

Dvar Torah Outline — “Limitless Mitzvot,” Using the World for Avodat Hashem, and Building Ahavah v’Yirah (Derech Hashem / Mesillat Yesharim)

Abstract

This dvar Torah develops a “hack” for generating “limitless mitzvot”: everyday, non-mitzvah actions can become spiritually elevating when they are necessary for avodat Hashem, permissible, and done with proper kavanah. It then pivots to a core inner avodah in Derech Hashem: strengthening אהבה and יראה through contemplation of Hashem’s greatness and human lowliness. Finally, it frames אהבה and יראה as the two “wings” that elevate a person—אהבה expanding the נשמה’s drive for closeness, and יראה purifying the body’s pull toward חומריות—while noting that different generations may emphasize different sides of this balance.

I. Opening metaphor: the “game code” for endless lives → “endless mitzvot”

A. “Hack” framing

- Like a secret code that yields endless lives in a game, there is a spiritual method to generate “always available” mitzvot.
- The claim: a person can turn much of ordinary living into continuous avodat Hashem.

B. The three conditions for turning reshut into mitzvah

1. Necessary for avodat Hashem

- If it is not needed for serving Hashem, “we can stop the conversation.”
- Includes health, stability, and functioning: food, sleep, exercise, emotional resilience, livelihood.

2. Permissible / not forbidden (כשר in the broad sense)

- Even if it would help your davening or learning, אסור remains אסור.
- Example given: non-kosher food cannot be justified by the desire for more energy to daven.

3. Kavanah

- The act must be done with intent that it is for enabling avodat Hashem.

C. Why this yields “limitless” mitzvot

- If one constantly “strategizes” life as preparation for the next mitzvah, there is always a mitzvah-track action available.
 - The idea: reshut becomes an engine for continuous spiritual gain.
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II. Derech Hashem: using the world correctly makes the act itself perfecting

A. Key line in the sefer (quoted conceptually from the text being learned)

- “...וכשיהיה אדם משתמש מן העולם על דרך הזה ... הנה ימצא התשמיש ההוא בעצמו פועל השלמות...”
 - When a person uses the world in this way, the usage itself becomes an act of perfection, akin to other mitzvot.

B. Difference between commanded mitzvot and reshut-actions

- **Mitzvot:**
 - Already “necessary” by definition because they are commanded.
 - Already “permissible” by definition.
 - Already “kavanah-shaped” because you are doing a mitzvah.
- **Reshut actions:**
 - Only become mitzvah-like when the three filters are met.
 - Example: earning money may or may not be necessary; it depends on circumstance (e.g., do you already have what you need for tefillin?).

C. Caring for the body as a mitzvah

- “כי גם זה מצוה עלינו לשמור את גופינו בהכנה ההגונה”
 - Protecting and maintaining the body properly is itself a mitzvah, because it enables serving the Creator.
 - Practical examples mentioned:
 - eating, sleeping, exercising, making a parnasah, having shelter, marrying—when oriented toward avodat Hashem.
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III. Two elevations: the person rises, and the world rises with him

A. האדם מתעלה

- Using the physical world for avodat Hashem elevates the person through the action itself.

B. העולם עצמו מתעלה

- The world is elevated when it becomes an “assistant” to man’s divine service.

C. Mesillat Yesharim’s image: Yaakov and the stones

- The teacher cites Mesillat Yesharim’s early framing: creation “stands ready” to serve man’s avodah.
 - Example: the stones around Yaakov’s head “arguing” to host the קצדיק’s head—because facilitating his rest helps him rise to serve Hashem better the next day.
 - The takeaway: the object need not be inherently holy to be part of holiness’ story.
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IV. Clarifying קדושה vs. חפצי מצוה (and what requires genizah)

A. The question

- Is the “kedushah” already inside mitzvah-objects (like lulav and etrog), waiting to be “unleashed,” or is there a different category?

B. Distinction introduced

1. דבר שבקדושה

- Has intrinsic kedushah due to Hashem’s Name / sacred writing.
- Examples given: מזוזה, תפילין, תורה (and items tied to Mikdash).
- Requires גניזה.

2. חפצא/דבר של מצוה

- Does not contain intrinsic kedushah; it facilitates performing a mitzvah.
- Once the mitzvah is completed, it may be discarded.

C. Common stringencies and their reason

- People are careful with tzitzit, lulav, etrog, etc.

- Not because they require genizah, but because of **avoiding ביזיון** (not treating mitzvah-items disgracefully).
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V. Kavanah in practice: travel, “ongoing” intent, and no berachah

A. Can driving to a shiur be mitzvah-activity the whole way?

- Yes—going to learn Torah can make one a **שליח מצוה**.
- Reference to the concept: **שלוחי מצוה פטורין מן המצוה** while traveling for the mitzvah.

B. Is a berachah needed for turning actions into mitzvah?

- No berachah; the key is kavanah.

C. Do you need continuous kavanah the entire time?

- No—once set at the beginning, it continues as long as you remain engaged and don't “break” the activity by switching contexts.
 - Parallel example: tying tzitzit “לשם ציצית”—you do not need to repeat the intention constantly.
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VI. אהבה in Derech Hashem: strengthening “within oneself” ויראה

A. The new practical focus

- what a person must strengthen — “**in himself**: ממה שצריך שיגביר אדם בעצמו”
 - **אהבה** and **יראה** toward Hashem.

B. The contemplative practice that generates both

- “שיעיין ויתבונן על גודל רוממותו יתברך ועוצם שפלות האדם...”
 - Reflect on Hashem's exalted greatness and human lowliness.
- Outcomes described:
 1. **הכנעה** (subjugation) and **בושת** (embarrassment/unworthiness) before His loftiness.
 2. A **yearning** to be among those who serve Hashem and find meaning in praising Him.

C. Why start with אהבה/יראה before תורה (the teacher's explanation)

- ".is an external acquisition—something you "go and get תורה
- are internal capacities always accessible and infinitely strengthen-able through יראה and אהבה contemplation.

D. אהבה needs יראה first (psychology of avodah)

- Without yirah, a person retains a self-satisfied posture: "I'm great... and there's also God, when I'm not busy."
 - Yirah breaks the illusion of self-sufficiency and awakens the realization:
 - Disconnected from Hashem, a person is "stuck in mud."
 - True value comes from being an eved Hashem.
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VII. אהבה ויראה as the two "wings": purifying body, igniting soul

A. The verse-like line in the sefer (quoted in the talk)

- "...כי אלה הם המליצים החזקים ... המזככים את חושך החומר ומזהירים זוהר הנשמה..."
 - They purify the darkness of חומר and cause the soul's radiance to shine, elevating a person level by level.

B. Mapping to the human composite: נשמה and גוף

- We are made of גוף and נשמה, so we need two complementary forces:
 - יראה: purifies/holds back the body's pull—cutting "junk," restraining תאוות, anger, selfishness.
 - אהבה: expresses the soul's expansive drive—burning desire for closeness and service.

C. "Both" is true: far and close

- From physicality: האדם is lowly and distant.
- From soul: האדם can be similar to Hashem in meaning and closeness (דבקות = similarity).

D. Practical imagery

- / shrinking back, humility, reverent approach (even feeling "out of place" entering a יראה: בית מדרש).
 - expansion, energy, excitement, yearning אהבה:
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VIII. Mesillat Yesharim (and Derech Hashem) textual support: two heads, two categories

A. Mesillat Yesharim, פרק י"ט (as cited)

- "ושני הראשים הם היראה והאהבה"
- Included in **יראה**:
 - when approaching avodah בושת, הכנעה,
 - toward mitzvot, Hashem's Name, and Torah כבוד
- Included in **אהבה**:
 - (zeal) קנאה, דבקות, שמחה,
 - Pleasure in mentioning Hashem's Name and praising Him

B. Link to לא תעשה / מצוות עשה (student's comment affirmed)

- Positive mitzvot align with the "active/expansive" side.
- Negative mitzvot emphasize restraint—"don't do"—aligned with yirah/body discipline.

C. "Two wings" hierarchy and sequence

- .is called "greater" (right wing), yet yirah "facilitates" it (left wing) אהבה
- Chronology: yirah must come first to clear space for ahavah to emerge.

IX. Where do אהבה and יראה come from? (inborn capacity)

A. Student's question

- Are these already inside us?

B. Answer given

- Yes—because a person already contains:
 - capacity for distance (from גוף)
 - capacity for closeness (from נשמה)

C. Connecting to "בכל לבבך"

- : "is read as "with both inclinations" "בכל לבבך"
 - יצר טוב and יצר הרע

- Serving Hashem with יצר הרע is framed as restraint—channeling/limiting it rather than letting it rule.
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X. Contemporary mussar question: Slabodka vs. Novardok (and generational needs)

A. The apparent tension raised

- Novardok-style: “you are nothing” → yirah/hachna’ah emphasis.
- Slabodka-style: build a person up (gadlut ha’adam) → self-worth emphasis.
- The question: what “works” today seems opposite of the “lowliness” approach.

B. Resolution offered

- Derech Hashem requires **both**.
 - Different generations/regions face different primary spiritual challenges.
 - Great leaders emphasized whichever side was most needed in their context; the truth includes both.
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XI. In Summary

- “Limitless mitzvot” emerge when reshut-actions are (1) necessary for avodat Hashem, (2) permissible, and (3) done with kavanah.
- This elevates both the person and, in a sense, the physical world that assists him.
- Clarifying categories prevents confusion: **דבר שבקדושה** requires genizah; **חפצי מצוה** do not, though ביטוי must be avoided.
- The central inner avodah begins “within oneself”: strengthening **יראה** (to purify the body’s darkness) and **אהבה** (to radiate the soul’s light).
- A healthy spiritual life integrates both: yirah first to humble and restrain, then ahavah to expand into joyful closeness—adapted to the needs of each generation.