

הלכות עבודת פוכבים • פרק ראשון

Complete Word-for-Word Interlinear • Navy & Gold Edition

CHAPTER PREVIEW

In this opening chapter, the Rambam, zatzal, takes us back to the very beginning of history to show us how the terrible error of avodah zarah first crept into the world. We learn how, in the days of Enosh, mankind made a tragic mistake by thinking that because Hashem placed the stars and spheres on high to run the world, it must be His will to honor and serve them as His ministers.

We then see how this initial error degenerated over generations. The Rambam describes how false prophets and deceivers arose, claiming they had received visions to build physical images and perform strange rituals, which eventually led the masses to completely forget Hashem and worship only these empty creations.

All introductions, summaries, and contextual notes are the editor's commentary and are not part of the original text.

הליא

הטעות הראשונה של עובדי פוכבים בימי אנוש

Halacha 1 • The Original Error of the Idol Worshipers in the Days of Enosh

בימי אנוש טעו בני האדם טעות גדול ונבערה עצת
the counsel of and became foolish great a mistake man the children of erred Enosh In the days of
חכמי אותו הדור ואנוש עצמו מן הטועים הזה. וזו היתה
was and this was the ones who erred from himself and Enosh generation that the wise men of
טעותם. אמרו הואיל והאלהים ברא פוכבים אלו וגלגלים להנהיג את
— to guide and spheres these stars created and God since they said their mistake
העולם ונתנם במרום וחקל להם כבוד והם שמשמים הממששים
who minister servants and they honor to them and apportioned on high and placed them the world
לפניו ראויין הם לשבחם ולפארום ולחקל להם כבוד. וזהו
and this is honor to them and to apportion and to glorify them to praise them they are fitting before Him
רצון האל פרוץ הוא לגדל ולכבד מי שגדלו וכבדו. כמו שהמלך
the king just as and honored He magnified whoever and to honor to magnify is He blessed the God the will of
רוצה לכבד העומדים לפניו וזהו כבודו של מלך. כיון שעלה דבר זה
this thing that arose once a king of the honor of and this is before him those who stand to honor wants
על לבם התחילו לבנות לפוכבים היכלות ולהקריב להן קרבנות
sacrifices to them and to offer temples for the stars to build they began their heart upon
ולשבחם ולפארום בדברים ולהשתחוות למולם כדי להשיג רצון
the favor of to obtain in order towards them and to prostrate with words and to glorify them and to praise them themselves

הַבּוֹרָא בְּדַעְתָּם הָרָעָה. וְזֶה הָיָה עֵקֶר עֲבוֹדַת פּוֹכְבִּים. וְכָךְ הָיוּ
they would and thus stars worship of the essence of was and this the evil in their opinion the Creator
אוֹמְרִים עוֹבְדֵיהֶם הַיּוֹדְעִים עֲקָרָהּ. לֹא שָׁהָן אוֹמְרִים שָׁאִין שֵׁם אֱלֹהִים
a god there that there is not say that they not its essence who knew its worshipers say
אַלָּא כּוֹכַב זֶה. הוּא שִׁירְמֵיָהּ אוֹמֵר מִי לֹא יִרְאֶה מֶלֶךְ הַגּוֹיִם כִּי לָךְ
to You for the nations King of will fear You not Who says that Yirmeyahu it is this star except
יָאֲתָה כִּי בְּכָל חַכְמֵי הַגּוֹיִם וּבְכָל מַלְכוּתָם מֵאִין כְּמוֹךָ וּבִאֲחַת
and in one like You there is none their kingdom and in all the nations the wise men of among all for it is fitting
יִבְעָרוּ וַיִּכְסְלוּ מוֹסֵר הַבָּלִים עֵץ הוּא. כְּלוּמָר הַכֹּל יוֹדְעִים שֶׁאֲתָה
that You know all meaning to say it is wood vanities the instruction of and senseless they are foolish
הוּא לְבַדָּךְ אֲבָל טְעוּתָם וּכְסִילוּתָם שְׁמַדְמִים שֶׁזֶה הַהֶכֶל רְצוֹנָךְ הוּא:
it is Your will vanity that this is that they imagine and their foolishness their mistake but alone are He

This halacha describes the historical origin of idol worship, which began as a misguided attempt to honor God by honoring His servants, the stars and spheres.

ה'ל"ב

הַתַּפְשָׁטוּת עֲבוֹדָה זָרָה בְּעוֹלָם וּשְׁכִיחַת הַשֵּׁם

Halacha 2: The Spread of Idol Worship and the Forgetting of God's Name

וְאַחֵר שֶׁאָרְכוּ הַיָּמִים עָמְדוּ בְּכַנִּי הָאָדָם נִבְיֵי שָׁקֶר וְאָמְרוּ
and they said falsehood prophets of man among the children of there arose the days that lengthened And after
שֶׁהָאֵל צִוָּה וְאָמַר לָהֶם עֲבֹדוּ כּוֹכַב פְּלוֹנִי אוֹ כָּל הַפּוֹכְבִּים וְהִקְרִיבוּ
and sacrifice the stars all or such and such star serve to them and said commanded that God
לוֹ וְנִסְכּוֹ לוֹ כֶּךָ וְכָךְ וּבָנוּ לוֹ הֵיכָל וַעֲשׂוּ צוּרְתוֹ כְּדִי לְהִשְׁתַּחֲוֹת
to bow down in order its image and make a temple for it and build and thus thus to it and pour libations to it
לוֹ כָּל הָעָם הַנָּשִׁים וְהַקְטָנִים וּשְׂאֵר עַמִּי הָאָרֶץ. וּמוֹדִיעַ
and he would inform the land the common people of and the rest of and the children the women the people all to it
לָהֶם צוּרָה שֶׁבָּדָה מִלְּבוֹ וְאָמַר זֶה הִיא צוּרַת הַפּוֹכַב פְּלוֹנִי
such and such the star the image of is this and say from his heart that he devised an image them
שֶׁהוֹדִיעָהּ בְּנִבְיָתוֹ. וְהִתְחִילוּ עַל דֶּרֶךְ זֶה לַעֲשׂוֹת צוּרוֹת בְּהֵיכָלוֹת
in the temples images to make this way on and they began in his prophecy that they informed him
וְתַחַת הָאֵילָנוֹת וּבְרָאשֵׁי הַהָרִים וְעַל הַגְּבְעוֹת וּמִתְקַבְּצִין וּמִשְׁתַּחֲוִים
and bow down and they would gather the hills and on the mountains and on the tops of the trees and under
לָהֶם וְאָמְרִים לְכָל הָעָם שִׂיזוּ הַצּוּרָה מִיִּטְיָבָה וּמִרָעָה וְרָאוּי לְעֲבָדָהּ
to serve it and it is proper and harms benefits image that this the people to all and say to them
וּלְיִרְאָה מִמֶּנָּה. וְכִהְיִנִּיהֶם אוֹמְרִים לָהֶם שֶׁבְּעֲבוֹדָה זֶה תִּרְבוּ
you will multiply this that through service to them would say and their priests from it and to fear
וְתִצְלִיחוּ וַעֲשׂוּ כֶּךָ וְכָךְ וְאֵל תַּעֲשׂוּ כֶּךָ וְכָךְ. וְהִתְחִילוּ פּוֹזְבִּים
deceivers and they began and thus thus do and do not and thus thus and do and you will succeed

אֲחֵרִים לַעֲמֹד וְלוֹמַר שֶׁהַכּוֹכָב עָצְמוֹ אוֹ הַגִּלְגָּל אוֹ הַמַּלְאָךְ דִּבֶּר עִמָּהֶם
with them spoke the angel or the sphere or itself that the star and to say to arise others
וַאֲמַר לָהֶם עֲבֹדוּנִי בְּכָךְ וּכְךָ וְהוֹדִיעַ לָהֶם דֶּרֶךְ עֲבֹדָתוֹ וַעֲשׂוּ כָּךְ
thus and do his service the way of them and he informed and thus in thus serve me to them and said
וְאַל תַּעֲשׂוּ כָּךְ. וּפָשַׁט דָּבָר זֶה בְּכָל הָעוֹלָם לַעֲבֹד אֶת הַצּוּרוֹת בַּעֲבֹדוֹת
with services the images — to serve the world in all this matter and spread thus do and do not
מִשְׁנוֹת זֹו מִזֹּו וּלְהַקְרִיב לָהֶם וּלְהַשְׁתַּחֲוֹת. וְכִיּוֹן שֶׁאָרְכוּ הַיָּמִים
the days that lengthened and since and to bow down to them and to sacrifice from this this strange
נִשְׁתַּכַּח הַשֵּׁם הַנּוֹכָח וְהַנּוֹרָא מִפִּי כָּל הַיָּקוּם וּמִדַּעְתָּם וְלֹא
and not and from their mind the living all from the mouth of and the awesome the glorious the Name was forgotten
הַפִּירוּהוּ וְנִמְצְאוּ כָּל עַם הָאָרֶץ הַנָּשִׁים וְהַקְטָנִים אֵינָם
they are not and the children the women the land the people of all and they were found did they recognize Him
יּוֹדְעִים אֵלָּא הַצּוּרָה שֶׁל עֵץ וְשֶׁל אֶבֶן וְהַהִיכָל שֶׁל אֲבָנִים שֶׁנִּתְחַנְּכוּ
that they were trained stones of and the temple stone and of wood of the image except knowing
מִקְטָנוּתָם לְהַשְׁתַּחֲוֹת לָהּ וּלְעִבְדָּהּ וּלְהִשָּׁבַע בִּשְׁמָהּ. וְהַחֲכָמִים שֶׁהָיוּ
that were and the wise men by its name and to swear and to serve it to it to bow down from their childhood
בָּהֶם כְּגוֹן כַּהֲנֵיהֶם וְכִיּוֹצֵא בָּהֶן מִדְּמִין שֶׁאֵין שֵׁם אֱלֹהֵי אֵלָּא
except a god there that there is not imagined of them and the like their priests such as among them
הַכּוֹכָבִים וְהַגִּלְגָּלִים שֶׁנַּעֲשׂוּ הַצּוּרוֹת הָאֵלוֹ בְּגִלְגָּלִם וּלְדַמּוּתָן. אֲבָל
but and to resemble them because of them these the images that were made and the spheres the stars
צוּר הָעוֹלָמִים לֹא הָיָה שׁוֹם אָדָם שֶׁהָיָה מִפִּירוֹ וְלֹא יוֹדְעוֹ אֵלָּא
except knowing Him and not recognizing Him who was man any was not the worlds the Rock of
יְחִידִים בְּעוֹלָם כְּגוֹן חֲנוּךְ וּמֵתוּשֶׁלַח נֹחַ שֵׁם וְעֶבֶר. וְעַל דֶּרֶךְ זֶה הָיָה
was this way and on and Ever Shem Noah and Metushelach Chanoch such as in the world individuals
הָעוֹלָם הוֹלֵךְ וּמִתְגַּלְגֵּל עַד שֶׁנוֹלַד עַמּוּדוֹ שֶׁל עוֹלָם וְהוּא אֲבִרָהֶם
our Father Avraham and he is the world the pillar of that was born until and rolling going the world
אֲבִינוֹ:

This halacha describes the historical descent of humanity into complete idolatry through false prophets and priests, until the true God was forgotten by almost all of mankind.

ה'ל"ג

הַפֶּרֶת אֲבִירָהֶם אֲבִינוֹ אֶת בּוֹרְאוֹ וְהַשְׁתַּחֲוֹת לְשֵׁלֹת הָאֱמוּנָה

Halacha 3 · Avraham's Discovery of the Creator and the Transmission of Monotheism

כִּיּוֹן שֶׁנִּגְמַל אֵיתָן זֶה הַתְּחִיל לְשׁוֹטֵט בְּדַעְתּוֹ וְהוּא קָטָן וְהַתְּחִיל לַחֲשֹׁב
to think and he began was small and he in his mind to explore he began this mighty he was weaned Once

ביום ובליִלָה וְהָיָה תִּמְנָה הֵי־אֵךְ אֲפָשָׁר שְׂיִהְיֶה הַגִּלְגָּל הַזֶּה נוֹהֵג
revolving this sphere that there should be is it possible how wondering and he was and by night by day

תָּמִיד וְלֹא יִהְיֶה לוֹ מְנַהִיג וּמִי יִסְבֵּב אוֹתוֹ. כִּי אֵי אֲפָשָׁר
impossible impossible for it causes to revolve and who a controller to it there should be and not always

שְׂיִסְבֵּב אֶת עַצְמוֹ. וְלֹא הָיָה לוֹ מְלַמֵּד וְלֹא מוֹדִיעַ דָּבָר אֲלֵא
rather of anything one who informs and not a teacher to him was and not itself — that it should cause to
revolve

מִשְׁקָע בָּאוֹר כְּשָׂדִים בֵּין עוֹבְדֵי כּוֹכָבִים הַטְּפָשִׁים וְאָבִיו וְאִמּוֹ וְכָל
and all and his mother and his father the foolish stars worshipers of among Kasdim in Ur mired

הָעָם עוֹבְדֵי כּוֹכָבִים וְהוּא עוֹבֵד עִמָּהֶם וְלָבוּ מְשׁוּטֵט וּמִבִּין
and understanding was exploring and his heart with them worshiped and he stars were worshipers of the people

עַד שֶׁהִשִּׁיג דֶּרֶךְ הָאֱמֶת וְהִבִּין קוֹ הַצֶּדֶק מִתְּבוֹנָתוֹ הַנְּכוֹנָה.
the correct from his understanding righteousness the line of and understood the truth the path of he grasped until

וַיֵּדַע שֵׁשׁ שָׁם אֱלֹהִים אֶחָד וְהוּא מְנַהִיג הַגִּלְגָּל וְהוּא בָּרָא הַכֹּל
everything created and He the sphere controls and He one God there that there is and he knew

וְאֵין בְּכָל הַנִּמְצָא אֱלֹהִים חוּץ מִמֶּנּוּ. וַיֵּדַע שֶׁכָּל הָעוֹלָם טוֹעִים
were erring the world that all and he knew Him besides a god the entities among all and there is not

וְדָבָר שֶׁגָּרַם לָהֶם לְטָעוֹת זֶה שֶׁעוֹבְדִים אֶת הַכּוֹכָבִים וְאֵת הַצּוּרוֹת
the images and — the stars — that they worshiped was this to err them that caused and the thing

עַד שֶׁאֲבַד הָאֱמֶת מִדַּעְתָּם. וּבֶן אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה הִפִּיר אַבְרָהָם אֶת
— Avraham recognized years forty and a son of from their minds the truth was lost until

בוֹרְאוֹ. כִּיּוֹן שֶׁהִפִּיר וַיֵּדַע הַתְּחִיל לְהַשִּׁיב תְּשׁוּבוֹת עַל בְּנֵי אוּר
Ur the people of to answers to return he began and knew he recognized Once his Creator

כְּשָׂדִים וְלַעֲרֹךְ דִּין עִמָּהֶם וְלֹאמַר שֶׁאֵין זֶה דֶּרֶךְ הָאֱמֶת שֶׁאֵתָם
that you the truth is the path of this that not and to say with them arguments and to arrange Kasdim

הוֹלְכִים בָּהּ וְשִׁבַּר הַצִּלָּמִים וְהַתְּחִיל לְהוֹדִיעַ לָעָם שֶׁאֵין רָאוּי
proper that there is no to the people to make known and he began the idols and he broke in it are walking

לְעַבֵּד אֱלֹהִים אֲלֵא לְאֱלֹהֵי הָעוֹלָם וְלוֹ רָאוּי לְהִשְׁתַּחֲוֹת וּלְהִקְרִיב וּלְנַסֵּךְ
and to pour libations and to sacrifice to bow down it is proper and to Him the world the God of except to serve

כָּדֵי שִׁפְירוֹהוּ כָּל הַבְּרוּאִים הַבָּאִים. וְרָאוּי לְאַבֵּד וּלְשַׁבֵּר כָּל
all and to break to destroy and it is proper the coming ones the creations all that they should in order
recognize Him

הַצּוּרוֹת כָּדֵי שֶׁלֹא יִטְעוּ בָּהֶן כָּל הָעָם כְּמוֹ אֵלֵי שֶׁהֵם מְדַמִּים
imagine who these like the people all with them they should err that not in order the images

שֶׁאֵין שָׁם אֱלֹהִים אֲלֵא אֱלֹהִים. כִּיּוֹן שֶׁגָּבַר עֲלֵיהֶם בְּרָאיוֹתָיו בְּקֶשׁ הַמֶּלֶךְ
the king sought with his proofs over them he prevailed Once these except a god there that there is not

לְהַרְגוֹ וּנְעָשָׂה לוֹ נִס וַיֵּצֵא לְחָרָן. וְהִתְחִיל לַעֲמֹד וּלְקַרְא

and to call to stand and he began to Charan and he went out a miracle for him and was performed to kill him

בְּקוֹל גָּדוֹל לְכָל הָעוֹלָם וּלְהוֹדִיעֵם שֵׁשׁ שָׁם אֱלֹהִים אֶחָד לְכָל הָעוֹלָם

the world for all one God there that there is and to inform them the world to all loud with a voice

וְלוֹ רָאוּי לַעֲבֹד. וְהָיָה מִהֲלֹךְ וּקוֹרְא וּמִקְבִּץ הָעָם מֵעִיר לְעִיר

to city from city the people and gathering and calling traveling and he was to serve it is proper and Him

וּמִמַּמְלָכָה לְמַמְלָכָה עַד שֶׁהִגִּיעַ לְאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן וְהוּא קוֹרְא שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר

as it is said calling out and he Canaan at the land of he arrived until to kingdom and from kingdom

בְּרֵאשִׁית כ"א ל"ג "וַיִּקְרָא שָׁם בְּשֵׁם ה' אֵל עוֹלָם". וְכִיוֹן שֶׁהָיוּ

that were And once the world God of Hashem in the name of there And he called 33 21 Genesis

הָעָם מִתְקַבְּצִין אֵלָיו וְשׂוֹאֲלִין לוֹ עַל דְּבָרָיו הָיָה מוֹדִיעַ לְכָל אֶחָד

each . inform he would his words about him and asking to him gathering the people

וְאֶחָד כָּפִי דַעְתּוֹ עַד שֶׁיִּחְזִירָהוּ לְדֶרֶךְ הָאֱמֶת עַד שֶׁנִּתְקַבְּצוּ

there gathered until the truth to the path of he would return him until his understanding according to and every one

אֵלָיו אֲלָפִים וּרְבָבוֹת וְהֵם אֲנָשֵׁי בֵּית אַבְרָהָם וְשָׂתַל בְּלִבָּם

in their hearts and he planted Avraham the house of were the men of and they and myriads thousands to him

הָעֵקֶר הַגָּדוֹל הַזֶּה וְחִבֵּר בּוֹ סְפָרִים וְהוֹדִיעָם לְיִצְחָק בְּנוֹ. וַיֵּשֶׁב

and sat his son to Yitzchak and he taught it books concerning it and he composed this the great principle

יִצְחָק מִלְמֵד וּמִזְהִיר. וַיִּצְחָק הוֹדִיעַ לְיַעֲקֹב וּמִנָּהוּ לְלַמֵּד וַיֵּשֶׁב מִלְמֵד

teaching and he sat to teach and appointed him to Yaakov taught and Yitzchak and warning teaching Yitzchak

וּמִחֲזִיק כָּל הַנְּלוּיִם אֵלָיו. וַיַּעֲקֹב אָבִינוּ לֵמֵד בָּנָיו כָּלם וְהִבְדִּיל

and he separated all of them his sons taught our father and Yaakov him those who joined all and strengthening

לְוִי וּמִנָּהוּ רֹאשׁ וְהוֹשִׁיבוֹ בִּישִׁיבָה לְלַמֵּד דֶּרֶךְ הַשֵּׁם וּלְשָׁמֹר

and to keep Hashem the way of to teach in the academy and established him head and appointed him Levi

מִצְוֹת אַבְרָהָם. וְצִוָּה אֶת בָּנָיו שֶׁלֹּא יַפְסִיקוּ מִבְּנֵי לְוִי

Levi from the sons of they should interrupt that not his sons — and he commanded Avraham the commandment of

מִמֶּנָּה אַחֵר מִמֶּנָּה כִּדִּי שֶׁלֹּא תִשְׁכַּח הַלְמוּד. וְהָיָה הַדָּבָר הוֹלֵךְ

going the matter and was the teaching should be forgotten that not in order a leader after a leader

וּמִתְגַּבֵּר בְּבָנָי יַעֲקֹב וּבְנֵי לְוִי עָלֵיהֶם וְנִעְשִׂית בְּעוֹלָם

in the world and there became them and among those who Yaakov among the children of and growing stronger joined

אֲמָה שֶׁהִיא יוֹדַעַת אֵת ה'. עַד שֶׁאָרְכוּ הַיָּמִים לְיִשְׂרָאֵל בְּמִצְרַיִם

in Mitzrayim for Israel the days grew long until Hashem — knows that a nation

וְחָזְרוּ לְלַמֵּד מַעֲשֵׂיהֶן וּלְעַבֵּד כּוֹכָבִים כְּמוֹתֵן חוּץ מִשְׁבֵּט לְוִי

Levi for the tribe of except like them stars and to worship from their deeds to learn and they returned

שְׁעַמַּד בְּמִצְוֹת אָבוֹת. וּמַעֲוָלָם לֹא עָבַד שִׁבְט לְוִי עֲבוֹדַת
worship of Levi the tribe of worshiped not and never the patriarchs by the commandment that stood
of

כּוֹכָבִים. וְכִמְעַט קָט הָיָה הָעֵקֶר שֶׁשָּׂתַל אַבְרָהָם נֶעְקַר וַחֲזֹרִין
and would return uprooted Avraham that planted the principle was by a little and almost stars

בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב לְטָעוֹת הָעוֹלָם וּתְעִיּוֹתָן. וּמֵאַהֲבַת ה' אֹתָנוּ
us Hashem And from the love of and their crookedness the world to the error of Yaakov the children of

וּמִשְׁמָרוֹ אֶת הַשְּׁבוּעָה לְאַבְרָהָם אֲבִינוּ עָשָׂה מֹשֶׁה רַבֵּנוּ רַבֵּן
the master of our teacher Moshe He brought forth our father to Avraham the oath — and from His keeping

שֶׁל כָּל הַנְּבִיאִים וּשְׁלָחוֹ. כִּיּוֹן שֶׁנִּתְּנָה מֹשֶׁה רַבֵּנוּ וּבָחַר ה' יִשְׂרָאֵל
Israel Hashem and chose our teacher Moshe prophesied Once and sent him the prophets all .

לְנַחֲלָה הִכְתִּירָן בְּמִצְוֹת וְהוֹדִיעָם דֶּרֶךְ עֲבוֹדָתוֹ וּמָה יִהְיֶה
would be and what His service the path of and informed them with mitzvos He crowned them for an inheritance

מִשְׁפָּט עֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים וְכָל הַטּוֹעִים אַחֲרֶיהָ:
after it those who stray and all stars worship of the judgment of

This halacha traces the spiritual journey of Avraham Avinu from his childhood search for truth in Ur Kasdim to the establishment of the Tōrah through Moshe Rabbeinu.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The chapter traces the historical descent of humanity from the initial, mistaken honor given to the stars in the generation of Enosh, through the rise of false prophets who commanded the worship of physical images, until the true knowledge of Hashem was almost entirely forgotten. This darkness prevailed until our father, Avraham Avinu, used his own intellect to recognize the Creator, began teaching the truth to the world, and established a nation dedicated to the service of the one true God, a legacy that Moshe Rabbeinu later sealed with the giving of the Torah.

The great tragedy of the generation of Enosh was not that they denied Hashem; they knew He was the Creator. Their mistake was looking at the "stars and spheres", the natural systems, the powerful forces, and the influential people of the world, and deciding that they needed to flatter and serve these middlemen to get what they wanted. They believed that honoring the king's ministers was the way to honor the King. Over time, this subtle shift in focus completely erased the memory of Hashem from their hearts, leaving them in total darkness.

We often make the very same mistake in our daily lives. When we worry about our parnassah, our health, or our standing, we are tempted to put all our energy into flattering the "middlemen." We might think we must bow to the demands of the market, appease influential people at the expense of our values, or rely entirely on natural means. We tell ourselves we still believe in Hashem, but our focus and trust have shifted to the creation rather than the Creator.

Like Avraham Avinu, who looked past the stars and realized there must be a single Guide directing the wheel, we have to look past the natural causes in our lives. True emunah means knowing that no boss, no doctor, and no financial system has any power of its own. They are merely tools in the hand of Hashem. When we direct our hearts solely to Him, we free ourselves from the anxiety of serving the world.

Today, when you find yourself worrying about a natural obstacle or trying to please someone for your own success, stop and remind yourself: "This person or situation is just a star in the sky. Only Hashem runs the world." Direct your request and your trust to Him alone.