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STUDY GUIDE

INTERNATIONAL
HIGH SCHOOL
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General Introduction:

Unlike most other sections of the רמב"ם, which deal with מצוות which are related to action (such as כשרות, שבת, etc.), ספר המדע deals with מצוות which are fulfilled by having proper thoughts and character traits (such as אהבת ישראל, אהבת ה', יראת ה', etc.). The הלכות in this ספר are therefore less detail oriented and more focused on fundamental ideas in Judaism.

Many of the concepts discussed, especially those in the first few פרקים, are extremely difficult to grasp. The רמב"ם himself describes them as such. Don't get stuck on trying to fully understand each idea. The goal of the חידון is to give you a general picture of the topics discussed.

הלכות יסודי התורה

Chapter 1:

Chapter Summary:

This פרק discusses the positive מצוות of 'ידיעת ה' - "knowing" Hashem and 'אהדות ה' - unifying Hashem, as well as the איסור against denying Hashem. This פרק also discusses connected theological and philosophical ideas. (For example - why it is logically necessary to say that Hashem is one? Why it is logically necessary to conclude that Hashem doesn't have a body? How can the תורה use physical terminology to describe Hashem?)

Guiding Questions:

1. What is the יסוד היסודות ועמוד החכמות?
2. What does the fact that the globe is constantly revolving prove?
3. Why is it logically necessary to say that Hashem is one?
4. Write the 3 פסוקים which describe Hashem or his actions in physical terms. Which concept do they seemingly contradict?
5. How does the רמב"ם resolve that contradiction?
6. How does the רמב"ם explain משה's request of נא כבודך?

Chapter 2:

Chapter Summary:

This פרק explains the way to achieve אהבת ה' and יראת ה'. The פרק then describes the spiritual creations.

Key Terms/References:

The word "חומר-matter" in this chapter can be loosely translated as the physical aspect of something, or its body. The word "צורה- form" can be loosely translated as the spiritual aspect, or the soul.

Guiding Questions:

1. How does the רמב"ם tell us to achieve אהבת ה' and יראת ה'?
2. What general topic does the רמב"ם explain until the end of the פרק? How is it related to the מצוות we are discussing?
3. Write down at least 3 characteristics of a מלאך as described by the רמב"ם in הלכות ג-ה.
4. Which concept does the רמב"ם describe as אין כח בפה לאומרו ולא באוזן לשמעו ולא בלב? האדם להכירו על בוריו?
5. Which concepts are called מעשה מרכבה? How and to whom should these concepts be taught?
6. Write down 2 of the פסוקים brought in י"ב הלכה which refer to the mysterious nature of these ideas.

Chapter 3:

Chapter Summary:

This פרק continues the description of how the world works. While the last פרק discussed the spiritual realms, this פרק describes the physical universe. It discusses the planets, constellations, and the four elements.

Guiding Questions:

1. Draw a diagram of the 9 spheres. Place each planet, the moon, and the mazalos in their positions in the diagram.
2. Place the earth in its proper position in the diagram.
3. Place the four elements in their proper positions in the diagram.
4. What is the smallest planet? What is the largest star? How much bigger is that largest star than the earth?
5. Which of these entities are conscious beings?
6. What do these conscious beings do with their time and knowledge?

Chapter 4:

Chapter Summary:

This פרק continues the description of how the world works. It discusses the characteristics of the four elements and how they interact to form different creations. The פרק ends off by explaining why it is important to learn the ideas discussed in these chapters, as well as the proper way these ideas should be taught.

Guiding Questions:

1. Why does the פסוק say ואל עפר תשוב?
2. Which group of מלאכים are in charge of giving each creation its proper form?
3. What is the difference between a תואר and a צורה?
4. What is מעשה בראשית?
5. What is the פרדס? What must one learn before “strolling into it?”
6. What is the difference between the way מעשה בראשית and מעשה מרכבה must be taught?

Chapter 5:

Chapter Summary:

This פרק discusses when a Jew is required to give up his life 'על קידוש ה' and, in contrast, cases where he is required to save his life instead. The end of the פרק lists everyday behaviors which cause either a 'קידוש ה' or a 'חילול ה' although they do not involve literally sacrificing a life.

Guiding Questions:

1. In which 2 cases are you obligated to give up your life 'על קידוש ה' even for a minor מצוה?
2. What do we learn from the phrase 'לא תעשה דבר לנערה'?
3. What do we learn from the phrase 'ואהבת את ה' אלהיך בכל לבבך ובכל נפשך ובכל מאודך'?
4. Can you kill one person to save another? Are there any exceptions?
5. Give an example of a substance you are not allowed to use as a medication unless there is danger to life.
6. Give an example of a behavior (other than actually sacrificing one's life) which causes a 'קידוש ה'.

Chapter 6:

Chapter Summary:

This פרק lists the הלכות related to the איסור of erasing a name of Hashem.

Key Terms/References:

When the רמב"ם says "not sacred" - "חול" in this chapter, he means that a word which normally refers to Hashem - such as אדני or אלהי-ם - are NOT referring to Hashem, but have another, mundane meaning. For example, אדני would mean "my master".

Guiding Questions:

1. What are the 7 holy names of Hashem?
2. Which letters connected to Hashem's name cannot be erased?
3. Can descriptions of Hashem (such as גדול, גורא, חנון, רחום, etc.) be erased?

4. What should a person do if they need to go to the מקוה and Hashem's name is written on their skin? Explain why.
5. Which is done to a ספר תורה written by a non-Jew? What about a ספר תורה written by a Jewish heretic?
6. Give an example of a passage in the תורה where the name is not sacred.

Chapter 7:

Chapter Summary:

This פרק discusses the מצוה of obeying a נביא. It describes how someone can achieve נבואה, what that experience is like, and how other people can verify whether someone is a נביא. It also contrasts the נבואה of most נביאים with the נבואה of משה רבינו.

Guiding Questions:

1. What are three characteristics of a man who can become a נביא?
2. Why do the body and senses of a נביא become weak when he gets נבואה?
3. Who are the בני הנביאים?
4. Why would the בני הנביאים play music?
5. What are two differences between the נבואה of משה רבינו and that of other נביאים?
6. How do we know if someone claiming to be a נביא is legitimate?

Chapters 8-9:

Chapter Summary:

פרקים ח-ט go into further detail how and why a נביא can be verified. They explain the basis for believing in נביאים, what נביאים are allowed to tell the Jewish people to do, and how a נביא can be disproven.

Guiding Questions:

1. What is the problem with believing in משה because of the many miracles he performed?
2. Why do we believe in משה?
3. Why do we believe in other נביאים because of wonders they perform?

(Seemingly, that would suffer from the same problem as believing in משה because of the miracles he performed!)

4. Give three instances where a נביא (or someone claiming to be a נביא) is punished with the death penalty.
5. When can a נביא nullify a מצוה? Which famous נביא did that and why?
6. Which מצוה is the exception to the rule in question #5?

Chapter 10:

Chapter Summary:

In this פרק, the רמב"ם describes how we can test a נביא and know that he is legitimate.

Guiding Questions:

1. What is the true test of a נביא?
2. What is the difference between the prediction of a נביא and the predictions of sorcerers?
3. Which prophecies that a נביא says DON'T have to come true?
4. Why don't they have to come true?
5. Give an example of a נבואה which didn't come true for that reason
6. In which case do we accept a נביא immediately, without testing him further? Bring an example.

הלכות דעות

Chapter 1:

Chapter Summary:

This פרק describes various character traits and advises following the “middle path” of all of them. It also discusses how to change one’s character.

Guiding Questions:

1. Which path does the רמב”ם call the דרך הישרה? Give an example.
2. What is a person who follows the דרך הישרה called?
3. Which type of person is called a חסיד?
4. How do חז”ל explain the מצוה of בדרכיו?
5. How can a person train themselves so the proper character traits become part of his personality?
6. What is the דרך ה’?

Chapter 2:

Chapter Summary:

This פרק describes the way to refine negative traits in further detail. Although the previous פרק advised following the “middle path”, in this פרק the רמב”ם says that there are certain situations where a person should take an extreme path.

Guiding Questions:

1. How are the חולי גוף similar to the חולי נפש?
2. Who are the “doctors” for the חולי נפש?
3. What is the “cure”?
4. Which qualities should not be adopted, even in moderation?
5. Which qualities must be taken to the extreme?
6. Give an example of a quality which must be adopted in moderation.

Chapter 3:

Chapter Summary:

In this פרק, the רמב"ם emphasizes not excessively separating oneself from worldly matters, while also not being overly indulgent. The "middle path" needs to be taken here as well.

Guiding Questions:

1. Who is the phrase "וכפר עליו מאשר חטא על הנפש" talking about?
2. What does it teach us?
3. Explain the phrases "וכל מעשיך יהיו לשם שמים" and "בכל דרכיך דעהו" according to the רמב"ם.

Chapter 4:

Chapter Summary:

This פרק lists guidelines for leading a healthy lifestyle.

Guiding Questions:

1. Why does the רמב"ם discuss health advice in this chapter? How is it relevant to הלכה?
2. List 3 pieces of advice the רמב"ם give regarding the proper way to eat a meal.
3. List 3 pieces of advice regarding how to sleep.
4. List 10 foods which are harmful.
5. How does the רמב"ם suggest relieving constipation in older people?
6. What piece of health advice does the רמב"ם learn from the phrase "שומר פיו ולשונוו" "שומר מצרות נפשו"?
7. The רמב"ם promises that everyone who follows his advice will be healthy. Which people does he say are the exception to that rule?
8. What amenities does a town need to have in order for a תלמיד חכם to be allowed to live there?

Chapter 5:

Chapter Summary:

This פרק discusses the proper way a חכם should act.

Guiding Questions:

1. Give three descriptions of how a חכם should eat a meal
2. Which פסוק describes the proper way of eating?
3. List three rules about how a חכם should speak.
4. Which proper behaviors does the רמב"ם learn from the phrase “גם בדרך כשהסכל הולך”
“לבו חסר ואמר לכל סכל הוא הוא מודיע לכל על עצמו שהוא סכל”?
5. What does the רמב"ם learn from the phrase “...מי האיש אשר נטע כרם ולא חללו...”?
6. List three rules about how a חכם should act in business dealings.

Chapter 6:

Chapter Summary:

This פרק discusses the importance of a person being in a proper social environment. It also discusses the מצוה of אהבת ישראל.

Guiding Questions:

1. Why should a person make sure to keep away from wicked people? Which פסוק teaches us that idea?
2. How can we fulfill the מצוה of ובו תדבק - cleaving to Hashem?
3. What does the רמב"ם tell us to do in order to fulfill the מצוה of ואהבת לרעך כמוך?
4. What does the רמב"ם learn from the story of אבשלום and אמנון?
5. What should you be careful about when you rebuke someone?
6. How long do you have to persist in rebuking them?
7. פסוק which מצוה is connected - כי אם צעק יצעק אלי שמוע אשמע צעקתו.

Chapter 7:

Chapter Summary:

This פרק discusses the נטירה and רכילות, לשון הרע, נקמה of איסורים.

Key Terms/References:

In הלכה א, the רמב"ם refers to the story of דואג. דואג was the man who told שאול that דוד had stayed with אחימלך. As a result of דואג spreading that piece of gossip, שאול ordered אחימלך and 80 other כוהנים in his city killed. (For more details, check out the story in פרק א, שמואל א, פרק א-כא-כב)

Guiding Questions:

1. What is the difference between רכילות and לשון הרע?
2. What is considered לשון הרע?
3. What is saying לשון הרע as a joke compared to?
4. What is the difference between נטירה and נקמה?
5. Write two פסוקים brought in the רמב"ם about the negative effects of לשון הרע.

הלכות תלמוד תורה

Chapter 1:

Chapter Summary:

This פרק discusses who is obligated in learning תורה, and how תורה should be learned.

Key Terms/References:

In הלכה ז, the רמב"ם says that it is forbidden for a teacher to take payment for teaching תורה. Today, teachers of תורה are paid. The halachic justification is that if the teacher wouldn't be teaching, they would be working at another paid job. The teacher is compensated for forgoing a paid job.

In הלכה י"ג, the רמב"ם discusses the obligation of women with regard to learning תורה. The Rebbe very much encouraged women to learn all aspects of תורה at a high level. To learn more about the Rebbe's approach and understand how that fits with the הלכות presented here, see ליקוטי שיחות חלק י"ד, page 37; ספר השיחות תש"נ, page 455; ליקוטי שיחות חלק ל"ו, page 86.

Guiding Questions:

1. Who is a man required to teach תורה to?
2. Which of those people take precedence?
3. At what age does the מצוה of תלמוד תורה begin? When does the מצוה end?

4. Can a teacher of תורה accept payment?
5. Which section of תורה is called גמרא? How much time should one spend learning it?
6. When and why does the rule “כל המלמד את בתו תורה כאילו למדה תפלות” apply?

Chapter 2:

Chapter Summary:

This פרק discusses the importance of children learning תורה and the proper way children should be taught. (Today, children don't learn based on the intense schedule outlined in these הלכות. However, this was the schedule followed in ancient times.)

Guiding Questions:

1. According to the first הלכה, what sustains the world?
2. At what age should a child be brought to study? What is the study schedule?
3. Who falls under the category of רמיה ה' מלאכת?
4. What is the proper teacher/student ratio?
5. Can a child be transferred from one school to another?
6. What do we learn from the פסוק of תורה ויאדיר וצדקו יגדיל תורה?

Chapter 3:

Chapter Summary:

This פרק discusses the lofty level of תורה, and the way to gain the “crown of תורה”.

Guiding Questions:

1. Which crown is the highest of the “three crowns”? Which פסוק teaches us that?
2. What does the פסוק of “יקרה היא מפנינים” teach us?
3. Which takes precedence, תורה learning or מצוה performance? Why?
4. What do we learn from the פסוק of “לא בשמים היא ולא מעבר לים היא”?
5. Why is תורה compared to water?
6. List three of the behaviors the רמב”ם mentioned with regard to the proper way to learn תורה.

Chapter 4:

Chapter Summary:

This פרק describes the protocol of how תורה should be taught. (Today, we clearly don't follow the strict structure outlined in these הלכות, however this was the way תורה was taught in ancient times.)

Key Terms/References:

The מתרגם mentioned in הלכה ג was a type of assistant teacher often used by the תנאים and אמוראים. There are different opinions about what the exact function of the מתרגם was. One opinion is that the מתרגם would translate the teachers words from Hebrew into Aramaic, the local language. Another opinion is that the מתרגם was a "human microphone" - the teacher would speak in a low voice and the מתרגם would say the words loud enough for everyone to hear. Having a מתרגם was also an expression of honor for the teacher.

Guiding Questions:

1. Which הלכה is learned from the פסוק of "כצורור אבן במרגמה כן נותן לכסיל כבוד"?
2. Describe the traditional seating arrangements and teaching methods in an ancient בית מדרש.
3. Explain the statement "אין הביישן למד ולא הקפדן מלמד"
4. What were the חכמים referring to when they said בתלמידים זרוק מרה?
5. What is the proper etiquette when asking a teacher a question?
6. Which is more holy - a שול or a בית מדרש?

Chapter 5:

Chapter Summary:

This פרק describes the respect a student should have for his teacher.

Guiding Questions:

1. Which הלכות reflect the idea that a person should honor their teacher more than their father?
2. When is a student allowed to say a פסק הלכה?
3. Who does the פסוק of חללים הפילה refer to?

4. Give three examples of how a student should respect their teacher.
5. To which type of teacher do these high standards of respect apply?
6. Which משל does the הרבה חכמה למדתי מרבותי of מאמר חז"ל bring to explain the ם רמב"ם ? ויותר מחבירי ומתלמידי יותר מכולם

Chapter 6:

Chapter Summary:

This פרק discusses the והדרת פני זקן of מצוה - respecting the elderly, and the various degrees of respect one would have for different leaders of the community. It also details the consequences for disgracing a תלמיד חכם.

Guiding Questions:

1. What does the word זקן mean? Who does it refer to?
2. Why does the תורה add the words ויראת מאלקך after the מצוה of והדרת פני זקן?
3. Why would תלמידי חכמים take the long route and walk around the city?
4. What is the protocol when one sees the נשיא outside? How about a regular תלמיד חכם?
5. Why should a student who is in front of his teacher all day only stand up twice?
6. Who is included in the מצוה of מפני שיבה תקום?
7. Give 3 other examples of how respect is shown to תלמידי חכמים.

Chapter 7:

Chapter Summary:

This פרק details the הלכות of putting a person in חרם: when and how they should be put in חרם, how to behave toward someone in חרם, and how a person can be released from חרם.

Guiding Questions:

1. What is learned from the וכשלת היום וכשל גם נביא עמך לילה of פסוק?
2. How and by whom can a נידוי or a חרם issued? How and by whom can they be lifted?
3. What is the difference between a נידוי and a חרם?
4. What happens if a person dreams they were placed under נידוי?
5. What can we learn from the פסוק of גם לכל הדברים אשר ידברו אל תתן לבך?

6. What is the exception to the rule learned from that פסוק?

הלכות עבודה זרה כוכבים

Chapter 1:

Chapter Summary:

This פרק describes the historical causes and rationales for idol worship. It also describes how אברהם, despite growing up in a world steeped in idolatry, found Hashem and passed that belief on to his children.

Guiding Questions:

1. When did people start serving עבודה זרה?
2. What was their initial mistake?
3. Why did people start bowing to man made objects?
4. What was the line of questioning אברהם thought of that led to his discovery of Hashem?
5. What was the role of שבט לוי?
6. Why did Hashem send משה to take us out of מצרים when he did?

Chapter 2:

Chapter Summary:

This פרק discusses the איסורים against serving עבודה זרה, learning about עבודה זרה, and a מגדף (someone who curses Hashem).

Guiding Questions:

1. Which behaviors do the פסוקים of אל תפנו אל האילים and אל תדרוש לאלהיהם prohibit?
2. Which thoughts does the פסוק of ולא תתורו אחרי לבבכם ואחרי עיניכם אשר אתם זונים prohibit? Why are they forbidden?
3. Prove that עבודה זרה is equivalent to breaking all of the מצוות.
4. Which פסוק teaches us the punishment of someone who serves עבודה זרה?
5. Which people qualify as a מגדף?

6. Why do the judges rip their clothes when the witnesses repeat the curse? Why do the judges and the witnesses place their hands on the head of the מגדף?

Chapter 3:

Chapter Summary:

This פרק discusses when a person is liable for punishment when serving עבודה זרה, the הלכות of manufacturing an idol, and the איסור against making pictures and images.

Key Terms/References:

It is important to note the difference between the word פטור - exempt and the word מותר - allowed. When the רמב"ם says an action is פטור, he means that the person does not get a punishment. However, the action is still forbidden.

Guiding Questions:

1. Why does the בית דין need to know the different ways idols are worshipped?
2. Which four acts of worship are *always* punishable by כרת or death?
3. Which type of person is not liable for serving עבודה זרה?
4. Which ordinary behaviors should you refrain from because it might *seem* like עבודה זרה?
5. Which two עבירות are transgressed if a person makes themselves an idol?
6. What is the difference between the איסור against making images of human beings and the איסור of making images of the sun, moon or stars?

Chapter 4:

Chapter Summary:

This פרק discusses the laws of an עיר הנדחת - a city where the majority of the population is led to serve עבודה זרה.

Guiding Questions:

1. What are the criteria for the population size of an עיר הנדחת? Bring a פסוק to prove it.

2. How and by whom does the city need to be led to sin in order to be considered an עיר הנדחת? Bring a פסוק to prove it.
3. Which cities can never be considered an עיר הנדחת?
4. What does the בית דין do when a city is declared an עיר הנדחת?
5. What happens if a person from outside the עיר הנדחת has property inside the city? What about if he owns property in partnership with someone else?
6. What happens to תרומה, objects dedicated to the בית המקדש and ספרים which are found in the עיר הנדחת?

Chapter 5:

Chapter Summary:

This פרק discusses the הלכות of a מסית and a מדיח (people who entice other Jews to serve עבודה זרה), a נביא שקר, and causing a non-Jew to swear by an idol.

Guiding Questions:

1. What is the difference between a מסית and a מדיח?
2. What does the רמב"ם mean by the words "מצוה להכמין לו"?
3. List the five things a מוסת cannot do for a מסית, along with the source פסוקים.
4. What is included in the איסור of "לא תשמע אל דברי הנביא ההוא"?
5. Which people are called a נביא שקר? What is their punishment?
6. Which actions violate the איסור of "ושם אלהים אחרים לא תזכירו"?

Chapter 6:

Chapter Summary:

This פרק discusses the איסור against various types of witchcraft, the איסור against offering children to מולך, and various other practices which are אסור because they resemble the way עבודה זרה is served.

Guiding Questions:

1. Describe the actions of איוב and ידעוני. Why were they forbidden?
2. Describe the ritual of מולך. What is the punishment?

3. Which exception to the punishment is learned from the words “כי מזרעו נתן למולך”?
What are other exceptions?
4. What is the מצבה referred to in “ולא תקים לך מצבה”? Why is it forbidden?
5. Why was there a מנהג to place mats or straw over stone floors in shuls?
6. Which הלכה do we learn from the word “לא תטע לך אשרה כל עץ אצל מזבח ה' אלהיך”?
What is the reason for the הלכה?

Chapter 7:

Chapter Summary:

This פרק discusses the איסור against benefiting from עבודה זרה and connected objects. It details the difference in status between עבודה זרה owned by a Jew and עבודה זרה owned by a non-Jew.

Key Terms/References:

The דרקון mentioned in הלכה ה' refers to an image of a man with fins and scales. It was a common pagan symbol in ancient times.

Guiding Questions:

1. What is included in the מצוה of “אבד תאבדון את כל המקומות”? What is the difference between ארץ ישראל and the diaspora?
2. What is the punishment for benefitting from idols or their accessories? When does the איסור begin?
3. Are you allowed to benefit from the payment for making an idol? Why or why not?
4. Can you benefit from a statue found in a city center or a statue found in a dump? Why or why not?
5. What happens if an object forbidden because of עבודה זרה is mixed with a pile of regular objects?
6. What is the הלכה if you bake bread using wood from an אשרה? How is that different from a case where a person plants vegetables in the shade of an אשרה?

Chapter 8:

Chapter Summary:

This פרק discusses which objects become אסור to benefit from because of their connection to עבודה זרה and which do not. It also discusses how an עבודה זרה can be “nullified” - a process where a non-Jew renounces his belief in the idol, thereby nullifying its connection to idol worship.

Guiding Questions:

1. Can one benefit from rocks which slid down a mountain, if they are designated by people to be worshipped as עבודה זרה? Why or why not?
2. How can a living animal become אסור?
3. How should עבודה זרה be destroyed?
4. What is the הלכה if a building or a stone was adorned for an idol?
5. Who can nullify an idol? Which type of idol can be nullified?
6. How can it be nullified?

Chapter 9:

Chapter Summary:

This פרק discusses the business restrictions between Jews and idol-worshippers.

Key Terms/References:

In הלכה ה the רמב"ם states that it is אסור to sell weapons to idolaters. To understand this, as well as the seemingly harsh restrictions on idol worshippers in the next פרק, it's important to realize the nature of idolaters in those times. They were very antagonistic and often dangerous to the Jews.

Guiding Questions:

1. On which days are there business restrictions between a Jew and a non-Jew? Why?
2. Can a Jew receive a present from a non-Jew on those days?
3. Which 3 categories of items can never be sold to someone who serves עבודה זרה?
4. What are the הלכות relevant to a city which has an idol in the center?
5. What are the הלכות regarding trading with idol worshippers at a fair? Explain the reasons behind the הלכה.

6. What are the הלכות regarding trading with a Jew on the way to and from a place of idol worship? What about on the way back from a fair?

Chapter 10:

Chapter Summary:

This פרק discusses more הלכות governing relations with idol worshippers.

Key Terms/References:

In הלכה א the רמב"ם makes sharp statements about אפיקורסים Jewish. It is important to note that the רמב"ם is referring to Jews who are fully knowledgeable of תורה and deliberately and publicly disregard it out of spite for Hashem. (For a more complete definition of an אפיקורס, see הלכות תשובה.) The רמב"ם is not referring to Jews who sin out of habit, temptation or ignorance. We would be hard-pressed to find an אפיקורס in modern times.

The area of "Syria" mentioned in this פרק refers to land adjacent to ארץ ישראל which at one time was under Jewish control. This area has an "in-between" status. In some respects it is like ארץ ישראל - for example, תרומה and מעשר must be taken from the fields there. On the other hand, it doesn't have the same sanctity as ארץ ישראל proper.

Guiding Questions:

1. What is the prohibition of "לא תכרות להם ברית"?
2. What are four actions included under the איסור of לא תחנם?
3. What are the exceptions to the above איסור?
4. What are the הלכות regarding renting land and fields to idolaters? Why are the הלכות with regard to fields stricter?
5. Which things should Jews do מפני השלום?
6. What is the difference between the הלכה when ארץ ישראל is under Jewish control and when it is not?

Chapter 11:

Chapter Summary:

This פרק discusses the איסור of לא תלכו בחקת הגוי - following non-Jewish customs and practices.

Guiding Questions:

1. What are three actions a Jew should not do because of “לא תלכו בחקת הגויים”?
2. What is the exception to that rule?
3. What is the difference between a מנהג, a קוסם and a מעונן ?
4. What could be halachically problematic about saying תהילים for a sick person?
Why are we allowed to?
5. Who is a דורש את המיתים?
6. According to the רמב”ם, why are all of these forms of magic prohibited?

Chapter 12:

Chapter Summary:

This פרק discusses the איסורים of shaving a beard, cutting פאות, tattoos, and gouging the skin.

Guiding Questions:

1. What is the reason for all of these איסורים?
2. How do we know that women can cut the corners of their head?
3. Women are obligated in all מצוות לא תעשה except for:
4. Can a man shave his moustache?
5. Why can't a man shave other body hair?
6. What is the second meaning of the איסור of “לא תתגודדו”?

הלכות תשובה

Chapter 1:

Chapter Summary:

This פרק discusses the greatness of תשובה, the basic components of תשובה, and how different categories עבירות can be atoned for.

Guiding Questions:

1. Which פסוק teaches us the מצוה of ווידוי?
2. What are the essential components of ווידוי?
3. What was the function of the עזאזל?
4. What does the רמב"ם learn from the phrase "רשעת הרשע לא יכשל בה ביום שובו מרשעו"?
5. Which עבירות are referred to by the פסוק of "כי ביום הזה יכפר עליכם"? Why?
6. Which עבירות are referred to in the פסוק of "ונגלה באזני ה' צבאות וגו' אם יכופר העון הזה לכם" פסוק of "עד תמותון"? Why?

Chapter 2:

Chapter Summary:

This פרק discusses the idea of "תשובה גמורה" - a complete, or ideal תשובה. It also details the best time and method for doing תשובה.

Guiding Questions:

1. What is תשובה גמורה?
2. Which action is compared to immersing in a מקוה while holding an impure carcass (טובל ושרץ בידו)?
3. List 7 recommended behaviors for a בעל תשובה.
4. How are the ten days of תשובה and davening with a מנין similar?
5. What is learned from the phrase "כי פשעי אני אדע וחטאתי נגדי תמיד"?
6. What do we learn from the story of the גבעונים?

Chapter 3:

Chapter Summary:

This פרק describes how a person is judged. It also discusses which people merit הבא עולם.

Guiding Questions:

1. Define a בינוני according to the רמב"ם. How is a בינוני judged on ראש השנה?
2. What does the phrase "יען נמצא בו דבר טוב" teach us?
3. What is the reason for blowing the שופר? What is the רמז in blowing it?

4. What does the פסוק of “צדיק יסוד עולם” teach us?
5. What is the difference between how an individual’s sins are counted and how a community’s sins are counted? Which פסוקים teach us this?
6. Define the terms מין and פורש מדרכי ציבור. Can these people get עולם הבא?
7. Do non-Jews go to עולם הבא?

Chapter 4:

Chapter Summary:

This פרק lists עבירות which are “מעכבין את התשובה” - hold back תשובה, and explains why these עבירות have such a damaging effect.

Guiding Questions:

- 1-5. The רמב”ם lists five categories of עבירות which are “מעכבין את התשובה”. Write down those five categories, and give one example from each one.
6. What does אין מספיקין בידו לעשות תשובה really mean according to the last הלכה?

Chapter 5:

Chapter Summary:

This פרק presents the concept that all human beings have בחירה חפשית - free choice. It also discusses philosophical questions related to this topic.

Guiding Questions.

1. What does the תורה mean when it says that “הן האדם היה כאחד ממנו לדעת טוב ורע” after חטא עץ הדעת?
2. Why is the principle of בחירה חפשית discussed in הלכות תשובה?
3. Prove that people have בחירה חפשית based on פסוקים in תורה.
4. Prove that logically, תורה must be based on the principle that people have בחירה חפשית.
5. Which contradiction is raised by the פסוק of “כל אשר חפץ ה' עשה בשמים ובארץ”? How is the contradiction resolved?
6. How does the רמב”ם resolve the question of how Hashem can know the future and allow for בחירה חפשית?

Chapter 6:

Chapter Summary:

This פרק explains why certain פסוקים seem to indicate that people do not have בחירה חפשית. (Such as Hashem predicting that the מצריים will enslave the Jewish people or Hashem hardening פרעה's heart.)

Guiding Questions:

1. List 3 פסוקים which seem to indicate that a person or a group of people did not have בחירה חפשית. How could these person/s have their free will taken away?
2. Why did Hashem tell משה go to פרעה if Hashem already told him that פרעה's heart was hardened and wouldn't let the Jewish people go?
3. How does the רמב"ם explain the phrase "הורני ה' דרכך"?
4. How does the רמב"ם explain the phrase "טוב וישר ה' על כן יורה חטאים בדרך ידרך ענוים"?
5. Which contradiction is raised by the פסוק of "וקם העם הזה וזנה אחרי אלהי נכר הארץ"?
6. How is that contradiction resolved?

Chapter 7:

Chapter Summary:

This פרק emphasizes the importance of always striving to do תשובה, and describes the great status achieved by the בעל תשובה.

Guiding Questions:

1. What is the meaning of the phrase "בכל עת יהיו בגדיך לבנים"?
2. Which עבירות are referred to in the phrase "יעזוב רשע דרכו ואיש עון מחשבותיו"? Why?
3. Explain the "מקום שבעלי תשובה עומדין אין צדיקים גמורין יכולין לעמוד בו" of מאמר חז"ל.
4. How do we know that the Jewish people will do תשובה before משיח comes?
5. List 2 pairs of פסוקים which show the contrast between Hashem's relationship with a sinner and Hashem's relationship with a בעל תשובה.
6. In this פרק, which עבירה falls under the category of ולא תונו איש את עמיתו?

Chapter 8:

Chapter Summary:

This פרק discusses the reward for doing מצוות and the punishment for doing עבירות. It also describes what עולם הבא is like, emphasizing that it is not a physical place with physical pleasure.

Guiding Questions:

1. What is the reward for צדיקים and the punishment for רשעים?
2. How does the רמב"ם interpret the phrases "עטרותיהם בראשיהן", "צדיקים יושבים", and "נהנין מזיו השכינה"?
3. List 3 metaphorical terms for עולם הבא found in תנ"ך and מאמרי חז"ל?
4. How does the רמב"ם define the punishment כרת?
5. What is the mistake the Arabs make?
6. Why is it called עולם הבא?

Chapter 9:

Chapter Summary:

In this פרק, the רמב"ם explains why the תורה promises physical rewards for doing מצוות, although the ultimate reward for doing מצוות is a spiritual one, in עולם הבא.

Guiding Questions:

1. Why does the תורה promise physical rewards for doing מצוות?
2. Why should a Jew want משיח to come?
3. List the three characteristics the רמב"ם attributes to משיח.
4. List 3 פסוקים which describe the times of משיח.
5. What is the difference between משיח and גלות?
6. What is the ultimate reward for doing מצוות?

Chapter 10:

Chapter Summary:

This פרק discusses the importance of serving Hashem out of אהבה, and doing תורה and מצוות for their own sake.

Guiding Questions:

1. Who is called an עובד מיראה?
2. What does the command of “ואהבת את ה' אלוך” demand of us?
3. What נמשל does שיר השירים use? What is the נמשל?
4. Which פסוקים teach us that we should serve Hashem out of love?
5. What is the justification for teaching children to serve Hashem for a reward?
6. How does one achieve ‘אהבת ה'?

Answer Key

הלכות יסודי התורה

Chapter 1:

1. Knowing that there is a Being (Hashem) who makes everything else exist. Nothing can exist without Hashem. However, Hashem doesn't need to be created by anything else. In other words: Everything is dependent on Hashem, but Hashem isn't dependent on anything else. Hashem exists “just because”.
2. Hashem has infinite and uninterrupted power.
3. If there were two gods, then they would both have to be limited. And in order to create the world, Hashem has to have unlimited power.
4. Correct פסוקים include:
 "ותחת רגליו", "באצבע אלהים", "יד ה'", "עיני ה'", "אזני ה'", "אם שנותי ברק חרבי", "לבושיה כתלג חיור", "חמוץ בגדים מבצרה".

These פסוקים seem to contradict the idea that Hashem has no body or physical form.

5. They are a משל. The תורה is just trying to speak in a way that we can understand.
6. He was asking to be able to recognize Hashem and distinguish him from other entities the same way you recognize a person's face when you see them and can distinguish them from other people.

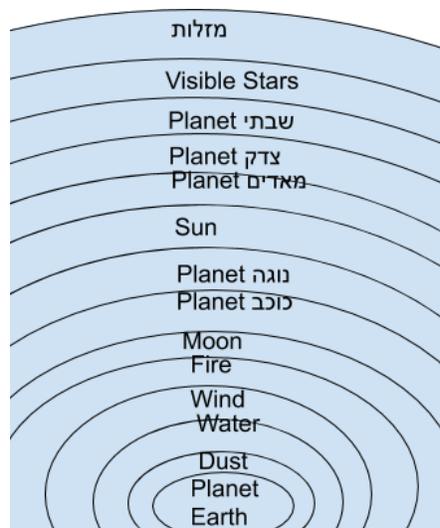
Chapter 2:

1. By contemplating his wondrous creations and infinite wisdom. Once a person appreciates Hashem's greatness, he will yearn to get closer to Him and be in awe of Him.
2. The רמב"ם discusses the creations of the spiritual worlds - the מלאכים. Learning about these matters is part of contemplating Hashem's creations. As the רמב"ם explained, this is the path to אהבת ה' and יראת ה'.

3. Correct answers include: they don't have a physical body, there are 10 levels of מלאכים, they are alive, they recognize and know Hashem
4. הוא היודע והוא הידוע והוא הדעה - He is the Knower, the Subject of Knowledge, and the Knowledge itself
5. The ideas in the first two פרקים of the רמב"ם. They should be taught to one wise man at a time.
6. Correct answers include: "יהיו לך לבדך ואין לזרים אתך", "דבש וחלב תחת לשונך", "כבשים ללבושך"

Chapter. 3:

1-3.



4. The smallest planet is Kochav. The largest star is the Sun. The sun is 170 times larger than the earth.
5. All of the stars and the spheres, except for the four elements.
6. They praise and glorify Hashem.

Chapter 4:

1. People are primarily made up of the element of earth.
2. The אישים.
3. The תואר is the physical appearance of the body. The צורה - form, is the form given by Hashem found in the human soul.
4. The ideas discussed in פרקים 3-4.

5. The ideas of מעשה מרכבה and מעשה בראשית, i.e. the ideas discussed in the first four chapters of the רמב"ם. One must first learn the הלכות of what is permitted and what is forbidden.
6. Both may only be taught to a single person at a time. However, מעשה מרכבה can only be taught to a very wise person who can understand the subject if you only tell him the fundamental ideas. מעשה בראשית can even be taught to someone who is less wise, and needs every detail explicitly explained to him.

Chapter 5:

1. If a non-Jew forces you to do an עבירה (and it's not for his own pleasure) in front of at least ten Jews, and if it is an era (such as the time of Nevuchadnezzar) when there is a decree against Jews keeping תורה and מצוות.
2. If a person is forced to do an עבירה (even if he should have given up his life instead), he is not punished for it.
3. We should love Hashem even if he takes our נפשך, and be willing to sacrifice our lives על קידוש ה'.
4. In general, no. If the non-Jews specify one person they want to be given to them to kill, if it is someone who is anyways sentenced to death by the king, the Jews are allowed to hand him over to save the community.
5. A mixture of milk and meat or כלאי הכרם. [Other foods, like חמץ or other non-kosher food can always be used as medicine as long as they are not eaten in a way which gives the patient pleasure. So, for example, a person can use a compress or eat a bitter tasting medicine with non-kosher meat in it, even if he is not in life-threatening danger. In contrast, a mixture of milk and meat or כלאי הכרם cannot be used in any way unless there is danger to life.]
6. Correct answers include: a תלמיד חכם studying תורה and wearing a טלית and תפילין all day, doing business honestly, acting pleasantly with other people, not talking a lot with the common people

Chapter 6:

1. The names are: א-ל, אלו-ה, ואלהי-ם, ואלה-י, ושד-י, צבאו-ת.
2. The prefixes to Hashem's name (such as the ל in לאלהי-ם) can be erased. However, the suffixes (such as the ך in אלהי-ך) cannot be erased.
3. Yes.
4. He should wind reeds or loose clothing around the name of Hashem. This is because you are not allowed to stand before the name of Hashem while you are naked. (And you cannot erase Hashem's name off of your skin before going into the water)

5. A ספר תורה written by a non-Jew should be buried. A ספר תורה written by a heretic should be burnt publicly.
6. Correct answers include: All the names written in פסוקים about Lot, except בראשית; All the names written in [גבעה בנימין פסוקים]; All the names written in the מיכה פסוקים about מיכה.

Chapter 7:

1. Correct answers include: Very wise; strong character; overcomes his natural desires; unblemished body; studies the ideas of פרדס; separates from other people; only thinks about Hashem
2. When the physical senses become weak, the mind is free to understand the נבואה
3. People who are “training” and striving to become נביאים
4. Because נבואה only rests on people who are happy.
5. משה could have נבואה whenever he wanted, and he didn't have to get it through a משל.
6. We follow the procedure laid out by the תורה - we evaluate whether he is a righteous person who is worthy of prophecy, and ask him to perform a sign to prove that he is a נביא. If a person has both of those criteria, we consider him a נביא and it is a מצוה to listen to him.

Chapters 8-9:

1. It still leaves room for doubt, because miracles can be performed by magicians or sorcerers.
2. Because Hashem spoke to him at הר סיני in front of all of the Jewish people - 600,000 witnesses.
3. We don't believe in other נביאים because of a miracle. We believe in them because משה, a verified נביא, commanded us in the תורה that there is a מצוה to believe in a נביא if they perform miracles. [In other words, our belief in other נביאים is based on our belief in משה, not on our belief in the miracle they performed.]
4. Correct answers include: Someone who takes away a מצוה; someone who adds a מצוה; someone who explains a מצוה differently than משה; someone who says a מצוה was only meant for a limited amount of time; someone who violates his own נבואה; someone who doesn't give over a נבואה he is supposed to say.
5. A נביא can temporarily suspend a מצוה for a specific purpose. For example, אליהו offered קרבנות outside of the בית המקדש on הר הכרמל to disprove those who worshipped the בעל.
6. עבודה זרה. A נביא can never tell us to serve עבודה זרה, even for a limited time.

Chapter 10:

1. Making an accurate prediction of the future.
2. A prediction made by a נביא always comes true in its entirety. A sorcerer's prediction is always partially true and partially false.
3. Prophecies about punishments.
4. Because Hashem is patient and forgiving and He won't punish people if they do תשובה.
5. The נבואה of יונה that נינבה would be destroyed.
6. If a confirmed נביא declares that he is a נביא. For example, משה declared that יהושע was a נביא in front of the Jewish people.

הלכות דעות

Chapter 1:

1. Following the "middle path" - not having an extreme of any character trait, but having a perfect balance between the two extremes. For example, you shouldn't be stingy with your money, and also shouldn't spend more money than you have. You should generously give צדקה, but within your means.
2. A חכם.
3. Someone who goes slightly to the extreme of a character trait (as a tool to improve his character).
4. Emulating the qualities of Hashem - being merciful, kind, gracious, etc.
5. To repeatedly act in the proper manner until it becomes natural for him.
6. Emulating the qualities of Hashem. These qualities are what make up the middle path.

Chapter 2:

1. People who are חולי גוף have inaccurate taste buds. Therefore, sweet food tastes bitter to them and vice versa. Similarly, חולי נפש have an inaccurate sense of right and wrong. Evil ways seem good to them and vice versa.
2. Wise men.
3. Going to the extreme good of a character trait. For example, someone who is always angry should never allow himself to show anger, even when it might be justified.

4. Anger and arrogance.
5. One should speak very little. And one should never be deceptive.
6. Correct examples include: you shouldn't be frivolous, and you should be sad, but you also should be happy; you shouldn't be greedy, but you also shouldn't be too lazy to work, you should work and be happy with what you have.

Chapter 3:

1. A נזיר.
2. The נזיר had to bring a קרבן הטאת because he separated from drinking wine. This teaches us that it is improper to separate from worldly pleasures.
3. He should eat, sleep, go to work, for the purpose of having a healthy body so that he can serve Hashem.

Chapter 4:

1. The main topic is health. The רמב"ם discusses healthy living habits because you cannot serve Hashem if you have an unhealthy or sick body.
2. Correct answers include: only eat when you are hungry; eat until you are $\frac{3}{4}$ full, drink only a small amount of water during the meal mixed with wine; go to the bathroom before you eat; exercise lightly before you eat; eat while seated; don't exercise until your food has been digested.
3. Correct answers include: Sleep for 8 hours; go to sleep on your left side and wake up on your right side; wait three or four hours after finishing the meal before going to sleep; don't sleep during the day.
4. Correct answers include: large fish that are aged and salted; cheese which is aged and salted; truffles and mushrooms; meat which is aged and salted; wine from the press; cooked food which has been left over until it produces an odor; any food with a bad smell or a very bitter taste; large fish; cheese and milk which has been left over for more than twenty-four hours after the milking; the meat of large oxen or he-goats, horse-beans; lentils; chickpeas; barley bread; matzot; cabbage; leeks; onions; garlic; mustard; radishes; water fowl; young pigeons; dates; bread roasted in oil or kneaded in oil; flour which has been sifted so well that no bran is left; fish brine; pickled fish oil; fruits; pickled fruits; carobs; honey and wine for young people.
5. Drink honey diluted with hot water four hours before the meal.
6. Overeating is like poison for the body.
7. People who are sick or have had unhealthy habits.

8. A doctor, a bloodletter, a bathhouse, a bathroom, an available source of water, a shul, a schoolteacher, a סופר, a designated צדקה collector, and a בית דין.

Chapter 5:

1. Correct answers include: He only eats enough to sustain himself; shouldn't eat in the store or marketplace; shouldn't eat with unlearned people; doesn't eat at anyone else's table unless it is a מצוה (e.g. a wedding or a בריה); only drinks enough wine to soften the food in his stomach (doesn't get drunk).
2. צדיק אוכל לשובע נפשו
3. Correct answers include: He should speak gently; he shouldn't speak while standing at a distance; he should greet other people before they greet him; he should speak pleasantly; he shouldn't speak unless his words will be listened to; he shouldn't try to calm someone down when they are angry; he shouldn't question someone when they are making a vow; he shouldn't try to comfort someone at the moment of tragedy; he shouldn't exaggerate (unless it's for the purpose of making peace); he shouldn't talk to women in the marketplace.
4. A תלמיד חכם should walk in a manner that befits him.
5. The order of the פסוקים teaches us that a person should first find a way of making a livelihood (מי האיש אשר נטע כרם), then he should build a house (מי האיש אשר בנה בית), and then he should find a wife (מי האיש אשר ארש אישה).
6. He shouldn't dedicate all of his possessions to the המקדש; he should try to improve the quality of his property; he deals honestly; he pays for what he buys immediately; he doesn't act as a guarantor or a debt collector; he is stringent about paying others back but he doesn't demand payment from other people.

Chapter 6:

1. A person naturally learns from those around him. "הולך את חכמים יחכם ורועה כסילים ירוע"
2. By connecting to תלמידי חכמים.
3. By praising other Jews, and being careful with their money and with their honor.
4. If you are angry at someone, you shouldn't quietly bear a grudge. You should tell them what they did wrong.
5. You need to rebuke them gently and in private. There is a מצוה to rebuke them until they change their ways or until they threaten to hit the rebuker (i.e. showing that they will not be receptive to the rebuke).
6. Being kind to the widow and the orphan.

Chapter 7:

1. רכילות is spreading information about other people for no good reason, even if it is not negative. לשון הרע is spreading negative information about other people. (Both רכילות and לשון הרע are true pieces of information.)
2. a) saying "I don't want to talk about that person..." (because then it would be לשון הרע) b) Speaking positively about someone to their enemies c) Someone who says לשון הרע as a joke d) Someone who pretends not to know that a piece of information is harmful
3. Shooting arrows or firebrands at someone and then saying "I was joking!".
4. נקמה is taking revenge; acting badly towards someone because they wronged you. נטירה is bearing a grudge; feeling resentment towards someone because they wronged you, even if you don't act on that resentment.
5. Correct answers include: לא תעמוד על דם רעך; יכרת ה' כל שפתי חלקות לשון מדברת גדולות; ואשר אמרו ללשוננו נגביר שפתינו אתנו מי אדון לנו

הלכות תלמוד תורה

Chapter 1:

1. A man is required to teach himself, his sons, his grandsons, and his students תורה, in that order of precedence.
2. A father needs to teach his son תורה as soon as he begins to speak. If a person wasn't taught by his father, he has an obligation to teach himself as soon as he is old enough to understand. The מצוה lasts for the person's whole life.
3. Studying leads to action, but action doesn't lead to studying.
4. He can accept payment for תורה שבכתב if that's the local custom. He cannot accept payment for תורה שבעל פה.
5. Comparing הלכות and understand how they are derived.
6. When a father teaches his daughter תורה שבעל פה, because she may not be able to devote time to understanding it properly.

Chapter 2:

1. The world exists in the merit of children who study תורה.
2. The child starts learning at the age of 6 or 7. The child should learn for the day and part of the night. On שבת, the child reviews his studies. On יום טוב there is vacation.
3. A schoolteacher who neglects the children or is lazy in his work.

4. A maximum of 25 students can be assigned to one teacher. A teacher and an assistant can teach a class between 25-40. A class of over 40 should be assigned two teachers.
5. Yes, if the child will learn better there, as long as the school isn't in a different city or across a river.
6. A teacher can open school right next to a different school.

Chapter 3:

1. The crown of תורה. תורה בי שרים ישורו.
2. A תלמיד חכם who is a ממזר is greater than than even a כהן גדול if he is unlearned. (Meaning תורה learning is greater than great lineage.)
3. תורה learning, because study leads to action.
4. A person can't learn תורה properly if they are proud (בשמים) or if they are "traveling across the seas" (מעבר לים) - involved in doing business.
5. Just as water flows to a low place, תורה is acquired by those who are humble and sit at the feet of חכמים.
6. Correct answers include: Be humble; Don't heavily involved in business; Put in a lot of effort; Learn while saying the words out loud; Learn תורה at night; Don't make תורה learning into a money-making tool.

Chapter 4:

1. A teacher shouldn't teach a student who acts improperly.
2. The teacher would sit in the middle and the students would stand or sit around him. The teacher would then speak. Often the teacher would have a מתרגם repeat his words to the students. When a student asked a question, the מתרגמן would repeat the question to the teacher. The teacher would respond, and the מתרגמן would repeat the answer to the student.
3. A student cant learn if they are embarrassed to say that they don't understand and they need the teacher to repeat themselves. On the flip side, a teacher can't teach if he is too impatient to repeat himself.
4. A teacher should command respect, and thereby push his students to learn well. Therefore, he should act formally; he shouldn't joke, eat or drink with them.
5. Two people shouldn't ask at once, one shouldn't ask more than three questions at a time, one shouldn't ask a question on an unrelated topic, and one should only ask a question when the teacher is sitting.
6. בית מדרש.

Chapter 5:

1. A person should return the lost object of his teacher, help his teacher with his load, and redeem him from captivity first.
2. The student can tell someone the הלכה in order to prevent him from sinning. Also, if he is 12 mil away from his teacher or his teacher has passed away he can pasken הלכה (provided that he is capable of paskening).
3. A person who is capable of paskening הלכה but refrains from doing so.
4. Correct answers include: Not referring to his teacher by name; greeting him respectfully; Not removing tefillin in front of his teacher; Not davening near his teacher; Not sitting in his teachers place; not voicing agreement or disagreement in front of his teacher; Not sitting or standing in front of his teacher unless he is told to; not turning his back to his teacher; standing as long as he can see his teaching walking away; Visiting his teacher during יום טוב; Mourning his teacher when he passes away and tearing his garments.
5. A רב מובהק - a great תלמיד חכם who taught him the majority of his knowledge. (A contemporary example could be the Rebbe.)
6. Just like a small branch can be used to light a large branch, a student sharpens and broadens the mind of his teacher.

Chapter 6:

1. תלמיד חכם. זה שקנה חכמה.
2. Because a person might be dishonest with themselves and pretend they didn't see a תלמיד חכם so they won't have to get up. (The words ויראת מאלוקך are added whenever a מצוה requires a person to be honest with themselves about their true intentions. The תורה warns you that you should fear Hashem, because Hashem sees what's truly in your heart.)
3. So he shouldn't trouble people to stand up for him.
4. When a person sees the נשיא, he should stand until he can't see him anymore. When a person sees a תלמיד חכם, he should stand up if he is within 4 אמות.
5. So that the honor he shows his teacher isn't more than the honor he shows Hashem. (Because שמע is said twice a day.)
6. Anyone of an advanced age, even if they aren't a תלמיד חכם, and even if they aren't Jewish.
7. Correct answers include: They don't have to participate in communal work projects; They don't have to pay taxes; They get precedence when they have something to sell in the marketplace; They are given priority in בית דין; They are

allowed to sit in בית דין; Those who disgrace them are placed under גידוי; Those who disgrace them are fined a litra of gold.

Chapter 7:

1. When a Jewish leader acts improperly, they are punished privately.
2. A person under גידוי can't cut their hair, do laundry, be counted in a מנין or a זימון, or sit within four אמות of anyone else. A person under הרם also can't be hired for a job, teach or learn תורה with others, or do business beyond what he needs for his livelihood.
3. He needs to get 10 תלמידי חכמים to lift it.
4. תלמידי חכמים shouldn't take insults to heart and get angry at people who insult them.
5. If they are insulted in public.

הלכות עבודה כוכבים

Chapter 1:

1. In the generation of אנוש
2. That Hashem created the heavenly bodies to help him run the world. Therefore, although Hashem runs the world, his "servants" should be honored as well.
3. False prophets told them that Hashem, or a specific star or angel had told them to bow to a particular statue or perform a certain ritual.
4. Which force causes the world to run? It can't run by itself!
5. They were in charge of teaching תורה, continuing the legacy of אברהם.
6. The Jews were steeped in idolatry and would have lost the ways תורה. Hashem had to take them out of Egypt in order to keep his promise to the אבות and preserve the special legacy of the Jewish people.

Chapter 2:

1. Looking at idols and learning about how they are served.
2. Any line of thought which is against the תורה, because human understanding is limited and people may therefore come to the wrong conclusion.
3. The תורה says "וכי תשגו ולא תעשו את כל המצות", and the words כל המצוות refer to עבודה זרה.

4. There is a פסוק which says “והנפש אשר תעשה ביד רמה מן האזרח ומן הגר את ה' הוא מגדף”, comparing someone who serves עבודה זרה and a מגדף. Therefore, their punishment is the same. Just like a מגדף is stoned, someone who worships עבודה זרה is stoned.
5. Anyone who curses the name א-ד-נ-י or י-ה-ו-ה using one of 7 names which can't be erased (see הלכות יסודי התורה פרק ו for a list of those names).
6. You need to rip your clothes when you hear a Jew curse Hashem's name. The פסוק says “וסמכו כל השומעים את ידיהם”.

Chapter. 3:

1. A person is only חייב if they serve an idol in a way it is normally meant to be served.
2. Bowing, slaughtering an animal, offering an animal, sprinkling blood.
3. Someone who is motivated because they like the rituals or they are afraid the idol might hurt them. (Meaning they are not motivated because they came to the logical conclusion that the idol is a god.)
4. Bending down in front of an idol to take out a splinter or pick up money, or drinking from a water fountain which comes out of the mouth of a statue.
5. The עבירה of having an idol made for himself (“לא תעשה לך פסל וכל תמונה”), and the עבירה of physically forming the idol (“ואלהי מסכה לא תעשו לכם”)
6. It is only אסור to make a realistic statue or protruding image of a person. In contrast, even a flat image of the sun, moon or stars is אסור.

Chapter 4:

1. The city must be more than 100 people and cannot make up the majority of a שבט. The words “יושבי העיר” imply that it's a city, not a small village or a large metropolis.
2. They must be at least two adult men from the same שבט as the people in the city. The proof is that the words “יצאו אנשים בני בליעל” are said in plural, implying at least two people. Also, it says “מקרבך” - from your midst, implying that the people must be residents of the city and from that שבט.
3. The ערי מקלט, a border city, ירושלים, and 3 cities next to each other.
4. They send two תלמידי חכמים to encourage them to do תשובה. If they don't do תשובה, the other Jews fight the city and destroy it. The בית דין kills all of the people who served עבודה זרה along with their families. All of the property in the city (even the property of the people who didn't serve עבודה זרה) is brought to the main street and burnt. The city can never be rebuilt.

5. The property of other people inside an עיר הנדחת is not burnt. If it is owned in partnership, the object is split. If the object can't be split (e.g. an animal) the object is destroyed.
6. תרומה which hasn't been given to a כהן yet should be given to a כהן outside the city. Property which is dedicated to the בית המקדש should be destroyed, and money should be donated to the בית המקדש in its place. ספרים should be buried.

Chapter 5:

1. A מסית is someone who tells individual people to serve עבודה זרה. A מדיח is someone who leads the majority of a city to serve עבודה זרה.
2. A person should trick the מסית into talking about serving עבודה זרה in front of two witnesses. For example, he should tell the מסית "I have friends who are interested in hearing about עבודה זרה". Or he should hide witnesses to listen in while the מסית talks about עבודה זרה.
3. A) He shouldn't love him - "לא תאבה לו".
 B) He should not help him - "ולא תשמע אליו".
 C) He should not save the life of the מסית if he is in danger - "ולא תחוס עיניך" D)
 He shouldn't give any arguments or excuses on the מסית's behalf - "ולא תחמול".
 E) He shouldn't conceal any evidence - "ולא תכסה עליו".
4. A person shouldn't discuss or debate with a נביא שקר, and he shouldn't contemplate the possibility that the נביא שקר is legitimate.
5. A נביא who claims that he heard a prophecy which never occurred, or a נביא who claims that he heard a נבואה which was actually heard by a different נביא. The punishment is הנק.
6. A person who says נבואה in the name of an idol (even if the information he gives over isn't against the הלכה); a person who takes a vow or an oath in the name of an idol; a person who makes someone else (even a גוי) take a vow in the name of an idol; a person who mentions the name of the idol in conversation; A person who uses the name of an idol as a landmark ("meet me next to that statue").

Chapter 6:

1. Practicing אוב involved burning incense, waving a myrtle and whispering incantations until the person heard a low voice speaking from the earth or their armpit. Practicing ידעוני involved sticking a bone from the ידוע bird in one's throat, and then whispering incantations until they went into a trance and predicted the future. Both of these practices are forbidden because they are idolatrous.

2. A person would light a fire and give his child over to fire-worshipping priests. The priests would then return the child to the father and the father would carry the child through the fire.
3. The expression of “מזרעו” implies that the father gave **some** of his children. If the father gives all of his children, he is not חייב. Other exceptions are: If the father carries the child through the fire but doesn't give the child to the priests; if he gives him to the priests but doesn't carry him; if he offers all of his children to מולך; if he offers a sibling or an ancestor or himself.
4. A monument around which people gather. It is forbidden because it is a practice followed by idol worshippers.
5. It is forbidden to bow down on stone, even to Hashem, because it looks like idol worship.
6. There wasn't allowed to be any wooden balconies in the בית המקדש. They all had to be made out of stone. This was because it is similar to having a tree in the בית המקדש. Planting trees were forbidden in the בית המקדש because the idol worshippers would plant trees next to their altars.

Chapter 7:

1. Destroying all idols and anything made to serve them. In ארץ ישראל, there is a מצוה to actively seek out the idols and destroy them.
2. Two sets of lashes [because the person is transgressing two עבירות: The עבירה of “ולא ידבק בידך מאומה מן החרם” and the עבירה of “ולא תביא תועבה אל ביתך”]. If the idol is made by a Jew, the איסור starts only when the idol is actually served. The same is true for accessories. If a non-Jew makes an idol, the איסור begins when the idol is made.
3. Yes, because the idol is only forbidden when it is completed. The final hammer blow which completes the idol is not worth any payment.
4. Yes, because you can benefit from a statue made for aesthetic purposes or an idol which was discarded and nullified by its owner.
5. All of the objects are forbidden. [If an object from that pile falls into a second pile, the second pile is permitted to be used.]
6. You cannot benefit from the bread. In contrast, you can eat the vegetables. This is because the vegetable grew from the earth, which is completely permitted, as well as the shade of the tree.

Chapter 8:

1. Yes, because the rocks were not formed or changed by people.

2. If the owner of the animal slaughters it for the sake of עבודה זרה or exchanges it for an idol.
3. It should be burnt and its ashes should be placed where no one can benefit from them.
4. The additional renovations or decorations should be removed, and you can benefit from the rest of the building or rock.
5. An idol-worshipping גוי can nullify any idol owned by a גוי.
6. A statue is nullified if the non-Jew indicates that he doesn't care about the idol anymore. For example, if he purposely smashes it, sells a metal statue to be melted down, paves a stone into a road, or pulls branches or leaves off of an אשורה tree.

Chapter 9:

1. A Jew cannot collect payment, repay a loan, buy from, or sell to a non-Jew on or 3 days before an idolatrous festival. If a Jew did business 3 days before (in this case on Thursday or Friday), בדיעבד he can benefit from the profits. However, if he did any business on the festival itself (in this case Sunday) he cannot benefit from the profits.
2. No, unless refusing the present will cause hard feelings. If he does accept the present, he can't benefit from it unless he knows for sure that the non-Jew doesn't serve idols.
3. Articles which are specifically used for עבודה זרה, any article if the buyer indicates that he is going to use it for עבודה זרה, and weapons which can harm people.
4. A Jew cannot walk inside the city, but he can walk around it. If a Jew is traveling, he cannot travel through the city if that is his specific route.
5. A Jew can buy from private individuals at a fair, but not from merchants. This is because merchants had to pay a tax to the idol, and therefore part of the Jew's payment to the merchant would be benefiting the idol.
6. You can trade with a Jew on the way to the idolatrous temple, provided that he is not a declared idolator, because he might change his mind. However, you cannot trade with him on the way back. You cannot trade with a Jew if he is on his way back from trading with idol worshippers because he may have sold them an idol, and any money he made from selling that idol cannot be benefitted from.

Chapter 10:

1. Jew's cannot make a treaty with non-Jews that allows them to live peacefully with us while they serve עבודה זרה.

2. A) Should not save an idolator's life if it's in danger. B) Should not sell them land or produce attached to the ground. C) Shouldn't praise them. D) Shouldn't give them a gift.
3. A doctor can and should treat all non-Jews for the sake of keeping peaceful relations. A גר תושב (meaning a non-Jew who has accepted upon himself to keep the שבוע מצוות בני נח) is an exception to all of these rules.
4. A Jew can rent a home in ארץ ישראל for storage purposes, but he cannot rent out a field. Outside of ארץ ישראל, a Jew can sell a non-Jew houses and fields. The rules about fields are more strict because aside from the issue of giving land to an idolator, there is an issue of תרומה. When land is owned by a non-Jew, the land is exempt from תרומה and מעשר. The חכמים wanted to prevent land becoming exempt from תרומה as much as possible.
5. Greet them, provide for the poor, and let them take שכחה, לקט, and פאה.
6. When ארץ ישראל is under Jewish control, no non-Jews should be allowed to pass through unless they become a גר תושב (meaning they take upon themselves to keep the שבוע מצוות בני נח).

Chapter 11:

1. A Jew shouldn't wear clothing or cut their hair in a style which is unique to non Jews, and Jews shouldn't build big theaters and circuses.
2. A Jew who works in a non-Jewish government can wear clothing and cut his hair in the local style to resemble them.
3. A מנחש is someone who designates certain events as good omens. For example, "Since my bread fell out of my mouth, today won't be a good day". A מעוּן is someone who designates certain times as auspicious - for example "this month is an auspicious month for starting a new job." A מעוּן also includes someone who deceives people into believing that he is practicing magic. A קוסם is someone who chants incantations, writhes on the floor, or taps a stick until he falls into a trance and predicts the future.
4. It could be considered being a חובר חבר - someone who chants spells. We are allowed to because we aren't saying תהילים as a magical charm. We say תהילים so the merit of us saying holy words of תורה should heal the person.
5. Anyone who does actions (such as sleeping in a cemetery, burning incense, reciting incantations) to communicate with the dead.
6. Because it's foolish and baseless, and it's not fitting for a wise people to believe in it.

Chapter 12:

1. They were all idolatrous practices.
2. The פסוק says “לא תקיפו פאת ראשכם ולא תשחית פאת זקנך”, thereby equating the איסור of shaving the פאות and shaving the beard. Just as the prohibition of shaving the beard doesn't apply to women, because they don't have beards, the prohibiting of shaving the פאות doesn't apply either.
3. Shaving פאות, shaving the beard, and becoming כוהנים טמא (i.e., a female כהנת is allowed to become טמא).
4. Yes, but it is the custom not to shave it completely, and only trim the hair which interferes with eating.
5. Because it transgresses the איסור of a man acting like a woman.
6. That Jews should not fragment themselves, and have two groups of Jews practicing different customs in the same community.

הלכות תשובה

Chapter 1:

1. “איש או אשה כי יעשו וגו' והתודו את חטאתם אשר עשו”.
2. Admitting what one did wrong, saying that they are embarrassed and regret it, and that they won't do it again.
3. It atoned for all sins, as long as the person did תשובה. [If the person didn't do תשובה, the עוון atoned for “מצוות קלות” - all מצוות which aren't punished by כרת or מיתה, except for taking a false oath.]
4. A person can always do תשובה, even if he did the worst עבירה, and even if it is the end of his life.
5. Negative מצוות. Unlike positive מצוות, they can't be forgiven right when a person does תשובה. Rather, יום כיפור needs to atone for them.
6. When a person desecrates Hashem's name. Then, unlike all other עבירות, even suffering can't atone for the sin. Only death can.

Chapter 2:

1. Someone who is placed in the same situation and has the same temptation as when he sinned, and yet doesn't sin.
2. Someone who says ויודוי verbally without truly regretting the עבירה in his heart.
3. To constantly be davening to Hashem; Giving צדקה; Distancing oneself from sin; Changing one's name; Changing all aspects of behavior; Exiling oneself; Confessing sins in front of other people (if the sins are לחבירו).

4. In both cases Hashem is especially accessible and accepts תשובה immediately.
5. Even if a person confessed for an עבירה on one כיפור day, he should confess that יום כיפור on the following עבירה.
6. That a Jew should always forgive easily.

Chapter 3:

1. Someone who has an equal amount of מצוות and עבירות. They're in "limbo" between ראש השנה and כיפור day. On כיפור day, they are forgiven if they do תשובה.
2. Not all מצוות and עבירות are equal. Sometimes one מצוה can have such a great merit that it outweighs many עבירות.
3. The reason is that it is a גזירת הכתוב. The רמז, meaning the message we can take from it, is that we should "wake up" and do תשובה.
4. That doing even one מצוה can "tip the scale" and save the world.
5. For an individual, the first two times they do an עבירה is isn't counted (unless their עבירות outweigh their מצוות). As is written - "הן כל אלה יפעל אל פעמים שלש עם גבר". For a community, the first 3 עבירות aren't counted - "על שלשה פשעי ישראל ועל ארבעה לא" - "אשיבנו".
6. A מין is someone who says there is no God nor ruler of the world; someone who accepts the concept of a ruler, but maintains that there are two or more; someone who says Hashem has a body or a form; someone who says that Hashem isn't the First Being and Creator of all existence. An פורש מדרכי ציבור is someone who doesn't do מצוות and join fast days with the community (even if he doesn't do any other עבירות!). These people do not get עולם הבא unless they do תשובה before they pass away.
7. Yes, if they are righteous.

Chapter 4:

1. עבירות which are so severe that Hashem makes it hard for the person to do תשובה. Examples include : a person who prevents many people from doing a מצוה; A person who causes many people to do an עבירה; a person who holds back from rebuking someone who he has influence over; a person who says "I will sin and then do תשובה".
2. עבירות which inherently make it difficult to do תשובה. Examples include: Separating from the community, because then he won't be included when they do תשובה together; A person who contradicts the חכמים, because then he won't be able to learn the proper path from them; A person who makes fun of מצוות, because not doing מצוות means he won't have the זכות to do תשובה; A person who doesn't

respect his teachers, because then he'll never learn the right way; A person who doesn't like being rebuked, because then he'll never learn to change his ways.

3. עבירות for which it is impossible to do a complete תשובה, because he doesn't know exactly who he wronged. Examples include: Cursing a group of people (because he doesn't have a specific person to ask for forgiveness); A person who takes a share of a thief's loot; A person who eats food belonging to orphans and widows; A judge who takes a bribe (because it is impossible to know exactly how much his judgment was perverted).
4. עבירות which a person probably won't do תשובה for because he doesn't think it is a serious sin. Examples include: A person who eats from a meal, when the owners don't have enough to eat; A person who makes use of a collateral in his possession; A man who gazes at a woman who is forbidden to him; A person who makes himself look good at someone else's expense; A person who suspects someone else wrongly.
5. עבירות which are "addictive" and create habits which are hard to break. Examples include: saying הרע לשון; saying רכילות; evil thoughts; getting angry; being friendly with bad people.
6. It is very hard to do תשובה, but not impossible.

Chapter 5:

1. That people, unlike any other creation, could now choose to do good or evil without any outside forces influencing them.
2. Once a person realizes that he has free will, and therefore has full responsibility for his actions, he has reason to regret what he has done and do תשובה for them.
3. Correct answers include: "מי"; "מי"; "ראה אנכי נותן לפניכם היום"; "ראה נתתי לפניך היום את החיים"; "יתן והיה לבבם זה להם"
4. The תורה commands us to do מצוות and not do עבירות, and rewards and punishes accordingly. If Hashem decided whether someone would be a צדיק, then how could he be rewarded? And if Hashem decided a person would be a רשע, how could he be punished?
5. The פסוק states that whatever **Hashem** desires, happens. So how can **people** have control over what happens? The answer is that when people act, Hashem's desire is that they should have free will. In other words, a person's choice to do something isn't in conflict with Hashem's will, it **is** Hashem's will.
6. As stated in הלכות יסודי התורה, Hashem's knowledge is different than our knowledge. We therefore can't really understand the mechanics of how Hashem's knowledge works. So although we cannot comprehend Hashem's knowledge, it must work in such a way that it does not contradict our free will.

world and “delighting in the radiance of the שכינה” as a metaphor for understanding G-dly truths that cannot be understood in a body.

3. הר ה'; מקום קדשו; דרך הקדש; חצרות ה'; נועם ה'; אהל ה'; היכל ה'; בית ה'; שער ה'; סעודה
4. Being cut off from עולם הבא.
5. That the reward in עולם הבא is physical pleasure.
6. Because a person experiences it after they experience life in a body.

Chapter 9:

1. Physical comfort allows a person to do מצוות better. So really, the reward for doing מצוות is getting the physical tools to do MORE מצוות.
2. Because then he will be free from oppression and will be able to fulfill מצוות properly.
3. Descendant of בית דוד, wiser than שלמה, almost at the level of משה.
4. “כי מלאה הארץ דעה את ה'”, “לא ילמדו עוד איש את רעהו”, “והסירותי לב האבן מבשרכם”.
5. When גויים comes Jews won't be under the control of the גויים.
6. עולם הבא.

Chapter 10:

1. Someone who serves Hashem for reward or because he is afraid of punishment.
2. To strive to do מצוות out of love.
3. Romantic love. Just like someone who is in love is constantly thinking about their partner, a Jew should always be thinking about Hashem.
4. “לאהבה את ה'”, “במצותיו חפץ מאד”
5. “מתוך שלא לשמה בא לשמה” - although they'll start off doing מצוות for the wrong reason, they'll come to do it for the right reason.
6. By contemplating Hashem.