their social rank is a huge driving force. We are very sensitive to our position in the world, how people perceive us, how people accept us and understanding that in the world to come I'm not alone, I don't just exist there, but rather I'm there with many other people of my caliber, my

grouping and I will be in comparison to everyone else, exactly what I made myself into, that can be a huge focusing, galvanizing force.

And then there's the third grouping. The third grouping is what the *Mesilas Yesharim* calls the *hamon am*, the regular common folk, us regular people that he says it's the depth of judgment. Just understanding how demanding the *Torah* is, how strict the *Torah* is and not because Hashem is cruel and not because the *Torah* is a vindictive system, but when we focus on the extreme judgment, and the precision of *halachah*, we begin to realize that we're dealing with stuff of a different realm. Totally different world, we realize we're dealing with powers, we're dealing with things that are not from our normal sense of doing things and it's this grouping that probably applies to us more than anything else.

And the *Mesilas Yesharim* explains to us that there's one concept that we have to fully, fully grip and fully understand and that is "*lo yashgichu hakallos es hachamuros*" the light, the heavy, the major, the minor, and everything in between, becomes part of the judgment.

You see when I leave this earth, they don't ask me overall how'd you do. They don't ask my grade point average, they ask for the specifics. But not just the specifics, every single action huge or tiny, major or minor, everything is reviewed.

And *Chazal* explain to us one of the concepts that's beyond our grip, that's beyond our comprehension is the *omek hadin*, the depth of the judgment. And if you'd like almost a, maybe a *mashal*, to what it's like on *yom hadin*, you have to first perceive why it is that *Chazal* with their great wisdom had such fear.

Meaning let's focus for a minute and understand why is it that you and I when we think about the day of judgment, but by and large we're not that afraid but yet you'll read story after story of

*Chazal*, great people who spent their life during other spiritual perfection and when they began dealing, grappling with what it's going to be like when they leave this earth, their fear of judgment was palpable.

Let's take one example, Reb Yochanan ben Zakai, it's hard to imagine a *tzaddik* of a greater level, he was a hundred and twenty years of age, he had mastered everything, the *Gemara* describes every part of *Torah* that he'd mastered and there are certain parts, the *sichah*, the *kelim*, that Rashi says *eini yodeah mah hu*, Rashi the great Rashi says I don't even know what that refers to.

He had mastered what seems to be *kol hatorah kulah* he was a total *tzaddik*, totally dedicated to his people and at a hundred and twenty years of age he was the acclaimed leader. And the *Gemara* in *Brachos* tells us that when he realized that it was his time, he took to his deathbed and his *talmidim*, great men in their own right heard that the great Reb Yochanan ben Zakai is about to leave this earth, "*nichnesu talmidav luvakro*" his *talmidim* came to visit him, they came to bid farewell to their Rebbi and when Reb Yochanan ben Zakai recognized why they had come to visit him, immediately, "*miyad bocheh*" he started crying.

And they said to him, Reb Yochanan ben Zakai, "*ner yemini patush vuchazak*" great powerful Reb Yochanan ben Zakai, why are you crying? Normally a mortal man has much to think about, much that he did that he shouldn't do and much that he didn't do that he should have, but you are the great *tzaddik*, you are Reb Yochanan ben Zakai, why are you crying?

And what's so telling are the words that Reb Yochanan ben Zakai said. He said, if they were taking me to judgment in front of *basar vedam*, in front of a flesh and blood, a mortal king, if this mortal king were to be angry with me, this mortal king were to lock me up, if this mortal

king were to punish me, it would be temporary, it would be passing. But even more than that, this mortal flesh and blood king, I can appease him, I can bribe him. All kinds of things I could use to change the judgment.

Nevertheless if I were being taken to judgment in front of a mere mortal, I would be trembling, I would be crying, how much more so now that they're taking me in front of *Hakadosh Baruch Hu*, Who lives on for eternity and those were the final words that Reb Yochanan ben Zakai left the world with.

And so let's ask it as a question, why is it, why is it that *Chazal* were literally petrified of the *yom hadin*, and were not?

Well okay listen you know, alright I'm not saying I'm looking forward, I certainly hope to be a real long time from now, but I'm not exactly quaking in fear. Why is that?

So I believe what the *Mesilas Yesharim* shares with us is the very first concept, that is that we think that we're judged in broad terms, we think we're given a grade point average. When a fellow's hired for a new job, they ask for his resume and on his resume it'll say which school he went to and maybe if it's extremely detailed it will even say his grade point average. They take all four years, all courses and he gets an A B B+, when I leave this earth, "*lo yashgichu hachamuros es hakalos*" the major mighty weighty acts do not weigh out against the minor ones. Every action, all of them are brought to judgment, large and small, good and bad.

And I might have been a great *tzaddik* in one area, but I might have done things in another area, all of them are brought to judgment. And every single action of my life, every interchange with another human being, every moment, every thought is put in front of me and I'm judged for every one of them.

And we gave a *mashal* earlier of what it's like on *yom hadin*, I explained that if you go to the Holocaust museum in New York you'll walk into this empty room and you see this huge, huge room, tall ceiling, wrapped all around, filled with thousands of photographs.

All the photographs are people who were in Europe, in Poland and in Russia and you'll see, young people, old people, thousands and thousands of photographs and that is what it's like on *yom hadin*.

My entire life every moment, every single snapshot, when I was thirteen, when I was eighteen, when I was twenty two, when I was first married, when I had my first kid, every single snapshot, every single moment right there.

But then the judgment starts. You see when you enter that anti room, the pictures are way, way up there and they're very, very small but you can't see the details because you're looking at thousands of pictures and they are in the distance.

But the actual judgment is far more demanding and if you'll like to understand it, imagine that one little snapshot, suddenly comes into focus and it becomes larger and larger and larger until we zoom in and we see the exact details. And there I am, oh my goodness, that was me, yeah, I was in the seventh grade, oh my goodness, yeah and there's that new kid who had just come into the, into the school, oh you're right, yeah, yeah oh, oh my goodness there we're in recess, oh my goodness, oh yeah they were making fun of that kid. Oh and there's that bully, that bully said to him ay you loser, no one likes you, no one's going to choose you on their team, nobody wants to learn with me.

And there I am, oh my goodness, there I go. I go over to the kid, oh, and I go hey don't call him loser, he's on my team and I'm learning with him. And for the rest of the year I learnt with that

guy, wow. That's great. It's amazing, I see it, I experience it again and I feel all the vivid detail and then they start analyzing the actions and they start playing forward the results.

See that kid, that kid left the next year when you all went to high school, he went on to another high school but because he had such a good year, because you accepted him, because you learnt with him, he had another great year and another great year and he became a great *Rosh Yeshivah* he became a leader of the community and everything that he is is because of you.

And I say, wow to my credit, that's amazing. But then they dig in and they analyze and they start asking questions on the details. They say, what were you thinking when you did it? Was it *kavod*, were you driven for your own honor? And they ask do you normally do these kinds of things.

And the truth is I look around and I say I normally didn't I tried to be a cool kid. Was this the kind of thing I normally would get into fights about? No, not at all. Were you really proud of it? No not particularly. Were you bragging about the fact that you saved this kid? No.

And I see this picture glow, gloriously, it's a shining diamond in my crown for eternity. And I say to myself, wow, this *yom hadin* thing is not so bad at all. This is pretty good.

But then I watch when they take out another picture. And this one's also not so bad, ooh look at me, at the *amud*, I'm *davening*, *shliach tzibbur*, wow. Look at me, wow, I have, my face is so intent, with real *kavanah*, wow I can't wait to hear this one.

And then they start asking me some questions, uh what were your intentions? Was he *davening* with *kavanah*? Yeah absolutely. Until he got to *kedushah*, until he got to the high note and all of a sudden his voice, hit the high note and he sort of felt this glow inside, oh wasn't there a touch

of arrogance there? Wasn't there a sense of oh listen to me and how did he leave the day? How did he leave that moment? Oh he left with a sense of arrogance and the sense of he was great.

And you see it's the extraordinary details of every action that's weighed and measured but it's not two actions, it's my entire life. My entire life, every moment, everything, with extraordinary careful *dikduk hadin*, precision and extreme detail.

And one of the reasons why it's difficult for us to see the *yom din* is because in our world we see one scene at a time and all I could ever focus on is here, the present, I feel, I am, in this moment. To recognize that there's going to be a time when I leave this earth and every moment of my life, the past, the future, everything comes back in brilliant, brilliant clarity and every moment is revisited and relived and I am that, is difficult for us mortal, corporeal beings to relate to.

But when my body's put into the ground, I'm no longer contained, I'm no longer held in check and suddenly every moment of my life comes flashing back and every moment is visited, weighed, analyzed and one of the reasons why it's very difficult for us to relate to *yom hadin*, because we think in very concrete, here and now terms. Right now I'm doing okay, I don't remember what I was like when I was twenty two, I surely don't remember what I was like when I was fifteen, I don't even remember ten years ago and I think it's forgotten, it's gone, I'm okay.

I might be okay if I did everything right then, I might be okay if I grew and accomplished and used every moment of my life properly, but it's quite likely that there are moments of great accomplishments and moments of mmm whatever.

There are certain parts of my life that I did that I'm very, very proud of and certain things that well hmmm, I'm not quite so happy that other people would be aware of them. And recognizing the fact that every detail, every moment of my life is played out is one of the difficult parts of

relating to the world to come and that's the first reason why it's hard for us to relate to the depth of judgment.

But there's another problem, you see we have a philosophical problem dealing with the concept of being judged and the depth of judgment.

And that philosophical problem is the fact that Hashem is far more merciful, far more loving, far more kindly than anyone we could ever imagine. And the more we focus on Hashem's love and *rachamim* and Hashem's giving kindness, the more it becomes difficult for us to relate to the world to come.

Why? Because look, Hashem is so merciful, Hashem is so kindly, think of the most forgiving, most gentle, kindly person in the world, multiply it ten thousand, ten thousand times, you don't have the beginning of an inkling of Hashem's love.

Doesn't the *Chovos Halevavos* teach us that?

So in the world to come it's going to be good, do you know why? Because me and Hashem, we're buddies. Hashem loves me, right? Hashem loves me so it's going to be all good. Hashem and I are buddies and it's going to be fine for the world to come. Don't worry I made some mistakes, did some things not so good, but okay it's okay, it's okay because Hashem loves me.

And while it's true that Hashem certainly loves every creation, there's a certain reality that we miss in terms of the potential of the human being, and the power that Hashem gave us. When Hashem created the world, it's for one purpose and one purpose only, for Adam.

Now when Hashem created men, Hashem put him as the pivotal point of creation in the center of creation, the reason for creation and the pivot upon everything turns on him. And that brings us

to a very important understanding, Hashem created me for one reason and one reason only because Hashem wants to share of His good with me and Hashem wants me to succeed and Hashem benefits not whatsoever, there is nothing in it for Hashem, Hashem is the *metiv*, Hashem is the giver and Hashem only created me, put me in this world for one reason, so I can have the opportunities, so I can grow.

But not just that, Hashem gave me an exact guidebook, Hashem gave me a *Torah* that shows me exactly how to live my life and Hashem showed me what to do, when to do, how to do it, and everything in that *Torah* is for my benefit.

Hashem doesn't need it, Hashem doesn't benefit. But there's another step, Hashem is "*molei kol ha'olam kulo*" Hashem fills the entire creation.

So let's put this into perspective. I stood in front of Hashem, and Hashem gave me a *Torah* for one reason, for my benefit, for my growth and I said to Hashem, I don't care, I'm not interested, this *mitzvah* is good, this *mitzvah*, ah ah, this one I like, this one I don't, I picked, I chose, some I did, some I didn't do. Whatever.

And in front of the king, I took the very guidebook, the holy *Torah* and I said I don't really give a darn, I don't care. And if you'd like to understand in very clear perspective, you see it's not just that Hashem created me, Hashem created the world and maintained it every given moment.

It wasn't just that I stood in front of my Creator, Hashem created and is *mishaveh*, keeps the world in existence, that means the reason why I'm here as we speak is because Hashem is constantly infusing energy into me.

My hands, my arms, my legs exist because Hashem keeps me here. And that means with the hand that Hashem created, with the hand that Hashem keeps in existence I took that very hand and if it could be, slapped the king right in the face, Hashem is right here, and in front of Him I said I don't really care. If we understood the gravity of one sin, we'd understand *tshuvah* is not possible.

As a matter of fact *Mesilas Yesharim* explains to us, if *middas hadin*, if strict justice was in operation, any act would have one ramification, any sin, the results would be destruction, instant, no *tshuvah*, no nothing, you violated the King's will in front of the King and He only created for you, for your benefit and He gave you an exact system to grow and in front of the King Himself you said you don't care, the punishment would be instant, it would be destruction and they'd be no concept of *tshuvah*.

Now, if in fact that were the way the world were operating, the world would not be too successful because not a lot of us would be around. As a matter of fact I have what I call the *Bar Mitzvah* funeral event, if *din* were in operation, if Hashem created the world with strict judgments, strict justice in operation, so I believe there would be a dual ceremony, a *Bar Mitzvah* boy would get up there, he'd *lein* his *parshah* beautifully, he'd come down, he'd make one snide remark to his uncle or his mother or his father and *tzeshem lushalom*, he's over he's toast.

In front of people, you're *muvayesh* you embarrass your parents, the ones who are responsible for putting you in this world, the ones who spend everything for you, the one who love you, take care of you and you say a snide nasty remark, he's done.

The *Bar Mitzvah* ceremony would double as the funeral ceremony and not a lot of us would be around. And clearly it's not what Hashem wants and therefore Hashem created the world with *din* mitigated by *rachamim*.

The *Mesilas Yesharim* explains to us what does *rachamim* do, mercy introduces a solution to those three problems.

Number one the punishment isn't instant, it's not like you touch the hot pot and get burned, the sinner gets a chance to sin and nothing happens. There's a lot of time given.

Number two, the punishments are not *alleh klalos*, you're not destroyed, even when you're punished and people do get punished in this world and typically it's not a punishment, it's a corrective course, Hashem sends messages because the real punishments are in the world to come and the real rewards are in the world to come but anything that does happen as a punishment isn't instant, there's a lot of time given.

And number three there's a concept of *tshuvah*. There's a concept of undoing the bad that you've done and this concept of *tshuvah* that we're very comfortable with, we're very familiar with is something that *Chazal* could not quite grasp and it's something that if we really understood things and we really had a clarity of vision, we would say doesn't make much sense.

And I'll explain to you what I mean. Imagine that a fellow is hauled in front of the judge. You see what happened was he had a few drinks too many, got into his car and started driving. A state trooper pulled him over, they arrest him and bring him into court and he stands now sober, a few days later in front of the judge.

And the judge says to him, young man what do you have to say for yourself? And he says your honor, I cannot defend my conduct, my shame and regret is beyond description, I cannot, I cannot even atone for it, but your honor it is my first offense, I'm a family man, I'm community minded, I beg the court to have mercy.

If he does a good job and he begs his case really well, he might get off. The judge may say okay, probation, let's prove yourself and he may get another shot, he may get his license back and he may go back to being a regular citizen.

But let's take the very same case with a slightly different twist. Instead of being pulled over by a state trooper, same guy got in his car, drunk as a sailor and ploughed into a telephone pole. Paramedics came rushing to the scene, they airlifted him to a hospital but there was no hope. His spinal cord was severed and he's paralyzed for the rest of his life.

A year later he stands in front of the judge, not standing but in his wheelchair because he does have to still stand on trial. If that fellow made the most beautiful plea in the world and he was the most convincing fellow in the world the judge may say yes, I forgive you but the fellow's not walking, he's still immobile, he's still handicapped because his spinal cord is severed and the judge may forgive him and the judge may say okay I'm okay with it, but he's not walking again.

You see what *Chazal* understood that we don't understand is the gravity of an action. Hashem put us into this world to grow, to accomplish, I can change the very world I live in, I could change myself and those accomplishments are huge, not in the physical world but I change the upper world, I change the spiritual world, I change me and it's much like electricity that can be powerful. It's much like nuclear energy that can do tremendous, tremendous things but there are consequences.

Would you like to know why Reb Yochanan Ben Zakai was trembling? He knew who he was and he knew his world to come is astonishing and amazing, yet he knew that there's still what to answer for and there might be slight things that he needs to answer for.

And the difference between *Chazal* and us is number one they understood that every action is weighed and measured, "*lo yashgichu hakalos es hachamuros*" it's not that the big issues are weighed and the small ones are ignored, every detail of my life. But it's not just every detail, that photograph comes zooming in, it's not just one photograph that comes zooming in and the context, the background who I was, where I was coming from, who I said to, when, why, my intentions, what I walked away with.

All of the backstories play and everything is weighed and measured, something that is beyond our understanding.

But the third aspect that *Chazal* understood and we don't understand is the gravity of the actions, the impact. It's very nice, you feel terrible, you clapped *al cheit*, that's wonderful, how does it eliminate what you've done?

And the *Mesilas Yesharim* explains to us that if you think about, *tshuvah* makes no sense. A man lived with a married woman, and there's a *mamzer* born. He now claps *al cheit*, *oy* I feel terrible, *oy yoy yoy*, he could clap *al cheit* the rest of his life, the child is still in the world.

Reuven killed Shimon, and then he realized, oh my goodness, the gravity of what I've done and he lives the rest of his life as a repentant sinner, total complete *tshuvah*, very nice, does Shimon come back alive?

How do you undo the action that you did? We don't think of it that way, whatever it's words, it's this, c'mon what's the big deal. If we understood the impact, the gravity of our actions, our words we'd understand you can't just eliminate them, they don't just disappear. Those photographs are there, that's me as a kid, that's me as a middle aged person, that's me throughout my life. And those actions are there, those thoughts are there, how do you just eliminate them?

And explains the *Mesilas Yesharim*, of course *tshuvah* makes no sense, and it's illogical. But Hashem created the world in such a way and Hashem wants our success, therefore even though Hashem demands justice, because Hashem is the *shofet* and is just, Hashem created a system within justice that we can somehow bounce the scales, and what's that?

If we use the *tshuvah* system, then there is a sort of system of justice. Explains the *Mesilas Yesharim* any decision that I made, had a will, had a *ratzon*. If I now unwill it, if I have such regret now that I have effectively strong as strongly felt the lack of will, the unwill as I felt the will then, and whatever pleasure I derive from that, if I feel an equal amount of regret, it's considered like a clean slate and that picture is gone.

The photograph disappears off the record it's no longer there. And as illogical as it is, and as beyond our comprehension as it is, it works. If you use the system of *tshuvah*, the regret, the system of *viduy* and if you go through the process, if you actually feel so strongly that Hashem would say this person standing in front of me today is not the same person who was there on that day, the will that He had then is totally different now, the pleasure that he derived more than compensated with the pain and the regret, the record is clean. The photograph is eliminated.

The *Orchos Tzaddikim* explains to us that there are many levels of *tshuvah*, not every *tshuvah* totally eradicates it. He explains it's much like a coat. Imagine you have a beautiful white coat

and a cab comes and splash I get mud on the coat. I rub it, I get some of the mud off, some of it, there's still stains, it's still an image. I have to rub more, rub more. The more I rub, the more I get into the fabric, the more of the stain I eliminate.

Explains the *Orchoz Tzaddikim*, there are many, many levels to *tshuvah*. Many levels and much like a stain that you have to rub it and rub it, if you really dig into the essence, if you really, really rub and rub, it's eliminated, *tshuvah* has many, many levels to it. If you clap *al cheit* and you stand in front of Hashem and say the words I'm sorry, that has a certain level of cleaning it. But it's the regret, the real change of the person, the real *charatah*, that's what actually eliminates it.

The more deeply you feel it, the more regret that you feel, the more you eliminate, but level after level you eliminate it and if you want to see it in our image, imagine you have those thousands and thousands of pictures on that wall, some are brilliant, beautiful and I'm so proud and some are mmm I'm not so proud of, but eliminating a picture, meaning there's that scene that I'm not very proud of and it's sort of fading a little bit, and fading a little bit more and fading a little bit more and a little more and the more that I sit there and do *tshuvah*, the more that I say to Hashem I regret bitterly having done that, I make up to change radically, the more that I dig into the essence of I, the more the picture becomes weaker and weaker, fading and fading and if I really to a complete *tshuvah*, it's gone.

That picture and that picture, and that picture, you could wipe out huge sections, it's a gift that is beyond our comprehension, it's a gift that's well beyond our understanding.

But if you ask where does *rachamim* fit in? Explains the *Mesilas Yesharim* it's the existence of our world and it's existence of us. You see if we ever understood life, and we understood the

impact of our actions, we'd understand that *tshuvah* isn't possible. Yet Hashem loves us and Hashem wants our success and therefore Hashem created this system of *tshuvah*.

What the *Mesilas Yesharim* is sharing for us is that there is a powerful inspiration for us when we focus on the gravity of the action. When we focus on this idea of what's it going to be like when I leave this earth and in envision that hall, thousands and thousands of pictures, the moments of my life.

The reason why we're not afraid is because we don't recognize it. The reason why *Chazal* had trepidation, Reb Yochanan ben Zakai as great as he was was filled with fear, why? Because he recognized that as great as he was and as many beautiful beautiful moments that'll be there, there are some that are a bit tainted, some that are not as pure and for eternity that's him.

But what he understood was, number one every action of my life, number two he understood that it's not just from a distance, it's not just that little picture, the picture is brought into very, very vivid detail with all of the emotions and all of the context and all of the backstory and in this world we can't see those moments all at the same time but that's only because I'm excluded, I'm blocked by this physical body. My body's from the ground, I see everything, every moment with brilliant clarity.

But the third part that Reb Yochanan ben Zakai understood was how impactful a human being is. The tremendous accomplishments or the opposite, and every action leaves an indelible imprint, permanent, it's not just on your permanent record, it's impossible to remove, how could you undo what you've done?

And explains the *Mesilas Yesharim* that yes, it's true, *tshuvah* does not make sense. But Hashem wanted the world to succeed and wanted us to have the opportunity to actually grow and if it's

true, if *din* were in operation it'll be a very, very different world and ironically sometimes *din* is in operation, we never know the whys, we never know what, but sometimes things happen and everyone says why? Hashem is such a good person, such a good person, why? Why?

We don't know the whys but I'll tell you one thing, if *din* is visited on you or I or anyone else we know, it's a very, very frightening thought.

Sarah *Imenu*, the great Sarah *Imenu* said to Avraham “*yishpot Hashem beni ubenecha*” Let Hashem judge. She had a complaint against Avraham, Avraham brought in Hagar and Sarah felt that on some level, Hagar was acting improperly, didn't honor Sarah propely, she was mocking Sarah and Sarah felt that Avraham should have stood up for her honor and Avraham didn't and Sarah said to Avraham “*yishpot Hashem beini ubenecha*” let Hashem judge.

And the *midrash* tells us because she said those words, she lost decades of her life why? Because when you enter into judgment, you're entering into a very frightening system, yes she was right in that instance, she might have been judged correctly there, but suddenly her entire life was visited with *din* and even a great *tzaddekes* like Sarah *Imenu*, when visited with absolute *din*, doesn't come out clean.

Hashem did not create the world in *din* and *rachamim* mitigates, not *rachamim* mercy balances out. What *rachamim* does is allow for time, you see if *din* were really in operation, any sin is violating the king's will in front of the king while the king keeps you alive. Instant, complete destruction. The punishment would be immediate, it would be destruction, they'd be no recourse and of course *tshuvah* wouldn't exist.

*Rachamim* introduces the opposite of those three elements. Number one the sinner is given lots of time, a person's given decades and decades and you can twenty years later, forty years later you can clean up things that you've done before.

And number two the punishments are not destructive. In this world when we get visited with pains and illnesses and the various things they are signs from Hashem for us to wake up. They are signs from Hashem for us to correct our path, they're not punishments, they're not vengeful, they're opportunities for us to either be *muchaper* or to correct our course, but they're for our benefit.

But the third difference is maybe the biggest one and that is that there's a concept called *tshuvah*. *Tshuvah* does not make sense, how do you undo the *mamzer*, how do you bring back Shimon to life? Hashem calculates it, if your regret equals the will initially to do it, if the pain you feel equals out to the pleasure you had then, it's off your record.

The action may still be there, the results aren't accredited to you. And you could come to the world to come, totally clean, totally I'm a *tzaddik*, you could be. If you do a complete *tshuvah* and you really dig in deeply, you come in clean.

However, there's one thing that you have to keep in mind, I could eliminate decades by doing a complete *tshuvah* but that won't make me who I'm not. Meaning if at the age of eighty I suddenly wake up and say *osh chatasi, avisi* and I really, really regret deeply wasting my life and I regret deeply not accomplishing and I regret deeply everything I did wrong, I could eliminate it but I'm not going to make myself into a twenty year old that has a chance to grow and accomplish and do.

Meaning makes it like the sin isn't there, but all of the *mitzvahs*, everything I could have accomplished, isn't brought into existence suddenly. I don't suddenly become ten times the size that I was. *Tshuvah* is great and the fact that I could eliminate sins is phenomenal. First of all the sins weigh me down and I'm going to have to answer for them in the world to come, but at the end of the day we're put here to grow and to accomplish and the greatest accomplishment of *tshuvah* is changing my direction so that I could actually grow, accomplish, I could live my life for a purpose.

*Tshuvah* is great that eliminates a sin, but even more importantly is it allows me to recalibrate, redirect myself and grow and accomplish that which I was put on the planet to do.