Dvar Torah Outline

Controlling תאווה as a "Gateway" Sin; and How the Seven Noachide Laws Map onto אדם–נפש–גוף

Abstract

Rabbi Shulman explains that the Torah repeatedly builds in a mitzvah meant to rein in human תאווה*, because unchecked desire becomes a gateway that generates many other sins—an idea he connects to both* אבר מן החי נח בני מצוות שבע *(within)* *and* "לא תחמוד" *in the* עשרת הדברות*. He then outlines a structural framework: human beings consist of* גוף *and* נפש*, plus a third emergent entity—*"אדם" *as a unified whole. Using that model, Rabbi Shulman shows how the Noachide prohibitions (both* בין אדם למקום *and* בין אדם לחבירו*) align with* גוף*,* נפש*, and the complete* אדם*, with special emphasis on why* ברכת השם *strikes at the totality of human existence.*

I

"לא תחמוד" and the thesis that תאווה is the beginning of sin

A. *Returning to the Noachide framework*

- Rabbi Shulman reviews the basic structure of **שבע מצוות בני נח**:
  - **Three** are primarily **בין אדם לחבירו**
  - **Three** are primarily **בין אדם למקום**
  - **One**—**אבר מן החי**—functions to help restrain **תאוות**

B. *Support from the* עשרת הדברות

- Rabbi Shulman cites the idea that the עשרת הדברות end with **"לא תחמוד"** to highlight:
  - **"שהחטא של תאוה התחלת כל החטאים"**
  - Even if one doesn't steal, letting desire grow can lead to many other עבירות.

C. *A* פיוט *as reinforcement (but not a strict "inclusion" claim)*

- Rabbi Shulman notes a line attributed to a paytan:
  - **"והפייט ייחס אלה המצוות בלא תחמוד כולם"**
- Clarification:
  - Rabbi Shulman frames this not as "all mitzvot literally equal לא תחמוד," but as a **gateway** concept:
    - If one violates the impulse-control boundary, it can trigger a cascade.

D. *Why this is presented as a thesis*

- Rabbi Shulman acknowledges the question: where's the proof?
  - He answers that the pattern gains strength when one consistent idea explains multiple Torah structures.
- The proposed unifying idea:
  - **תאווה** is a root engine of many failures; therefore Torah repeatedly legislates a boundary to train restraint.

II

The recurring Torah pattern: Hashem provides a restraint for תאווה

5:30

A. *Adam HaRishon as an early prototype*

- Rabbi Shulman argues that even before meat is permitted:
  - Adam is given a restraint-mitzvah: **not** eating from the Tree.
- He links this to the Torah's description of temptation:
  - **"שנאמר עליו שהוא טוב למאכל ותאוה לעינים"** (that it was good to eat and a desire to the eyes)

B. *Noach and* אבר מן החי

- Rabbi Shulman reiterates: **אבר מן החי** fits the same pattern as "don't take the tempting object."
- Function:
  - To prevent a person from being "pulled" after desire—**"שלא ילך אחר יצרו"**
  - If desire is restrained early, one is "guarded" from many other sins.

C. *Israel and "*לא תחמוד*"*

- Rabbi Shulman ties the same mechanism into national Torah life:
  - Just as humanity was trained via early restraints, Israel is trained via the final commandment of the Decalogue.

III

The deeper structure: גוף + נפש + "אדם" as an emergent third entity

6:31

A. *Rabbi Shulman's model of the human being*

- A person has two primary "parts":
  - **גוף**
  - **נפש**
- Plus a third reality:
  - **אדם בכלל**—the unified, emergent whole that is "more than the sum of its parts."

B. *Analogy: house as more than wood and stone*

- Rabbi Shulman explains:
  - Wood and stones alone aren't a house.
  - Combined, they create a new entity with new properties—**"דבר שלישי"**.
- He notes this is a recurring idea already developed earlier in the sefer.

IV

Mapping (אדם (בין אדם למקום: עבודה זרה (נפש), עריות (גוף), ברכת השם

8:30

A. עבודה זרה *corresponds to* חטא הנפש

- Rabbi Shulman emphasizes the uniqueness of עבודה זרה:
  - One can sin **in thought alone**, without bodily action.
  - **"דכל עבירות אין מצטרפת מחשבה למעשה חוץ מן עבודה זרה"**
- Supporting language:
  - **"למען תפוש את ישראל בלבם"**—indicating liability rooted in the heart/mind.

B. גילוי עריות *corresponds to* חטא הגוף

- Rabbi Shulman describes עריות as fundamentally physical:
  - **"כולו בשר"**—driven by bodily desire.
- Proof-text from Sotah practice:
  - The Sotah brings **שעורים** (animal food), because:
    - **"היא עשתה מעשה חמור, הא קרבנה יהא מאכל חמור"**
  - Conclusion: this עבירה is **material/physical** in nature.

C. ברכת השם *corresponds to* חטא "אדם בכללו"

- Rabbi Shulman explains that ברכת השם (i.e., cursing Hashem) involves **speech**:
  - **"כי ברכת השם הוא חוטא בלשון"**
- Speech defines האדם:
  - **"וגדר אדם שהוא חי מדבר"**
- Conceptual point:
  - Speech is where the נפש and גוף meet:
    - It embodies abstract thought by giving it concrete expression.

V

A deeper layer: Why ברכת השם is "כופר בעיקר" and negates human existence

16:32

A. ברכת השם *as denial of revelation in the world*

- Rabbi Shulman explains "כופר בעיקר" here as:
  - Denying Hashem's manifest presence/expression within creation.
- He contrasts "blessing" with "cursing":
  - When we say **"ברוך אתה ה'"**, it cannot mean adding perfection to the Infinite.
  - Rather, following the Rashba/Nefesh HaChaim idea:
    - It means increasing **התגלות כבוד השם** in this world.
  - Therefore, cursing implies the opposite: suppressing/denying that revelation.

B. *Why this targets "*אדם*" as a whole*

- Rabbi Shulman explains:
  - If one denies Hashem's presence in the world, one undermines the very basis of existence.
  - Thus, the sinner's **מציאות** (as אדם) becomes "בטלה לגמרי."
- This makes the עבירה qualitatively different:
  - Not merely נפש-sin or גוף-sin, but anti-existence of "אדם" altogether.

C. *"*דמך בראשך*": the* משפט *symbolism of self-destruction*

- Rabbi Shulman cites the Torah procedure for the blasphemer:
  - The act conveys: you brought death upon yourself.
- He reads "דמך בראשך" as:
  - Other sinners may retain some זכות elsewhere.
  - But one who is **כופר בעיקר** has uprooted the root; there is no remaining merit to "hang on" to.
- Rabbi Shulman notes this is explained in **גור אריה**, referencing:
  - **ויקרא כ"ד י"ד**

VI

Mapping בין אדם לחבירו: beginning with דינים as חטא הנפש

22:30

A. *Transition: societal "harm" and the three interpersonal prohibitions*

- Rabbi Shulman introduces the next set:
  - **דינים, גזל, ושפיכות דמים**
- Goal:
  - Show how these also correspond to נפש–גוף–אדם, paralleling the earlier mapping.

B. *Why* דינים *is a* נפש*-oriented sin*

- Rabbi Shulman defines corrupt justice as distortion of the inner moral-intellectual compass:
  - **"שהוא מעוות משפט"**
  - Truth and ישרות are rooted in the **נפש השכלית**.
- Additional dimension:
  - Failing to enforce justice reflects **lowliness of the נפש**:
    - A healthy person is stirred to protest injustice.
  - Hence:
    - A judge needs **"לב אמיץ וחזק למשפט."**

C. *A communal responsibility illustration: Shechem and "*דינים*"*

- Rabbi Shulman references the discussion about why the people of Shechem were liable:
  - One approach (associated here with Rambam's direction):
    - The society violated **דינים** by allowing systemic injustice to persist.
- Practical takeaway:
  - Justice isn't only "don't pervert judgment," but also **don't allow a society without functioning משפט**.

D. *Midrashic support: justice and nefesh from the "left hand"*

- Rabbi Shulman brings **ויקרא רבה**:
  - **"שני דברים הם בשמאלו של הקדוש ברוך הוא, המשפט והנפש"**
- He connects pesukim implying "hand" = left:
  - **"ותאחז במשפט ידי"** (that Hashem's hand grasps justice)
  - **"כי בידך נפש כל חי"** (that in Your hand is the soul of every living being)
- Conclusion Rabbi Shulman draws:
  - Because נפש is "created" from the same "side" as משפט, the נפש naturally seeks justice:
    - **"ולכך, הנפש מבקש המשפט."**

E. *Parallel to* אלהים "עבודה זרה: *" language*

- Rabbi Shulman notes:
  - עבודה זרה is called **"אלהים אחרים"** (other "lords").
  - A judge is also called **אלהים**.
- Chazal's line:
  - **"המעמיד דיין שאינו הגון כאילו נוטע אשרה"**

- Conceptual parallel:
  - Appointing an unfit judge is like installing a false "power/authority," mirroring עבודה זרה's distortion.

VII

Preview: גזל will be mapped against עריות

36:12

A. *Rabbi Shulman signals the next topic*

- He concludes this session with the next correspondence:
  - **"וגזל הוא נגד עריות"**
- He ends by noting they will begin from גזל next week.

VIII

In Summary

- Rabbi Shulman develops a thesis that **תאווה** is a gateway sin, explaining why Torah places restraints like **אבר מן החי** and **לא תחמוד** to prevent a cascade of עבירות.
- He frames האדם as **גוף** + **נפש** + **a unified "אדם"**, and maps Noachide laws accordingly.
- **עבודה זרה** is uniquely a **נפש**-sin (even thoughts), **עריות** is a **גוף**-sin, and **ברכת השם** attacks **אדם בכללו** by denying Hashem's revelation in the world.
- On the interpersonal side, Rabbi Shulman begins showing how **דינים** is rooted in **שכל/נפש**, supported by Midrashic language of משפט and נפש sharing a "left-hand" origin, and he previews the coming mapping of **גזל** to **עריות**.