

# Season One Episode 4

Central Guest: Rabbi Professor David Ellenson

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Isaiah 45:7	ישעיהו מד ז
The former of light and creator of darkness, the maker of peace	יוֹצֵר אוֹר וּבּוֹרֵא חֹשֶׁךְּ עֹשֶׂה שָׁלוֹם
and the creator of evil — I am God, who does all of these things.	וּבוֹרֵא רַע אַנִי ה׳ עשׁה כָּל־אֵלֵּה:

## Maimonides, Mishneh Torah, Laws of Repentance 2 10

It is forbidden for man to be ill-natured and unforgiving, for he must be easily appeased but unwidely to wrath; and when a sinner implores him for pardon, he should grant him pardon wholeheartedly and soulfully. Even if one persecuted him and sinned against him exceedingly he should not be vengeful and grudge-bearing, for such is the path of the seed of Israel and of their excellent heart. Only the idolaters are not so, they are of uncircumcised heart, and their wrath is ever-watchful; and, because the Gibonites were unforgiving and unappeasing, that of them it is said: "Now the Gibonites were not of the children of Israel" (II. Samuel, 21.2).<sup>11</sup>

## רמב"ם משנה תורה הלכת תשובה ב

אָסוּר לָאָדָם לְהְיוֹת אַכְזָרִי וְלֹא יִתְפַּיֵס אָלֶּא יְהֵא נוֹחַ לִרְצוֹת וְקָשֶׁה לִכְעֹס וּבְשָׁעָה שָׁמְּבַקֵּשׁ מִמֶּנּוּ הַחוֹטֵא לִמְחל מוֹחֵל בְּלֵב שָׁלֵם וּבְּנֶפֶשׁ חֲפֵצָה. וַאֲפִלּוּ הַצֵּר לוֹ וְחָטָא לוֹ הַרְבֵּה לֹא יִקֹּם וְלֹא יִשֹׂר. וְזֶהוּ דַּרְכָּם שָׁל זֻרַע יִשְׂרָאֵל וְלִבָּם הַנָּכוֹן. אֲלַל הָעוֹבְדֵי כּוֹכָבִים עַרְלֵי לֵב אֵינָן כֵּן אֶלָּא (וְעֶבְרָתָן) [וְעֶבְרָתוֹ] שְׁמָרָה בָצַח. וְכֵן הוּא אוֹמֵר עַל הַגִּבְעוֹנִים לְפִי שֶׁלֹא מְחֲלוּ וְלֹא נִתְפַּיְסוּ וְהַגְּבְעוֹנִים לֹא מִבְּנֵי יִשִׂרָאֵל הָמַה:

## Maimonides, Mishneh Torah, Laws of Repentance 7 3

Do not say that no repentance is needed save on sins to which action is attached, for example: prostitution, robbery, or theft. For even as it is necessary for man to repent from such, so it is necessary for him to search his bad tendencies, to turn in repentance from anger, from

#### רמב"ם משנה תורה הלכת תשובה ז ג

אַל תּאֹמֵר שָׁאֵין תְּשׁוּבָה אֶלָּא מֵעֲבִירוֹת שָׁיֵשׁ בָּהֶן מַעֲשֶׂה כְּגוֹן זְנוּת וְגֵזֶל וּגְּבָבָה. אֶלֶּא כְּשֵׁם שֶׁצָּרִיןּ אֶדָם לָשׁוּב מֵאֵלּוּ כָּךְ הוּא צָרִיךְּ לְחַפֵּשׂ בָּדֵעוֹת רָעוֹת שֶׁיֵשׁ לוֹ וְלָשׁוּב מִן הַכַּעַס וּמִן הָאֵיבָה וּמִן הַקִּנְאָה וּמִן הַהָּתּוּל hatred, from jealousy, from deceit, from pursuing after wealth, honor, feasting and such like these; yea, from all of these it is necessary for him to turn in repentance. Indeed these iniquities are more grievous and more difficult for a man to be separated from than those which require action, for on such the prophet Isaiah said: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the man of iniquity his thoughts" (Is. 55.7).

וּמֵרְדִיפַת הַמָּמוֹן וְהַכָּבוֹד וּמֵרְדִיפַת הַמַּאֲכָלוֹת וְכַיּוֹצֵא בָּהֶן מִן הַכּל צָרִיךְּ לַחֲזֹר בִּתְשׁוּבָה. וְאֵלּוּ הָעֲוֹנוֹת קָשִׁים מֵאוֹתָן שֶׁיֵשׁ בָּהֶן מַעֲשֶׂה שֶׁבִּזְמֵן שֶׁאָדָם נִשְׁקָע בְּאֵלּוּ קַשֶּׁה הוּא לִפְרשׁ מֵהֶם. וְכֵן הוּא אוֹמֵר )<u>ישעיה נה ז</u>" (יַעֲזֹב רָשָׁע" וְגוֹ:'

### Maimonides, Mishneh Torah, Laws of Repentance 7 4

Let not a penitent man imagine that he is removed at a distance from the degree of the righteous on account of the iniquities and sins which he had committed. It is not so, forsooth, but the Creator considers him beloved and desirable, as if he had ever known of no sin. Moreover, his reward is great; for, after having partaken of the taste of sin, he separated himself therefrom and conquered his passion. The sages said: "The place whereon the penitent stand the wholly righteous could not stand;" as if saying: "their degree is above the degree of those who ever did not sin, because it is more difficult for them to subdue their passion than for the others.<sup>2</sup>

### רמב"ם משנה תורה הלכת תשובה ז ד

וְאַל יְדָמֶה אָדָם בַּעַל תְּשׁוּבָה שֶׁהוּא מְרֵחָק מִמַּעֲלַת הַצַּדִּיקִים מִפְּנֵי הָעֲוֹנוֹת וְהַחֲטָאוֹת שָׁעָשָׁה. אֵין הַדָּבָר כֵּן אֶלָּא אָהוּב וְנֶחְמָד הוּא לִפְנֵי הַבּוֹרֵא כְּאִלּוּ לֹא חָטָא מֵעוֹלָם. וְלֹא עוֹד אֶלָּא שָׁשְּׂכָרוֹ הַרְבֵּה שְׁהָרֵי טָעַם טַעַם הַחֵטְא וּפֵרַשׁ מִמֶּנוּ וְלָבַשׁ יִצְרוֹ. אָמְרוּ חֲלָמִים מְּקוֹם שָׁבַּעֲלֵי תְשׁוּבָה עוֹמְדִין אֵין צַדִּיקִים גְּמוּרִין יְכוֹלִין לַעֲמֹד בּוֹ. כְּלוֹמַר מַעֲלָתָן גְּדוֹלָה מִמַּעֻלַת בּוֹבְשִׁים יִצְרָם יוֹתֵר מֵהָם: