

## **Maharal**

Redaction May 2020

The following is a redaction of notes from Rabbi Carmy's spring 2020 course in Maharal.

- **Rav Carmy Shlit"a has not scene these notes**, while I have contacted him about a few individual issues, he gives only his blessing not his approval of the content
- The notes do not always follow the order of the shiurim, some inyanim are moved around
- I tried to keep my personal opinions to myself, however anything in curly brackets{} or in a footnote can be assumed to be my personal take, not from any notes(even my own)
- I would like to thank everyone who has contributed, but specifically, Yak. Kamensky and Eli Morrel whose notes served as the base and outline for everything else, and for not minding me butering the spelling of their names.
- By default stam bullet point is Yak stam paragraph is morrell, more then two typos in a sentence meen it was probably me.(I added bullets and paragraphs from my own notes, and refomated some of there stuff so this is not a hard rule)
- At the end of the notes is the final from May 2020.
- Lastly I have included practice tests at the end of the notes. This was made only based of my understanding of the material and having taken 8 courses with Rebbe. Please keep this in mind when using them. (These notes were originally complied for the first time the course was offered and as such there was no final to work off of, I have left it here Zikui harabim)

Hatzlacha to all,

The Redactor

## **Maharal**

### **Sylabus**

**this is the most important thing.** “The goal of this course is to grow as thinking religious individuals”

I may be violating church and state

At a secular college core academic freedom

### **Overview**

In terms of **Hakdama**: The Maharal wrote many sefarim. Firstly, Gur Aryeh, pretty much on Rashi. The Maharal wrote al seder hamoadim not in the topic of philosophical issues like the rishonim did, Gevuros H-shem, Netzach Yisroel, and Tiferes Yisroel. He used the calendar. Then Nesivos Olam, l'ma'aseh a mussar sefer. Includes many topics of mussar. Some are more classic, some are lengthier. Be'er Hagolah is systematic treatise about things that bother people in reading agadeta. Ner Mitzva on Chanuka, Ohr Chadash on Purim. Derech Hachayim on Pirkei Avos. Lastly, a peirush on agados hashas, chidushei agados, this is the last thing he wrote.

There are Sifrei Maharal on Gemara and Halacha, very recently published. Very little in terms of chiddushei hashas, very little was written in that period. Even when he lived, his works were not so commonly known or learned. People knew who he was, yet he was seldom read. When the Maharal is mentioned by poskim, they always go by him. Very heavy hitting in the world of halacha and gemara.

Many newly annotated editions of the Maharal. The text of the Rabbi Hartman editions is usually better. The annotations may be a little bit overdone. Anything remotely related gets put in there.

- Maharal printed his works late. First book was gur aryeh on Rashi.
- In intro to gevuros n he writes that he was planning to write on many of the moadim, we have all of them except for sukkot, yom kippur, and Shabbos. Rabbi Carmy thinks they weren't written because he never quotes them.

- Most Jewish philosophers up until this point had discussed Jewish thought in a methodical way. Moreh nevuchim, emunot vdeot, milchamot n. Maharal chose to discuss Jewish thought through the moadim. Similar to Hirsch who said the calendar is the cathetisism of Judaism. We learn and internalize our emunot vdeot from living the calendar.
- Maharal also wrote Nesivos olam on a number of different topics in Judaism including Talmud Torah, teshuva, middos etc....
- Also wrote Beer hagolah which deals with many issues people have with reading aggadata
- Another important difference between Maharal and earlier thinkers, Maharal primarily focuses on maamarei chazal while earlier thinkers primarily focused on pesukim
- . Maybe part of an agenda to highlight what was unique to Judaism as opposed to Tanach which we share with the goyim.
- Chassidic thinkers and others only begin quoting maharal 100-150 years after they were published.
- Rav Hutner quoted Maharal extensively in his writings. Rabbi Carmy said he only really understood Maharal once he started learning Rav Hutner. Rav Hutner named his Kollel Gur Aryeh.

**History:** We know very little about the Maharal's yichus and family background. He had a brother named Chaim. There is a view that there was a scandal with the family, and for this reason he didn't speak about his yichus. He met the emperor Rudolf, the Austrian emperor. He did not make a golem. One can debate the level in which he was involved with his historical events of his time. Looked at, in many ways as a harbinger of modern nationalism.

The Maharal had a very negative attitude toward pilpul. Unclear the difference between pilpul and lomdus, and it has what to do with shver diyukim and weak lomdus. He was more oriented toward pshat in the gemara.

- Maharal's torah is found specifically in late<sup>1</sup> chasidus, not before then. Rav Hutner was osek very much in the Torah of Maharal. Kollel Gur Aryeh. Rabbi Carmy didn't understand Maharal until he understood Rav Hutner. Rav Kook didn't present himself as

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<sup>1</sup> Lifie Morienu late Chasidus is fourth generation talmidim of the bash"t and on. Morell pointed out that pishcha quotes maharal. This fits with rebbe's formulation, however other definitions of late chasidut would not make this statement blanketly

a talmid of anyone in the realm of machshava. He identified with the Gr"a. The Maharal is not a big quoter either. Uses Kabbalistic ideas without using the shprach. Quotes the Zohar once.

## דרך החיים

### Background

**Derech Hachayim Hakdama: Intro: What are ethics?** The Maharal in his writing chidushei adagados was a mechadesh. In the pirkeia avos, many had done so already. He often begins with a pasuk in Mishlei, many darshanim begin with mishlei.

Ethics is meant to be as opposed to law. Pirkei Avos is not halacha, there are mishnayos here not devoted only to halacha. Certain things in Avos, the Rambam paskens lehalacha. What makes ethics different? One could say that ethics are more about personality than about law. Discussing personal models is not the same as paskening halacha. A book by the Rav called "halachic ethics" ', was built on pirkei avos.

The **Maharal** is medayek that there are three different things, mitzva, torah and Derech Chayim. He is trying to speak about this philosophical issue.

- In contrast to the topics of Maharal's other sefarim, Pirkei Avos already had a number of other commentators.
- Often, as Maharal does here, darshanim will start with a pasuk from Mishlei. Maharal starts with **כי נר מצוה ותורה אור**.
- A few questions about Avot. Why is it called Avot? Maybe because it contains the chain of mesorah. The first perek at least, is a recording of statements in chronological order. Problem is we could've done this with Shabbos also. Maybe because it's an insight into their personalities more so than other masechtas, many mishnayos start with **הוא היה אומר**. Ethics is more about personality than law. {redactors note: this idea while raised did not seem to be what rebbe thought the maharal was getting at}<there are people who focus on the biographical elements, to the contrary what the maharal is doing to a certain degree is turning perek aleph from a randomized perek, to an organized one.  
>-Harav SHalom Carmy verbeitem

- What separates Pirkei Avot from everything else is that it's not halacha, it's ethics as opposed to law.
- Law sometimes has an aspect of גזירה"כ. It's partly divine revelation. Ethics can be more intuitive.

The nekuda for the Rav was that ethics are more personalized. Some things in yahadus are not only a matter of law, they are fundamentally different. One may think about what it means to have an ethic in yahadus that is outside the realm of revelation. "Offenbarung". At the end of the day in this arena, we do things because "gzeiras hakasuv". Whereas when we speak about ethics, it's not quite the same thing as revealed religion.

#### הקדמה

- כי נר מצוה ותורה אור ודרך חיים תוכחות מוסר
- Man's physical body blinds him
- His sechel/ intellect lights up the path towards the actions that are worthy. However, it only leads him to those that are worthy as a man
- Torah and mitzvos, however, light up the path towards clinging to G-D. In that sense they are "or" and "ner" respectively. Mitzvos have a "casing", like a candle, due to the fact that they are performed with a body. Torah however is more abstract similar to light.
- דרל חיים תוכחות מוסר are those things that man's sechel alone tell him to do. The things that allow him to divorce himself from "chomer" and his materialistic desires which lead him to death. This is what it means when the gemara says that the satan was created when woman was created. The satan is the malach hamavet representing death, and a woman represents chomer.
- למאן ייטב לך והארכת ימים is an expression of these three ideas. Light is the greatest good and those are achieved by torah and mitzvot. Divrei mussar allows you to experience that good for all of eternity, never dying.

**Ner Mitzvah V'Torah Ohr:** The Maharal begins by describing the fact that the body is dark. It is negative in terms of being the "chomer" of above. Also, in a practical sense it drags you down. Even with the light of intellect, which humans have. More is required to have "vehalachta

b'drachav" and "dveikus". One must have "Ner Mitzva" and "Torah Ohr", Ner is not inherent flame, it is talui on the guf which holds it. While Torah is Ohr because it is eino talui badavar.

Quotes Gemara in Sotah 21. That mitzva is Magen LeFi Sha'a, and Torah Magina Le'Olam. The Maharal takes the terms of the Gemara and uses it to fit the yesod which he was trying to say. Temporary means time, it means physicality, it means mitzvos. This can explain the temporary power of protection which the mitzvos have.

**Derech Eretz: Mussar:** The Torah is a permanent source of life which can never change. It is called an eitz in medrash. Eitz Hachayim. But there is something called the "derecho eretz", the derech to the tree, so that a person does not get bogged down by the guf.

Chaza"l speak about the Satan being created together with the Isha. The Maharal takes this and considers the woman to represent the Chomer and the Choshech and the guf. This is Bepashtus a metaphysical statement, and the Maharal is not trying to reify women. {redactor's Note: this should fit in with the Maharal's other comments about male being seichli and female being chomri}

כל ישראל יש להם עוה"ב

- Maharal asks why did we start with kol yisrael yesh lahem chelek, why not start with eilu shein lahem chelek, like in Sanhedrin?
  - o Maharal answers that if we started with ein lahem chelek one might've thought that it only knocks you out if your 50-50 ka mashma lan that only yisrael have olam haba and these people don't have a shem yisrael and therefore they lose their shem yisrael and mmeila no olam haba.
  - o Another answer is that there's no nafka mina to eilu shein lahem chelek. Also not good to start off on a bad note.
  - o Lastly maybe the Tanna wants to highlight that even if your chayiv missa you still get olam haba and if this wasn't highlighted maybe one would've thought that once im chayiv misa I've lost everything and maybe I should just throw away everything.
- The Mishna brings a pasukt to prove that all Jews have olam haba. Maharal asks how is this a proof, olam haba isn't mentioned at all in the pasuk? Maharal explains that since

the pasuk says that the whole nation are tzadikim, that can't possibly mean in terms of actions rather it means that all jews by definition share a certain level of righteousness.

- Maharal brings up bechiras Yisroel. In other places, gur aryeh for example, maharal that bechiras Yisroel and bechiras Avraham were purely a function of G-d's absolute bechira, no external factors, ahavah sheino teluyah bdavar, as opposed to kuzari who thinks that adam chose to pass down the inyan eloki to specific descendants.
- The importance of this is that ahavah sheina teluai badavear, can never be batel.

ועמך כלם צדיקים לעולם ירשו ארץ נצר מטעי מעשה ידי להתפאר

What is this concept of "**shem yisrael**" brought in the Maharal? Why does the Maharal introduce a qualitative point here? The **Rambam** would tell you that the reason a person who is an apikores doesn't have olam haba, is because he has no da'as which he acquired for olam haba. A kofer has nothing to have olam haba with. This intellectual kinyan is the 13 Ikkarim. You can't put a dog in a philosophy seminar. The Maharal has shifted that to a chalos "shem yisrael". In the time of the Maharal, there was no Judaism outside of belief. There was no reality where you would be a kofer and still "love chazzanus". In this way, this was enough to not be considered a "yisrael".

In explanation of the Maharal, like the Rambam says in hilchos teshuva about a poresh min hatzibbur. He's out of the club.

- Maharal explains that erez is the element which is in the center and also stable, these things represent longevity and durability so to inherit "erez" means olam haba.
- Netzer is the centermost branch, again referring to center and not side, side implies ending and in this context death, also whay "matai" is plural, too hands to imply that sense of stability and not one-sided which would imply end and death. All of this implies eternal life in olam haba for all Jews.
- Bnei yisrael are maaseh Yadav betzem, rest of nations are regular maaseh Yadav, difference is that klal yisrael are also called banim lamakom because they are the purpose of the world, goyim are just here to serve/help Jews, but Jews have inherent

value independently. Therefore, since they're maaseh Yadav it wouldn't make sense for them to have a lacking so maaseh Yadav implies eternal life.

- This precedes pirkei avos because chazal thought it was important to highlight to klal yisrael their significance especially through the hard galus, so we begin with the fact that they're all shayach to olam haba, they can get even more, with middos tovos, which is represented by pirkei avos itself, and we end off with ra=ebbe chananya ben hakashya which represents torah which is the highest level.
- Yirshu Eretz- asks the Maharal, how does it make sense to say that it means olam haba? Also, why mata'ai, not matei. And why does it say netzer, not ilan? Ilan isn't a biblical word, but an equivalent question would be "eitz".

### Intro to Avos

**Pirkei Avos:** Gemara in **Bava Kama 30. Nezikin, Avos, and Brachos** are the three paths to one who wants to be a chasid. **Nezikin** is bein adam lachaveiro. Why nezikin and not chessed? Nezikin means you avoid harming people. It's not measured by how much good you do but how careful you are in not doing harm. We often find people who do a lot for others, but they are careless in causing harm to others.

Or Pirkei avos, individual shleimus. Or Brachos, gratitude to G-d. The **Maharal** explains that this isn't a machlokes, they are just three arenas. **Oftentimes you have this tendency to explain things as not being machlokes in agadeta, because of both frumkeit and common sense.**

There are three parts to a person, nefesh, sechel and guf. A person who is misrachek from nezikin is metaken himself on a level of nefesh. Because nezikin and a person who is mazik doesn't get hana'a, he just has a bad nefesh. Mussar is meyaser the guf of a person.

For this reason, Pirkei Avos is part of shas even though it isn't halacha. Derech eretz still goes together with the Torah.

**Placement in Shas:** In Nezikin and between Eduyos and AZ? It is in Nezikin because it had a common ground: "How you should act and how not to act". **Firstly**, the "Din" in the sense that it tells us how to act.

The **second**, that Derech Eretz for Maharal means "the way a human being acts as a human being". As opposed to things which are meyuchad to human beings. This, says the Maharal, is why Derech Eretz was kodem to the Torah 26 generations. One could say that Torah is the



derecho erez of jews. Or, one could say that both Derecho Eretz and Torah and Ba'im ke'echad and you eventually integrate. The Maharal nonetheless interprets derecho erez, historically, as coming before mattan torah. 26 generations before the world was ready for torah. This does not imply importance, it only implies that derecho erez is more sichli. The Medrash is not speaking about the individual and his hanhage, but historically. This explains why avos is in nezikin and after Eduyos, because in this way Avos is "midin" it is sechel-dik, because it is after Eduyos which is also Din. This is because sitting in a beit din and submitting dinnim in this context sounds like it belongs near Sanhedrin.

How does this fit with the understanding that Avos is lifnim mishuras hadin? The answer is because at the end of the day it isn't a mitzvas asech and a mitzvas lo ta'asah. There is a distinction between imperfect duties and perfect duties, are they clearly defined obligations or not? This was used by Kant. There is a similar concept being described here. **Ohr Sameach Hilchos Deos Elu Dvarim** describes this same phenomenon. He includes Talmud Torah in this.

- The gemara in berachos writes that three things are acquired through yissurin: torah, erez yisrael, and olam haba. Maharal explains that this is because these three are kadosh. Eretz yisrael is more sichli than other lands, Torah is the wisdom of G-d, and olam haba has no physicality. This is why all three are called "matanot", because they are inherently separate from man and are given to him from G-d. They transcend the realm that he lives in. Yissurin minimizes the chomri nature of man and allows him to connect to these metaphysical entities.
- So it comes out that yissurin also minimize chomriyus and prolong life but that's not what our pasuk is saying. Our pasuk is referring to the other way to minimize chomriyus which is divrei mussar.
- Pirkei Avos is the masechta which contains all of the divrei mussar which can lead a man down the path of life.
- The gemara in bava kamma has three opinions about what makes man a chasid. Nezikin, brachos, and avos. Maharal explains that there are three areas where man strives for perfection. Interpersonal relationship, represented by nezikin (Maharal notes that we see from here that to do chesed and good for others is more pashut and obvious that one will do, however to not harm others, that's already lifnim mishuras hadin). Avos represents the middos tovos a person has, his ability to control his materialistic desires, his relationship with himself. Finally brachos represents his relationship with G-d. It's

also possible that there's no machlokes and these are all necessary aspects to be a chasid.

- These three are also kneged nefesh (mezikin cuz no hnaah), guf (avos controls desires), sechel (brachos because sechel is about dveikus with ה'). {redactor's note: sechel here is not sichli in the rest of maharal, this trichotomy is not a part of the chomer/sechil dichotomy}
- Why is Avot in nezikin? Because mussar similar to din, s are permitted somethings are discouraged. Sechel is mechayev one to do certain things like a dayan would obligate you based on mishpat in nezikin. Ay, but didn't we say its chasidus and lifnim mshuras hadin? It's similar to duties and imperfect duties of Kant, the law doesn't obligate you in these things but sechel does.
- Rabbi Carmy added that the reason why nezikin is associated with din even though really all of shas is din is because nezikin is the most significant din, it's a din on the person (chayiv, patur) as opposed to a din on an object which is a lower level din.
- Maharal writes towards the end of the hakdama that there are numerous different peirushim and they're all potentially pshat. Strange because elsewhere Maharal is not scared to tell others are wrong. Rabbi Carmy explained because the issues in avos are not as fundamental as ikkarei emuanh, there maharal gets more excited about telling people that they are wrong. Rabb I Hartman has a different pshat.

## SHabbas and avot

- Length of the day. And Temperature, yemos hageshamim are harder to learn during.
- This is also why there is a minhag to learn on shabbos because Shabbos was also given specifically to klal yisrael and not goyim, it reminds us of how were separate and have maalos over the other nations which is what is accomplished by internalizing the values in pirkei avos. We also learn this after mincha because mincha discusses the greatest maaleh klal yisrael have over other nations. {redactor's Note: there was discussion in shiur by rebbe about the conflict between shabbos being unique for klal yisroel but also relating to the whole world via creation:rebbe thought this actually strengthened the maharals point}

- The three tefillos of Shabbos, atah kidashta, yismach moshe, and ata echad all represent different levels. Atah kidashta represents the basic level of kedusha and separation from work and the mundane. Yismach moshe focuses on how this gift was specifically given to us and not others, this day is also separate from all other days. Ata echad represents the third madreiga is that Shabbos is one, everything else is batel to it, there is nothing real outside of it, and klal yisrael is the same, were the main purpose of the world everything else is here to help us, other days of the week are just there to help Shabbos be what it is supposed to be.
- Maharal also discusses that there is a general rule that an effect is similar to cause. Sun creates heat and sun is also hot. Therefore since ה is echad it and yisrael is the primary creation of yisrael it makes sense that yisrael is echad. Shabbos is the time of yisrael. This is the pshat in the midrash about Shabbos complaining that it doesn't have a partner and the response is that knesses yisrael is their partner. G-d is the only independent being, everything else needs a partner, this is pshat in kol davar zachar vneivah bara osam
- Shabbos and yisrael are fit for each other because the same way Shabbos was the completion of the world, klal yisrael is the completion of humanity. Last of 70 nations was klal yisrael, this is why torah was given on Shabbos, we only became a nation at har sinai cuz ushmartem es brisi vhiyisem li segulah.... Mamleches kohanim vgoy kadosh.{redactor's note: rebbe also alluded to the connection between this and the gemara in chullin that handles out when gid hanashe became assur, however, I do not remember how much he talked out the inyan in Maharal}
- This is pshat in the tefilla by mincha, we are saying since we are an am echad, we are raui to menucha, work comes from a tension between two opposing forces but if ur echad there's menucha. This is another way in which we are matched up to Shabbos. This is pshat in ה בדרך ינחנו.
- **Yerushalmi Nedarim** says that each jew is like another limb in the body. H' badad yanchenu. Echad has no hitnagdut and that is why it has menucha.
- This is the final and highest madreiga so that's why we discuss it at the end of Shabbos, mincha time

**Rest and Unity:** The Maharal explains that there is a connection between the rest and unity of Shabbos. The maharal seeks to explain the medrash about Hkb”h and Yisrael being me’id on Shabbos.

There are two creations, zman and everything else. Everything is found in Zman. There is a resemblance between cause and effect. Is this true? Many medieval thinkers thought this way true. Because it appears to our thinking up to a certain point. Many medieval thinkers believe this to be the case, mashal would be with a salty food having salt in it. But nowadays we do not assume this may not necessarily be true.

The Maharal explains that Yisrael is Echad, because H’ is echad. This is true just like chom and fire, water and lachus. This specifically applies to Yisrael because of their central role in the world. They represent therefore, some level of unity. “ata echad...umi k’amcha yisrael”. Everything has a particular time and space, and that of the jew is Shabbos. For this reason, Torah as well “hakol modim sheshabbos nitna torah le’yisrael”. This is pshat in the medrash that tells us that Shabbos had no ben zivug.

### **Intro to first Mishne**

This edition has Rashi in it. Really Machzor Vitri. The first perek is organized by chronology until Rebbe. The second perek is from Rebbe then another chronology going back to hillel. The rest of the mishnayos are in no clear chronological order. The name **Avos** implies the importance of the opening in the first perek.

He begins with a very pashut question: Why is the kabala specifically written here? Anyway, this masechta is only divrei mussar? Why kibel, then “umasrah”? Why not m’Hkb”h? Why not m’zkeinim l’zkeinim- there was more than one dor? Why nevi’im matters, not actually shayach to Torah? Where is multiple generations of nevi’im? Where is Elazar, talmid of moshe and cohen? No mussarim for nevi’im and zekeinim here?

{redactor's note: Many of these questions did not end up being resolved directly in shiur, however almost all were indirectly discussed and answered bellow}

We can add a question: Why call them zekeinim and not shoftim? See **Rashi**, who notices this question and included the shoftim as part of the zekeinim. He held al pi the mesorah that the shoftim were a part of the zekeinim.

Avaot Derebbe natan

In **Avos D'rabi Nassan** the shoftim are in fact mentioned as an independent stage. There are two versions put out aleph and beis. Even if the Maharal saw it, it didn't really concern him.

When it comes to poetry, there is a human context in trying to convey certain ideas in the writing. Trying to personalize it. He explains that the classical form of mussar is that of father to son. As the pasuk tells us "shma ben mussar avicha". Mussar is communication between generations. Therefore, the masechta is called avos, and all these people in the chain of the mesora are considered to be "avos". The fact that Moshe was mekabel the torah in the specific place of "sina", is symbolizing the permanence of the kabala and the "mikreh m'yuchad" which it was.

In Avos D'Rabbi Nasan the nusach is "b'sinai". The Maharal wasn't concerned with this.

משנה א': משה קבל תורה מסיני

- Important to note maharal thinks that order of masechta is important, it's not just simply chronological, the mishnayos and ideas build on each other [because chronologically they do]
- We continue to the zugos who, due to their role as transmitters of the torah were considered avos, and therefore worthy of being sources of mussar.
- By moshe it says kibel msinai to highlight that it was a precoordinated event at a specific place, this is implied by kibela nd msinai. This is different than all other neviim who prophesied bmikra.
- Another reason why it couldn't say moshe received from G-d is because that would imply that G-d only gives the torah to moshe but we believe that he gives it to everyone, we all daven vhaer eineinu btorasecha.
- All of the transmissions in the mishna are unique, Yehoshua was the unique rebbe of the zekeinim and they were his unique talmidim, same for zekeinim and neviim, that's why moshe can't be mentioned with ה because ה isn't unique as a teacher to moshe.

- Also every talmid-rav pairing implies that there's a connection between the two, but there's no common denominator or anything shared between moshe and ה.
- Tzeiruf- combination. A combination can be something very trivial. A better word would be amalgamation <good GRE word btw>. A Rav and Talmid have a tzeiruf, but Moshe and Hkb"ח could never reach that level. That's why we have "meedaber eilav" not "midaber", it really should be "mitdaber eilav". A voice which is speaking back and forth. Because it is not derecho kavod klapei ma'alah.

#### ומסרה ליהושע

The Maharal explains that if not Moshe who gave the Torah, somebody else could have. In the Ralbag, he understood that only Moshe could be mekabel the Torah. The alternative is to say that empirically only moshe did it, but theoretically others could have done it.

On torah shebealpeh the importance is to understand what you are reading.

Ability to arise from material to spiritual existence.

Moshe went up to GD and Ezra went up to Eretz Israel.

Moshe...sinai...Aliyah...chochmah and sechel

Ezra...Eretz Israel...Aliyah...chochmah and sechel physical

In agudat hashem...Moshe is different than anybody else.

The torah could have been taught by Ezra.

Maharal in tiferet, realized that Maharal is really about educational idea.

The ktab hibri was the original ktab because we weren't completely am Israel.

- General idea is kaballah is used for an incomplete transmission, moshe couldn't have possibly received everything, mesira is a more complete giving over. Also regarding everyone else who was taught by moshe, it wasn't even called a kaballa because they had the option of not receiving, Yehoshua however was not just a kaballah, it was almost beyond his will that he receive the entire corpus of knowledge

- Another reason why Yehoshua is singled out with is because he was the one who retained it the most.
- Zekeinim gave to neviim because chacham adif mnavi.
- Gemara in Sanhedrin says that acc. to one shitah torah was given in ksav ivri and changed to ksav ashuris, maharal asks if so, how could the tagin be so important if originally they didn't even exist and what's pshat in the gemata in megillah about mem vsamech bnes hayu omdin
- Kibel is used by moshe because it didn't have to be him the gemara says it could've been ezra.
- Maharal in gevuras ה when he discusses the uniqueness of moshe is highlighting his lack of yichus and also his nevuah but here in tiferes yisrael when comparing to ezra he's talking about his ability to separate from chomer and his agency as a transmitter and teacher of the torah, regarding this they are equal.

שינוי הכתב

- Maharal rejects the possibility that mitzvos changed, when the gemara says that the script changed by ezra that's talking about the language that bnei yisrael wrote in but ה wrote the torah in ksav ashuris from the beginning and that's why mem and samekh on luchos were still a nes. ~~Ay, what about all the halachos that we supposedly learned from the tagin? That medrash mentions G-d making the tagin, so not a kashya for the same reason and furthermore it could be that ksav ivri also had tagin since the medrash says~~
- Sefer haikkarim wanted to prove from here that mitzvos aren't eternal. Maharal strongly disagrees

Moshe and beginning of tangents across maharal

**M'tzad Hanosein** and **M'tzad hamekabel**. The first four books of the Torah are mtzad hanosein and devarim is "mtzad hamekabel". See **Maharal** on the two different points of view in the luchos. Moshe couldn't be mekabel everything, so kibel.\.

**Also**, Mesira implies that the talmid was a meyuchad lekach. Kibel is more incidental. Mesira implies handing it all over. Kabala implies that the camera is from your point of view, but you can never be exactly like the teacher.

Still, why would the ksav change? The answer is that the name of the jews was “ivrim”, they started in ksav ivri. Writing, says the Maharal, comes before language. Communication is also a very unofficial thing, nations, on a fundamental level, have a written language. You can write another language in your own script. Chazal refer to the Romans as a people that “ein lahem ksav velo lashon”, because they used the Greek alphabet. This is what the maharal means when he says that “writing” comes first. Therefore, for the Jews, they always had a script, and being distinguished by their language was something which occurred at an earlier point. **Ksav is superior to language as well. They weren’t on the madreiga, early on, to receive the ksav ashuri.** “Me’ushar”. 1) Change Place- Change Ksav. 2) Went up status. The shitas Rabanan (Megila 8:), tells us that the Megila could have been written in another language, as long as it could have been written in ashuris. This makes sense with the idea of “ksav over speech”. Another pshat, that Rabbi Carmy wants to say, look in the R’ Hartman comments there is a reference to statement of SA Harav that Torah Shebichtav can be learned without understanding it, not Torah Sheba’al peh. Bichtav, the identity as Torah is the written letter, but Torah Sheba’al peh is defined by its meaning.

Ezra-fundamentally could have gotten the torah. Ezra was ready. What does this mean, how was he ready? The maharal says: The ability to be **mita’aleh min hachomer**. “Ezra alah mibavel”. When the Maharal quotes this Gemara in Derech Hachayim, he didn’t quote the entire passage from the gemara. We wondered whether Moshe was unique. In Tiferes Yisroel, that Maharal quotes the entire gemara. What made ezra qualified is that he was “oleh”. Moshe+Sinai=Alah-Chochma and Sechel. Ezra+EY=Alah-Chochma and sechel.

For the Maharal, it isn’t about the ontological<sup>2</sup> nature of Moshe. It is the leading of the people out of Egypt, or back to eretz Yisrael for Ezra. Both, in this way, raised the people from chomrius to sichlius. There are two dinim in Moshe. One is that Moshe is a unique person unlike all others, even Ezra. The second din in Moshe, is that he led the people out of Egypt. What the Maharal was saying was that his distinctiveness is in that he brought them out of Egypt and his raising of chomrius to sichlius. In Gevuros H’- Moshe is unique unlike anybody else. Moshe doesn’t have human yichus. That’s mtzad the metaphysics of it. Legabei his being raui to be mekabel the Torah, “u’Moshe Alah el Ha’elokim”, in this Moshe is like Ezra. Turns out, that there is more

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<sup>2</sup> this sentence is crucial, but meaningless if you do not know what ontological means. B’kitzur an ontology is a structure of classifications, so an ontological approach is one that focuses on structuring things, dividing and labeling them into separate classes.



precision than otherwise. **The educational precision of Moshe, and the metaphysical uniqueness.**

key takeaways

- Moshe is unique ontologically, but that has nothing to do with receiving the torah (this while muchrach in the maharal is a massive chidush. think about t for a moment)
- receiving torah is about being able to lift klal yisroel up. that is why ezra is equal to moshe in this regard
- there was no way to develop this mehalch from any one essay of the maharal. This shows the importance of cross referencing in order to understand.
- This also just stam azoy shows the brilliance of Morienu haRav Carmy, this mehalich is the only way to get all of the maharals together, yet there seems to be no way to get the maharal to tell you this straight out

Moshe's speech impediment

**Next issue: Why did Moshe Rabbeinu have a speech impediment?** – The well-known Gemara that Moshe Rabbeinu had a speech impediment because of the fact that he chose the coals instead of eating the treif food. How are we to understand this? The Maharal would tell us that this isn't just something random, this isn't just an accident. There would surely be mefarshim who would tell us that it just happened to be that way and it doesn't have to be explained. There are those who would say that this Gemara, just happened to be this way, but it still happens to be important, how it happens. But one could ask- why didn't H-shem cure him?

- **Ramban:** Since moshe didn't pray to be cured, H-shem punished. It is something that happens, and we have to explain why G-d didn't remove it.
- The **Ran** explains, in his **third drasha**, He wants to understand why we learn out so many halachos from Moshe. He explains that change comes about through conflict. Moshe would have to separate himself for seven days to purify his imagination and to make it non-physical. Moshe had to be 'sichli' so that it wouldn't be a curtain to his nevuah. G-d then made him superhuman. So, if so, why did G-d deny him the perfection of speech? Why not, "chacham, gibor, v'ashir"?
- The **Rambam Shmona Perakim** explains that these things refer to spiritual levels. But the Ran disagrees with that, he does think they are meant to be literal. The nevuah is more likely to be received if the navi is impressive, it makes sense. The Ran's answer, in

brief, is that Moshe had to be perfect in mind and body. This was in order that people listen to Moshe. People had to take him seriously. The answer that the Ran explains is that people shouldn't think Moshe isn't just a mouthpiece, no, he is a kvad peh. H-shem did this to show that the content of what Moshe had to say was legit. To show that it isn't about the content.

The **Maharal Gevurot H-shem** agrees with the Ran, that Moshe's speech impediment is a difficulty. He explains that since Moshe is sichli and Nivdal, it is understandable how when it comes to somebody like Moshe, who is fully spiritual wouldn't be expected to have this gift. Externally, this means that "a great philosopher doesn't talk like a game show host".

The Ran's explanation is a good explanation. It may not give you the same level of theological depth as the explanation of the Maharal. For the Maharal we see Moshe as a leader of the people who is on his own independent level. There is a notion that you can have the ultimate teacher, and at the same time, it doesn't come naturally.

If you look at the Rav's shiurim on parshas bamidbar. He explains in parshas behaaloscha, that part of the tragedy of Moshe is that he was on a higher level than that of the people.

What we have done here with the comments of the Maharal, which seem more allegorical, and we have psychologized them. We did that deliberately, is because even though the Maharal uses abstract language, there is a "flesh and blood" reality to his ideas. These ideas resonate in a certain way. There is a famous quote from Rav Lichtenstein "for the Ramban, the Avot are human beings, and still can remain larger than life characters". For the Maharal, the ikkar Moshe Rabbeinu is the musag, the abstract language. But underneath that, there is still a human being.

The Ran's approach is practical in explaining the nature in which the toras emes was given. On the other hand, the Maharal sees the speech impediment as faithful to moshe's personality.

This shtikle here shows how much you can really do with the maharal.

- Difference between moshe and Rebbe Akiva is that Moshe is connected to olam hazeh, this is why he doesn't relate to the tagim and only rebbe akiva does, they are so subtle, implication is that the rest of torah is somewhat connected to olam hazeh, sounds somewhat like ish halacha. Rebbe akiva was totally mufka from this world, this is why moshe had to go to the back of the shiur and didn't know what was going on. Maharal

adds that Moshe understood the tagin but had no connection, pretty vague. Maharal gives examples like Moshe had military victories to express how he was more connected to olam hazeh than rebbe akiva.

- Maharal also says that rebbe akiva's torturing and suffering is an expression of his disconnect with olam hazeh, what does this mean? Rabbi Carmy explained that one can't possibly go through an experience like that, and have the ability to move on because he has a high threshold for pain. The only way a person like that can function is if he is simply living in a different world. This is the implication of seeing osiyos porchos baavir as well.
- Maharal explains that halacha moshe m'sinai is the polar opposite of tagin, rabbi carmy suggested that it fits that many of them are very earthly ideas.
- Rabbi (carmy) suggested a different mehalech about why moshe had to go to the back of the shiur and didn't understand what was going on, maybe moshe was more pure chachmah and rebbe akiva was more of a lamdan and pilpul, more binah.

**Tiferes Yisrael {mikan v'ad pesach chaser kol hadphusim,chutz miphus "marrel", v'nishlam ha'inyan al yidei ktav yad "Benjamin"}**

The Gemara about Moshe going up and watching H-shem being kosher k'sharim on the otot. H-shem tells him that Rabbi Akiva will darshan them. Moshe doesn't understand the shiur and feels better when he hears "halacha l'moshe m'sinai". (Menachot 29:). This idea that we can formulate things in new generations in ways that they weren't able to formulate earlier on and that there is a notion of development, is popular in the contemporary modern orthodox. That Moshe was a bechina of "chochma" and a bechina of "Bina". This is the pshat between EY and Bavel. EY is a place of clarity and Bavel is a place of lomdus. The Maharal does not understand this way. Also, this doesn't explain the part of the Gemara about Moshe seeing the suffering of Rabbi Akiva.

Maharal asks several questions on this Gemara. Firstly, how could you say that Rabbi Akiva is greater than Moshe? The Maharal also is doche' the first idea that was mentioned earlier, inherently, because we are speaking about the Tagim here. This is to explain certain esoteric aspects of the Torah. Tagim represents hidden elements and ideas in the Torah.

Maharal will explain how there are different levels in the Torah. Not historical lomdisizing. We are talking about two levels, superficiality, and what is between the lines. These exist from the

very beginning. These tagim are what the Ribono Shel Olam is preparing for Rabbi Akiva, and how can it be that Moshe doesn't get that?

We tried to explain the duality in Maharal's terminology. He defined Moshe as a personality and in terms of an intellectual orientation. With his terms Klali and Prati, there are two levels, even though the terms are not identical, they relate to one another. The Mathmaterican is more klali, while the poet is more prati, both in their intellectual insight and in their personalities.

The Klali perspective on the Torah which Moshe embodied, related to Olam Hazeh. While Moshe removed from worldly affairs and he is sichli, like the Maharal has explained earlier, at the same time, he related to a "torah of this world". In this way he is very much the *Ish Halahakha*. The ideal of olam hazeh, is related to him "Lo nivrah olam hazeh elah l'moshe". While Rabbi Akiva isn't this way, he is more in the "tagim" and the "hasagot" that do not relate to olam hazeh.

**Not every tzadik is the same. The Maharal is a distinguisher, he is medayek so much in lashon Chaza"l, because saying things in two different ways is different.**

For this reason, Moshe sat in the back of the class and "lo yada mai ka'amrei", because the mehalechim in torah had no chibur. He may have known the content of the tagim, but he didn't have the same connection. What does this mean exactly that one had a different shaychus to the tagim than the other? See the Drasha of the Rav for his uncle *Ma Dodeich M'dod*. It's not easy to really nail it down.

A Ra'ayah that Moshe Rabbeinu is connected to olam hazeh, this is the meaning of his triumph over sichon and og. There is a notion in Jewish thought where Moshe is more separate from the people than Aharon was. The Gemara in **Sanhedrin 6:** discusses this, how Moshe was more related to "yikov hadin et hahar". Cheit Ha'eigel, and the mourning of Aharon. You would think this means that Aharon is not as nivdal as Moshe. You would think that because Moshe was a different kind of creature and he was alienated. In spite of all of this, Moshe was the one chosen to get the Torah. He is a great Rebbe, see earlier from the Maharal.

With respect to the proof from Sichon and Og. One could also make the argument that Moshe is not a military man, the proof is that Yehoshua was the one who went out to fight. But for Maharal, Moshe is the "king of olam hazeh". Reminiscent of the idea of "man malchei, rabanan".

Rabbi Akiva suffered horribly. In the next story they were “soreik besaro b’masreikos shel barzel”. Because of this, he had no chelek in olam hazeh. Why? We can say two ways: **1.** We think of olam hazeh as meaning having a “pleasant life”. **2.** We could think of it that when a person has no olam hazeh, we could say that he is “living in a different world”. It’s not that he had no olam hazeh, he didn’t even care about it. It didn’t even signify at all for him. “There is a pain in the room, but I’m not sure if I have it”.

Some kinds of suffering do not change the world for us. But with Rabbi Akiva, and you keep on going, it’s not only that you have a high threshold of pain. The only way a ba’al yisurim like this can function is if he simply lives in a different dimension. The Gem’ **Brachos** says that Rabbi Akiva is “socheik”. The Roman asked him are you mevaet b’yisurin? This may fuel what Maharal is saying here.

The shock Moshe has at the shiur of Rabbi Akiva are not his questions about divine justice. His question is, that he thinks Rabbi Akiva is on his level. The response of “halacha l’moshe m’sinai” satisfies him, because that is something which is more relevant to the nature of Moshe. It could relate to the nature of a halacha l’moshe m’sinai. It could also be that Halacha L’moshe M’sinai often relates to more “down to earth issues” like that of shiurim.

In Yahadus, you can look at things through different lenses. **Aruch Hashulchan** explains that the beauty of singing is that multiple voices create a symphony. Different sefarim will speak differently. The Maharal’s example, when the **Yerushalmi Makos** speaks about Teshuva, the Torah says Korban, Nevuah says death, Chochma (Tehillim) chata’aim tirdof ra’ah. They then ask H-shem, he says Teshuva. You hear four legitimate voices here. H’ paskens at the end. Does that mean there is a machlokes here, and H’ pasken on his own? No, it means there are multiple legitimate voices in Yahadus, and Hkb”h is the deciding voice. In this way, we can understand the voices of Rabbi Akiva and Moshe.

## **Pesach**

**introduction to the issues:** The following are mostly Ha’arot of haRav Carmy, not found in the maharal

The pesukim at the end of Parshas Bo, **Shemos 12: 18-19**, the pesukim here do not tell us what the reason for the mitzva is. They do not tell us there is a reason. One could make one up and say that the issur is specifically dependent on the mitzvas achilas

korban pesach. Because that is the only context in which this din is brought. Later in verse **34** we are told that they left before the bread rose. One could have said “they only ate matza because it was an accident”.

- The **Ramban** says that G-d was metzaveh them to eat matza on that night because they couldn't have chameitz, thus even if they would have had time to leave, it wouldn't have become chameitz. We know that the Torah ends up telling us later “ki bechipazon”. Ramban says that we commemorate the mere leaving of mitzrayim, not that it would have risen.
- The **Ran Pesachim 115**: how could it be that the halacha followed commemorating a historical event? This is difficult.
- The **Beis Haleivi** says that in fact it was supposed to be this way. The history imitates dvar H-shem, and we aren't commemorating anything historical. Later in pasuk **39** the pasuk restates how they ate the matza because there was no time for it to rise. Same point. We have in Mishpatim how the pesukim refer to chameitz in the context of the matza, and not just in the context of Korban Pesach.

The Ramban ended up saying that there were two aspects to the lechem oni. One was the “chipazon” which reminded us of the geula on that night. Merely commemorating the geula of that night. The other aspect reminds us that we are no longer in slavery. The commemoration of the geula doesn't remind us of who we are, it is “accidental” to the theme of Pesach. For the Maharal, the things which we commemorate, are not “accidental”, they are fundamental to whom we are. The geula and the chipazon really define us. Something which is chipazon, it is more unencumbered, and it reflects freedom more. Suddenness reflects freedom. Often in other mefarshim where we have the word “pitom”, see the Netziv, he explains similarly. It is impressive, there is a certain shock value to the zman. (Also, when something is above time, it isn't dependent on historical change. Here too, there is such a sense.

In **Re'eh Devarim 16:3** the pesukim tells us that we must eat the korban pesach, and then we eat matza for 7 days “lechem oni”. Oni can be translated as “poor person's”, or “affliction”, it seems that poverty is the pashut pshat in the pasuk.

One could interpret the word “oni” as “oneh” and it would thus be a different “ayin”.<sup>3</sup> Chazal interprets it as being “lechem she'onim alav dvarim harbeh”. Around this bread we arrange the seder. Another thing, the **Ramban Devarim**. The Ramban explains that oni means poverty, and the chipazon represents the poverty because that is how we left that place. The bread reminds us of the poverty of mitzrayim. The slave eats matzah because matzah represents fast food. Chipazon and matza remind us of the oni of mitzrayim. So as of now, we have two reasons: 1. Zecher l'avdus. 2. When they left Egypt, they couldn't bake the bread completely.

Why did Chazal introduce “Ha lachma Anya”? This influences the Maharal to say that the matza is central to the dialogue of the evening. To be mekayem “sheonim alav dvarim harbeh”.

## Gevorot 51

- Maharal then goes on to explain that oni is a contrast to matzah asheirah, matzah is like an ani in the sense that it is simple, uncomplicated and unencumbered by anything other than wheat.
- Maharal goes on to explain that geulah means independence. Becoming free means liberation from your weights. An ani is in this sense, liberated. He has no extras. Maharal emphasizes that matzah isn't about the state of freedom because aniyus isn't a siman of cheirus rather its about the process of leaving, it's about removing all extras, this is why matzah asheira is pasul, geulah isn't shayach to a composite.
- This is why geulah has to happen in the first month, first means onits own, unconnected to anything else, this reflects the ability for geilah. Chipazon represents not limited by time or other factors.
- Poverty is only a chisaron in this world cuz our world is a world of composites and combinations. The olam haelyon is the olam hapashut, geulah comes from the olam helyon, the olam hapashut.
- The psul of matza ashira represents this. Irrespective of the Maharal's personal shita earlier that one may be able to be yotzeh with matza ashirah. The Maharal says that this

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<sup>3</sup> Rebbe has quoted the idea many times that some say certain hebrew shorashim of the same letters are really different, the most classic example is how there are two ayin equivalents in arabic. Two hebrew shorashim with ayin might be different ayins, and therefore unrelated

is the reason why the month of geula is Nissan. The first month is not “connected” to anything else. This is the significance of “chipazon”. It represents being above time.

- Maharal also points out that lfi his mehalech of what matzah represents it makes sense that they ate it with the first korban pesach but according to ramban its strange cuz matzah is only significant due to what happened later that they ate it as they left bchipazon.

Even though there isn't an impressiveness to simplicity in this world. The night of Yetzias Mitzrayim is above the boundaries of time. It is simpler in this way. Cohen Gadol and his bigdei lavan. A madreiga elyona relates to pashtus.

The Maharal makes another point. We said that the original matza is there to commemorate that night of yetziat mitzrayim, this was like the Ramban. The Maharal says that this is a stage in the development of freedom. There are three stages to this freedom. One of them is the end of the shibud. It was already a part of the cheirus to eat matza at this point. Not like the Ramban who explained it as a separate reason to remind the jews of the geula of that night. Pesach is the neis of G-d. Maror is vaymareru. And matza is the concept of yetziah.

**Rav Olshin:** {honestly do not know how likely this stuff will be on the fina}

in **Yerach Lamoadim** embraces the Ramban's mehalech, that matza symbolizes both “oni ” and liberation. He implies that there are two separate kiyumim on pesach, oni of shibud and that of freedom. The first mitzva is the first matza of mitzva, and the final matza of afikomen is the mitzvas matza. The Rambam implies that in some ways the afikomen is the ikkar matza. What is difficult for Rav Olshin, is why there a problem with matza ashira for afikomen, which comes from the actual same matza of onim alav? He explains that one has to say that both themes exist. He wants to explain that the rest of pesach “shushes yamim tochal alav” matzos, like the **Gra**, that there is always a mitzva to eat matza on pesach. The kiyum of lechem oni, and shibud, you have all seven days “shivas yamim...lechem oni”. The first night has the inyan of cheirus. But if you hold like the Maharal, that matza is all about freedom as well, how do you explain the charoses? The Rambam holds that Charoses is used for matza as well? Maror and charoses makes sense, but matza and charoses wouldn't make sense? Still, Korech has this



concept in its very essence. But for Rav Olshin, the Charoses is the clincher for the entire yesod.

To explain the Korech idea for the Maharal: **1.** That is the idea of hillel, that they should go together. **2.** Rav Olshin would explain that our Korech is another way of being mekayem maror. Eating it with Korech is being yotzeh the other shita. The matza doesn't have an active role in korech, only for the sake of the maror. **3.** One could say that there are multiple meanings of maror, in context. If you say this, then you can say that matza has two meanings. The meaning that come forth, depends on the meaning of the matza. Maror can help you remember bad things independently. Or as part of a larger story, even the sufferings which become part of the sweetness of the victory. (Rav Schachter on the Haggadah-see there and Rambam Moreh 3:53). In Rav Olshin's drashos he wants to argue that the "koshi hashibud" allowed them less time in the shibud. He builds the entire drasha around that principle. He says it's good because it allowed us to get out earlier.

This discussion of the Maharal seems to have very broad implications in many areas.

#### **Gevurot 55:**

B'yad Chazaka- cherev etc. The Maharal doesn't understand this grouping, it doesn't seem to make any sense at all? The 5 things refer to five levels of makot. Each maka has a causer the effected one, and the maka itself. Usually if something is unpleasant it doesn't matter how it comes about. The first kind has no specific thing causing the makah, just an image of G-d withdrawing. This, says the Maharal, is dever, which is His withdrawal, he withdraws life. There isn't a difference in the end, but the experience of G-d acting, and G-d withdrawing will be different. When it comes to the dever, the point the Maharal wants to make is that there is no direct divine intervention during the tekufa of dever. For the Maharal, this may be "yad chazaka", H' is responsible, but his actions are not evident.

If I were to divide the makos I would do it by 3, based on Rabbi Yehuda's simanim. Another way, the first five have vayichbad, and the second five do not. The Maharal saw a correspondence between the first five and the second five.

Cherev isn't something just happening, it is an active pe'ula. But gilui shechina, by it just "being there", it could be understood as somewhere in the middle. This is the general nature of Yiras Shamayim, it is something present and galui for one to simply accept its revelation. That's the

inyan of “hakol bidei shomayim chutz m’yiras shomayim”. This is this within the tevah. **Gur Aryeh 10:12** explains how yirah is something which one obtains by afar, the keeping away gives a certain credence to the king. In this way, it is not something which can be given. Ahavah is dveikus, it is given over. The same is true of tzinim pachim, they effect man, without being given to him. In a more rational way, a person can’t be given yiras shomayim, he has to earn it. But the Maharal shmaltzes it up.<sup>4</sup>

Within the nes, **Otos** – Mateh, **Moftim** is blood. The second is highly unusual, nature truly changes. The first, I do something unusual. Otos is mitzad the poel, and the moftim and mekablum. This is because of the two elements of punishment, and demonstration of G-d’s power. The first three nisim are of the first kind, punishment. The next two are demonstrations.

In the makos there is an aspect of chomer, tzurah, and their combination. Dever is chomer- lack. Cherev, is decisive, and it cuts up completion, tzura. Morah Gadol, is the third part, chomer and tzura’s connection. Showing the attack on the synthesis between chomer and tzura.

- The number three generally represents the avos. In the Maharal, Avraham is to malach hamaves, al pi the gemara. Yitzchok, the cherev.
- Ya’akov the gilui shechina. I would have quoted “ma norah hamakom hazeh”. That’s not what the Maharal brings down! He brings “ki sham niglu elav ha-elokim b’barcho mipnei achiv”.
- In Vayishlach the pesukim are more concrete, not just a fearful place, but that it was at the point in his life when he was running away. The event here is identified not as his trip to charan, it puts emphasis on the fear of the journey. In this way, the fear of G-d, and the fear of Eisav come together. When people are afraid sometimes, they don’t perceive it right away. One thinks they are afraid of one thing; they are afraid of something else. His being fearful is both in the religious and technical senses, they come together. (Similar to being “maaleh midas hayirah”).

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<sup>4</sup> See Rabbi Hartman footnote, where he shows that at times the Maharal refers to Yirah as coming close, a stirah? He quotes a chacham echad as explaining that some closeness is inappropriate, but some is there to appreciate the malchus. Nevertheless, Yirah is from afar, it isn’t given. {not the redactor: this was yak or morrel now I forget}

- Another pshat, the verb used in vayishlach “niglu eilav”. The first place in Tanach where galah, is used to describe revelation. It is not a common word for revelation. The Maharal gravitated to the pasuk where it is closest to the language of gilui shechina. In the hagada the term gilui shechina is a little confusing, it is the first time where he has G-d speaking to somebody in Tanach.

Moshe is Mateh, Yehoshua is dam. These five personae are the promise of EY and its attainment. That is why there are five aspects of the makos.

Next part: What's the Hagada's goal in dividing the Makos into 5x2? The Maharal liked the 5 and 5 division of the Makos. The first 5 makos correspond to the second 5. That explains the hagada's 5x2 and how it is like the pashtans 5 and 5. The first five attack the tachtonim and the second five the elyonim.

### **Tiferet yisroel**

- Perek 5 maharal discusses gemara in makkos which says n wanted to be mezakeh klal yisrael so he made many mitzvos. This pre-supposes that the point of torah is for our benefit.
- side-note: rambam's pshat is that we have so many choices to choose from cuz we only have to perfect one of them to get olam haba. Rambam brings rayah from rebbe chanina ben tradyon where he was asked what have you done and he answered one mitzvah implying that's all you need,
- maharal answers that it was just a siman that he kept others, furthermore he may have symbolically saying that he traded his maos purim completely for maos aniyim, symbolizing his willingness to completely give up olam hazeh for olam haba and therefore he was raui for olam haba but he wasn't discussing a particular mitzvah per se.
- Maharal explains in this memra that all Jews are created inherently with a harmonious relationship with torah “muchanim latorah”.
- Perek 6, maharal quotes those who wander about taamei hamitzvos, how can physical actions accomplish spiritual objectives, and even if you clean they develop middos tovos, doesn't work for everything (shaatnez, shechita etc...), furthermore just like in the natural world we don't claim to understand the reason for certain thing, why are we any more bothered by not understanding mitzvos?

- Maharal then goes on to explain gemara in berachos/megillah about how its wrong to say al kan tzipor yagiyu rachamecha, that there are two shitas, first shita holds its possible that certain mitzvos are an expression of rachamim but just wrong to make the rachamim inconsistent among the creations and the other opinion holds that it's wrong to make any mitzvos out to be a way of expressing mercy because they are really all gezeiros.
- Quotes rambam and ramban who both think that even if there is an opinion who thinks that all mitzvos are gzeiros we don't pasken like that
- Maharal goes on to say that although its true that mitzvos are l'tov cuz we eventually get olam haba through them this was not the reason why they were instituted, they were instituted as gzeiros, as a burden, like a king makes gzeirahs on his people, it happens to be that they also give us olam haba. This is pshat in mitzvos laav leihanos nitnu.

Why so many mitzvot, see Mishna in Makot? Why does being marbeh mitzvot, help be mezakeh us? It's the opposite? "Ratzah Hkbh lezakot et yisrael...lefikach hirbah lahem torah u'mitzvos"- This tells us that the entire purpose of the mitzvos, to be mezakeh the Jews. Is this a "frum" assumption or not? G-d's intention may be to help you, but this doesn't mean that you are to be selfish about it. The Torah is G-d's will, it's purpose should be to express truth. People don't ask "why are 2+2=4". This is more of a utilitarian argument, saying that it is all there for people. What "lezakos" is saying is that it is downgrading the Torah in its entire purpose for the jews.

The **Rambam** offers ta'amei hamitzvos, both philosophical and practical. The frummer you are, the less you may like ta'amei hamitzvos? How do we look at Torah? The Maharal emphasized in Avos, that Torah is the way the world must be, and even the role of the jewish people expresses the unity of G-d. The **Rambam Peirush Hamishnayos** explains that if a person is mekayem one mitzva really properly, he gets Olam Haba. An opportunity to shine. But this mehalech, is centered on human beings. The story of Rabbi Chanina Ben Tradyon and tzedakah "klum ma'aseh ba leyadcha".

The **Maharal** doesn't like this. It's against all the gemaros about cheshbon aveiros. The Gemaros of klum ma'aseh ba leyadcha means two things. **1.** This mitzva is a **sign** that you are a tzadik gamur. **2.** The maos of purim and maos of tzedakah represent olam haba. How? Purim represents gashmius. Ani'im have no olam hazeh. The exchange means he gave away olam

hazeh for olam habah. This is what it means when Rabbi Chanina was burned, he gave up olam hazeh for olam haba. The act of being machmir in tzedakah, symbolized his having a share in olam haba.

The Jews are prepared for the breadth of Torah. Ktanim having a chelek in olam haba indicates that it is not just earned, it is inherent to Yisrael. This is a frummer way of understanding the Mishna, we have an inherent connection to all of the mitzvos, and that gives us more schar. If people were wicked, they shouldn't take so many chances with mitzvos. However, Yisrael are inherently shayach to Torah, and them acting well or not can go either way. A preexisting affinity, even if they may go off. "Kol Yisrael yeish lahem chelek ba'olam haba".

## Practice test.

This was made only based on my understanding of the material and having taken 8 courses with Rebbe, **Do not assume** that the practice test will reflect our final. It is merely a useful way to check if you have retained information. Also rebbe mentioned that his questions will be more specific than his usual essays so keep that in mind.

choose 8 of 10

1. What things do we know about the Maharal, what do we not? How might any of the above effect his works and how we interpret him
2. Why would pirkie avot be put where it is? This question regards it's placement as part of the canonical mishna, its placement in nezikin and its placement between neduyot/avodah zarah. focus on maharal, but also mention alternatives discussed in class.
3. Ki ner mitzvah vatorah ohr..., where is this pasuk from in tanach? in maharal? discuss why this is important, and how the maharal applies it. OR ... kulam tzdikim..., what does the mishna try to infer from here, what questions does the maharal raise, and what is his approach to deal with those issues?
4. Two unique roots are used in the first mishna masar and kibel, explain the contrast according to the maharal.
5. Try to explain the Maharal's, chomer/tzura male /female equation in a way that Rebecca Walker would not find offensive.
6. Ezra and Rabbi Akiva. please contrast moshe to each of these two individuals
7. Explain the main difference between the maharal and the ramban in understanding of "lechem oni".
8. What are the different approaches to categorizing the makkot? what would be the reason for these breakdowns?
9. Explain the Maharal's approach to ta'amie haMitzvot and contrast it to other approaches discussed in the course.
10. The following are Three themes/motifs we have seen through maharal. Please elaborate on two of them in ONE **coherent** paragraph explaining the maharal's methodology
  - a. chomer vs. tzura ,
  - b. the maharal being very medayik and exact in lashon chazal
  - c. the maharal referencing himself, and completing ideas in different places

## Extra credit:

- 1) What is one way you have grown/ had your opinions about a topic change since the beginning of the course.
- 2) Suppose the Maharal had written on the standard text for the Tefilah chagigit on the night of Yom ha'tzmaut traditionally recited at the end of the tekes ma'avar. Write in an approximation of his style something intelligent about the choice of liturgy. (assume he approved of it)  
[https://images.shulcloud.com/131/uploads/Source\\_Sheets/tefillah-chagigit-mount-sinai.pdf](https://images.shulcloud.com/131/uploads/Source_Sheets/tefillah-chagigit-mount-sinai.pdf)
- 3) What was the Black Adder? how did it relate to this course? (google is forbidden)

## Final Exam Spring 2020<sup>5</sup>

### CONDITIONS OF EXAM:

Primary texts of Maharal and your notes are allowed.

Answer 10 questions: Clarity is important. If your answer overlaps with response to another question, please indicate. Answer the question asked, not the question you are prepared for.

1. Moses' speech impediment: How and why does Maharal diverge from Ran and how do both differ from earlier thinkers?
2. ובמורא גדול—Explain according to Maharal.
3. In what respect does Maharal treat Moses like a “regular” human being and in what way as different? Explain clearly and give examples.
4. Rabbinic statements comparing Ezra and Moses: Maharal's explanation and how it squares with other statements by Maharal.
5. Hanaiah b. Akashia statement about the *mitzvot*: How does Maharal disagree with Rambam? What basic conflict underlies the dispute?
6. Difference between opening phrases of כל ישראל יש להם חלק and the openings of other chapters in *Sanhedrin*. Give and explain Maharal's answer.
7. Are all the nations the “handiwork” of G-d or are they not? Present and explain Maharal's view.
8. Explain Maharal's view and Ramban's regarding the verses in the Torah about matza. What theological issue underlies the dispute?
9. Two stories about Moses and R. Akiva on *Menahot* Why and how does Maharal interpret them together?
10. How does Maharal connect the three patriarchs to the plagues in Egypt as presented in the Haggada? Discuss in particular what he says about Jacob, as analyzed in class.
11. Explain Maharal's view on the transmission of Torah to Moses by contrast with later stages of tradition. Note how he derives his approach from the language of the Mishna.
12. Divide מכות מצרים into groups: One common approach among commentators and Maharal's. How does Maharal derive his view from the Haggada?
13. Explain according to Maharal the Talmudic discussion of the language and script of the Torah. Note our additional explanation.

BONUS: (At your leisure): A) In what ways has your thinking about Maharal changed during the term, or not? B) One point in Maharal that can be made into amusing banter at the Seder table. C) How long do you expect Israeli government to last? Why?

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<sup>5</sup> Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic this final was remote, and had different rules and the questions more specific the Rabbe's normal tests. Please keep this mind while using these questions.