

הלכות תלמוד תורה • פרק שלישי

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

CHAPTER PREVIEW

In this chapter, the Rambam takes us into the very heart of the greatness of Torah study, showing us how the crown of Torah stands supreme above all other crowns in Klal Yisrael. We will learn how the Torah is the inheritance of every single Yid, waiting for anyone who is willing to put in the effort to acquire it, and how a talmid chacham takes precedence in honor over even a Kohen Gadol who is an am ha'aretz.

The chapter also guides us in how to balance our learning with the performance of other mitzvos. The Rambam lays down the practical halachic guidelines for when we must interrupt our learning to perform a mitzvah and when we must remain engrossed in our holy study, based on whether the mitzvah can be performed by others.

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

הליא

שְׁלֹשָׁה כְּתָרִים וּמַעֲלַת כְּתָר תּוֹרָה

Halacha 1 • The Three Crowns and the Supreme Greatness of the Crown of Torah

בְּשִׁלֹּשָׁה כְּתָרִים נִכְתְּרוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל. כְּתָר תּוֹרָה וְכְתָר כֹּהֲנָה

priesthood and the crown of Torah the crown of Israel were crowned crowns With three

וְכְתָר מַלְכוּת. כְּתָר כֹּהֲנָה זָכָה בּוֹ אַהֲרֹן שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר בַּמִּדְבָּר כֹּה יִג

13 25 Numbers as it is said Aaron · merited priesthood The crown of royalty and the crown of

"וְהָיְתָה לוֹ וּלְזֶרְעוֹ אַחֲרָיו בְּרִית כֹּהֲנֵת עוֹלָם". כְּתָר מַלְכוּת

royalty The crown of eternal priesthood a covenant of after him and for his descendants for him And it shall be

זָכָה בּוֹ דָּוִד שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר תִּהְיֶה פֶּטַח לוֹ "זֶרְעוֹ לְעוֹלָם יִהְיֶה וְכִסְאוֹ כַּשֶּׁמֶשׁ

like the sun and his throne shall be forever His seed 37 89 Psalms as it is said Dovid · merited

נִגְדִי". כְּתָר תּוֹרָה הָרִי מָנַח וְעוֹמֵד וּמוֹכֵן לְכָל יִשְׂרָאֵל. שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר

as it is said Jew for every and ready and standing placed behold it is Torah The crown of before Me

דְּבָרִים לֵגַד "תּוֹרָה צִוָּה לָנוּ מֹשֶׁה מִוְרָשָׁה קִהְלַת יַעֲקֹב". כָּל

Any Yaakov the congregation of an inheritance of Moshe us commanded Torah 4 33 Deuteronomy

מִי שִׁירָצָה יָבוֹא וְיִטַּל. שְׂמָא תֵּאֵמַר שְׂאוֹתֶם הַכְּתָרִים גְּדוּלִים מִכְּתָר

than the crown of are greater crowns that those you say Lest and take let him come desires who

תּוֹרָה. הָרִי הוּא אוֹמֵר מִשְׁלִי ח טו "בִּי מְלָכִים יִמְלְכוּ וְרוֹזְנִים יַחְקִקוּ צֶדֶק"

justice decree and rulers reign kings By me 15 8 Proverbs says it behold Torah

מִשְׁלִי ח טז "בִּי שָׂרִים יִשְׁרוּ". הָא לְמִדָּת שְׁפָתַי תּוֹרָה גְּדוּל

is greater Torah that the crown of you have learned Behold rule princes By me 16 8 Proverbs

משניהם:

than both of them

This halacha establishes that while priesthood and royalty are inherited lineages, the crown of Torah is open to every Jew and surpasses them both.

ה'ב

קדימת תלמיד חכם ממזר לכהן גדול עם הארץ

Halacha 2 · Precedence of a Torah Scholar Mamzer Over an Unlearned High Priest

אמרו חכמים ממזר תלמיד חכם קודם לכהן גדול עם הארץ

person who is an unlearned Gadol a Kohen precedes of a Sage who is a disciple a mamzer the Sages Said

שנאמר משלי ג טו "יקרה היא מפנינים". מפנין גדול שנכנס

who enters Gadol more than a Kohen more than pearls" it is "Precious 15 3 Mishlei as it is said

לפני ולפנים:

sanctuary into the innermost

This halacha establishes that Torah knowledge elevates a person's spiritual status and priority above even the highest hereditary priesthood.

ה'ג

מעלת תלמוד תורה כנגד כל המצוות

Halacha 3 · The Greatness of Torah Study as Equivalent to All Mitzvos

אין לה מצוה בכל המצוות כלין שהיא שקולה כנגד תלמוד תורה

Torah the study of against is equal that it all of them the mitzvos among all a mitzvah to you There is not

אלא תלמוד תורה כנגד כל המצוות כלין שהתלמוד מביא לידי

to the hands of brings because the study all of them the mitzvos all is against Torah the study of rather

מעשה. לפיכך התלמוד קודם למעשה בכל מקום:

place in every to deed precedes the study therefore deed

Torah study is equivalent to all other mitzvos combined because study ultimately leads to proper action.

ה'ד

קדימות תלמוד תורה לעשיית מצוה

Halacha 4 · Priority of Torah Study Over the Performance of a Mitzvah

היה לפניו עשיית מצוה ותלמוד תורה. אם אפשר למצוה

for the mitzvah it is possible if Torah and study of a mitzvah the performance of before him There was

להעשות על ידי אחרים לא יפסיק תלמודו. ואם לא יעשה

he shall perform not and if his study interrupt he shall not others the hands of by to be done

המצוה ויחזור לתלמודו:

to his study and return the mitzvah

Torah study is only interrupted for a mitzvah that cannot be performed by others.

ה'ה

דין התלמוד תחלה ועסק התורה שלא לשמה

תחלת דינו של אדם אינו נדון אלא על התלמוד ואחר כך על
 on that and after the study on except judged is not a person · the judgment of The beginning of
 שאר מעשיו. לפיכך אמרו חכמים לעולם יעסק אדם בתורה
 in the Torah a person should occupy himself always the Sages said therefore his deeds the rest of
 בין לשמה בין שלא לשמה שמתוך שלא לשמה בא לשמה:
 for its sake comes for its sake not for from within for its sake not whether for its sake whether

This halacha establishes that a person is judged first on their Torah study, and therefore one should study even with ulterior motives, as this eventually leads to studying for its own sake.

הל"ו

הדרך הראויה לקניית כתר תורה

Halacha 6 · The Proper Path to Acquire the Crown of Torah

מי שנשא לבו לקיים מצוה זו כראוי ולהיות מכתר בכתר תורה.
 Torah with the crown of crowned and to be properly this mitzvah inspires him heart whose One
 לא יסיח דעתו לדברים אחרים. ולא ישים על לבו שיקנה
 that he will acquire his heart upon should he set and not other to matters his mind should divert not
 תורה עם העשר והכבוד כאחת. משנה אבות ו ד "כך היא דרכה של
 of the path is such 4 6 Avos Mishnah as one and honor wealth with Torah
 תורה. פת במלח תאכל ומים במשורה תשתה ועל הארץ תישן
 you shall sleep the ground and upon you shall drink by measure and water you shall eat with salt bread Torah
 וחי צער תחיה ובתורה אתה עמל". ולא עליך הדבר לגמור
 to complete the matter upon you and not toil you and in Torah you shall live deprivation and a life of
 ולא אתה בן חורין לבטל ממנה. ואם הרבית תורה הרבית
 you have increased Torah you have increased and if from it to desist freedom a son of you and not
 שכר. והשכר לפי הצער:
 the pain is according to and the reward reward

The Rambam outlines the single-minded devotion and simple lifestyle required to truly acquire Torah knowledge.

הל"ז

קביעות עתים לתורה ואסור דחיתה

Halacha 7 · Making Torah Study Fixed and the Prohibition of Delaying It

שמיא תאמר עד שאקבץ ממון אחזר ואקרא. עד שאקנה מה שאני
 that I what that I buy until and I will study I will return money that I gather until you will say Perhaps
 צריך ואפנה מעסקי ואחזר ואקרא. אם תעלה מחשבה זו על
 upon this thought arises If and I will study and I will return from my business and I will be free need
 לבך אין אתה זוכה לכתרה של תורה לעולם. אלא עשה תורתך קבע
 fixed your Torah make Rather forever Torah of to the crown will merit you not your heart

וּמִלֹּאכֶתָּךְ עֲרָאִי מִשְׁנֵה אֲבוֹת ב ד וְלֹא תֹאמַר "לִכְשָׁפְנָה אֲשֶׁנָּה שְׂמָא
perhaps I will study when I am free say and do not four two Avos Mishnah temporary and your work
לֹא תִפְנֶה":
you will be free not

The Rambam warns against delaying Torah study for financial pursuits, emphasizing that one must make Torah primary and work secondary.

ה'ל' ח

הַתּוֹרָה אֵינָה מְצוּיָה בְּגִסֵּי הָרוּחַ וּבְסוֹחְרִים

Halacha 8: Torah is Not Found in the Proud or in Businessmen

כָּתוּב בַּתּוֹרָה גִּמְרָא עִירּוּבִין נָה א "לֹא בַשָּׁמַיִם הִיא וְלֹא מֵעֵבֶר לַיָּם
the sea across and not is it in the heavens Not a 55 Eruvin Gemara in the Torah It is written
הִיא". לֹא בַשָּׁמַיִם הִיא לֹא בְּגִסֵּי הָרוּחַ הִיא מְצוּיָה וְלֹא בְּמַהֲלָכֵי
in those who travel and not found is it of spirit in the proud not is it in the heavens Not is it
מֵעֵבֶר לַיָּם הִיא. לְפִיכָךְ אָמְרוּ חֲכָמִים מִשְׁנֵה אֲבוֹת ב ה "לֹא כָּל
every Not 5 2 Avos Mishnah the Sages said Therefore is it the sea across
הַמְרַבֶּה בְּסוֹחְרָה מַחֲכִים". וְצוּר חֲכָמִים הָיָה מִמַּעַט בְּעֵסֶק
in business minimizing Be the Sages And commanded becomes wise in business one who increases
וְעִסֵּק בַּתּוֹרָה:
with the Torah and occupy yourself

The Rambam explains that Torah study requires humility and a minimization of business pursuits.

ה'ל' ט

הַתּוֹרָה נִמְשָׁלָה לַמַּיִם וְהַעֲנָנָה הַנִּדְרָשֶׁת לְלִמּוּדָהּ

Halacha 9: Torah is Compared to Water and the Humility Required to Acquire It

דְּבָרֵי תּוֹרָה נִמְשָׁלוּ כַּמַּיִם שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר יִשְׁעִיה נָה א "הוּא כָּל צָמֵא לֵכוּ
go who is thirsty everyone Ho 1 55 Yeshayahu as it is said to water are compared Torah The words of
לַמַּיִם". לוֹמַר לָךְ מַה מַּיִם אֵינָם מִתְכַּנְּסִין בְּמָקוֹם מְדֻרָּן אֶלָּא נִזְחָלִין
flows but a slope in a place of collect does not water just as to you to say to the water
מֵעָלָיו וּמִתְקַבְּצִים בְּמָקוֹם אֲשֶׁבוֹרָן כֶּךָ דְּבָרֵי תּוֹרָה אֵינָם נִמְצָאִים
found are not Torah the words of so a depression in a place of and gathers from upon it
בְּגִסֵּי הָרוּחַ וְלֹא בְּלֵב כָּל גִּבְהָ לֵב אֶלָּא בְּדַכָּא וּשְׁפַל רוּחַ
spirit and lowly of in the humble but heart haughty of any in the heart of and not spirit in the haughty of
שֶׁמֶתְאַבֵּק בְּעֶפֶר רַגְלֵי הַחֲכָמִים וּמִסִּיר הַתַּאֲוֹת וְתַעֲנוּגֵי הַזְּמַן
the time and pleasures of the desires and removes the Sages the feet of in the dust of who makes himself
dusty
מִלְּבוּ וְעוֹשֶׂה מְלָאכָה בְּכָל יוֹם מֵעַט כְּדֵי חֲיָיו אִם לֹא הָיָה לוֹ
to him there was not if his sustenance sufficient for a little day in every melacha and does from his heart
מַה יֵּאכַל וְשָׁאֵר יוֹמוֹ וְלֵילּוֹ עוֹסֵק בַּתּוֹרָה:
with the Torah he occupies himself and his night his day and the rest of he will eat what

הלי

האסור להנות מדברי תורה והחייב לעסוק במלאכה

Halacha 10 · The Prohibition of Benefiting from Torah and the Obligation to Work

כָּל הַמְּשִׁים עַל לְבוֹ שְׂיַעֲסֵק בְּתוֹרָה וְלֹא יַעֲשֶׂה מְלָאכָה וְיִתְפָּרֵנס
and will be sustained work do and not in Torah that he will engage his heart upon who places Anyone
מִזֶּה הַצְדָּקָה הָרִי זֶה חָלַל אֶת הַשֵּׁם וּבָזָה אֶת הַתּוֹרָה וְכָבָה
and extinguishes the Torah — and dishonors the Name — desecrates this one behold charity from
מֵאוֹר הַדֵּת וְגֵרָם רָעָה לְעַצְמוֹ וְנָטַל חַיּוֹ מִן הָעוֹלָם הַבֹּא. לְפִי
because to come the world from his life and removes to himself evil and causes the faith from the light of
שְׁאֵסוֹר לְהֵנוֹת מִדְּבָרֵי תוֹרָה בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה. אָמְרוּ חֲכָמִים מִשְׁנֵה אֲבוֹת ד'
4 Avos Mishnah the Sages They said this in the world Torah from words of to benefit it is forbidden
ה "כָּל הַנֶּהֱנֶה מִדְּבָרֵי תוֹרָה נָטַל חַיּוֹ מִן הָעוֹלָם". וְעוֹד צִוּ
they commanded And further the world from his life removes Torah from words of who benefits Anyone 5
וְאָמְרוּ מִשְׁנֵה אֲבוֹת ד' ה "אַל תַּעֲשֶׂם עֲטָרָה לְהַתְגַּדֵּל בָּהֶן וְלֹא קָרָדִם
an axe nor with them to magnify oneself a crown make them Do not 5 4 Avos Mishnah and said
לְחַפֵּר בָּהֶן". וְעוֹד צִוּ וְאָמְרוּ מִשְׁנֵה אֲבוֹת א י "אָהֵב אֶת
— Love 10 1 Avos Mishnah and said they commanded And further with them to chop
הַמְּלָאכָה וּשְׂנָא אֶת הַרְבָּנוֹת", מִשְׁנֵה אֲבוֹת ב ב "וְכָל תּוֹרָה שְׂאִין עִמָּה
with it that is not Torah And all 2 2 Avos Mishnah the Rabbinat — and hate the work
מְלָאכָה סוּפָה בְּטִלָּה וְגוֹרֶרֶת עוֹן". וְסוּף אָדָם זֶה שְׂיֵהָא מְלָסְטֵם אֶת
— rob is that he will this man And the end of sin and drags is nullified its end work
הַבְּרִיּוֹת:
the people

The Rambam strongly decries using Torah knowledge for financial gain or relying on charity instead of working for a livelihood.

הלי יא

המעלה הגדולה של המתפרנס מיגיע כפיו

Halacha 11 · The Great Virtue of Earning a Livelihood from One's Own Toil

מַעֲלָה גְדוֹלָה הִיא לְמִי שֶׁהוּא מִתְפָּרֵנס מִמַּעֲשֵׂה יָדָיו. וּמֵדַת חֲסִידִים
pious ones of and the trait of his hands from the work of sustains himself who is for one it great A virtue
הָרֵאשׁוֹנִים הִיא. וּבָזָה זֹכָה לְכָל כְּבוֹד וְטוֹבָה שֶׁבְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה
this that is in the world and goodness honor all he merits and through this it is the early generations
וְלְעוֹלָם הַבֹּא שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר תִּהְיֶינָה קִכָּה ב "יָגִיעַ כַּפֶּיךָ כִּי תֹאכֵל
you eat when your hands The toil of 2 128 Tehillim as it is said to come and for the world
אֲשֶׁרֶיךָ וְטוֹב לָךְ" מִשְׁנֵה אֲבוֹת ו ד "אֲשֶׁרֶיךָ בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה
this in the world Praiseworthy are you 4 6 Avos Mishnah for you and it is good praiseworthy are you

וְטוֹב לָךְ לָעוֹלָם הַבֶּא "שְׂכָלוֹ טוֹב:

good which is entirely to come in the world for you and it is good

The Rambam extols the virtue of self-reliance and earning a livelihood through honest labor, as practiced by the early pious Sages.

ה'י"ב

עֲמַל וּמִסִּירוֹת נַפֶּשׁ בְּתִלְמוּד תּוֹרָה

Halacha 12 · Toil, Self-Sacrifice, and Vocalization in the Study of Torah

אֵין דְּבָרֵי תּוֹרָה מִתְקַיְמִין בְּמִי שֶׁמְרַפָּה עַצְמוֹ עָלֶיהָ. וְלֹא בְּאֵלוֹ שְׁלוּמֵי דִין

who study in those and not upon them himself who slackens in one are established Torah words of not

מִתּוֹךְ עֲדוּן וּמִתּוֹךְ אֲכִילָה וּשְׂתֵיָהּ. אֶלֶּא בְּמִי שֶׁמִּמִּית עַצְמוֹ עָלֶיהָ וּמַצְעֵר

and afflicts upon them himself who kills in one but and drinking eating and from pleasure from

גּוּפוֹ תָּמִיד וְלֹא יִתֵּן שְׁנָה לְעֵינָיו וּלְעַפְעָפָיו תְּנוּמָה. אָמְרוּ חֲכָמִים דֶּרֶךְ

by way of the Sages said slumber and to his eyelids to his eyes sleep will give and not constantly his body

רָמְזוּ בַּמְדָּבָר יֵט יָד "זֹאת הַתּוֹרָה אָדָם כִּי יָמוּת בְּאֶהֱלָה" אֵין הַתּוֹרָה

the Torah not in a tent" he dies when a man the Torah "this is 14 19 Bamidbar allusion

מִתְקַיֶּמֶת אֶלֶּא בְּמִי שֶׁמִּמִּית עַצְמוֹ בְּאֶהֱלָה חֲכָמִים. וְכֵן אָמַר שְׁלֹמֹה

Shlomo said and so the Sages in the tents of himself who kills in one except is established

בְּחֻכְמָתוֹ מִשְׁלֵי כֹד י "הִתְרַפִּיתָ בְּיוֹם צָרָה צָר כְּחֻכָּה". וְעוֹד אָמַר

said and further your strength" narrow is distress in a day of "you slackened 10 24 Mishlei in his wisdom

קָהֵלֶת ב ט "אִף חֻכְמָתִי עֲמָדָה לִי" חֻכְמָה שֶׁלְּמִדָּתִי בְּאַף הִיא עֲמָדָה לִי.

for me stood it in anger that I learned wisdom for me" stood my wisdom "even 9 2 Koheles

אָמְרוּ חֲכָמִים בְּרִית כְּרוּתָה שְׂכָל הֵיגַע בְּתוֹרָתוֹ בְּבֵית הַמְּדָרֶשׁ לֹא

not study in the house of in his Torah who wearies that anyone is made a covenant the Sages said

בְּמַהֲרָה הוּא מְשַׁכַּח. וְכָל הֵיגַע בְּתִלְמוּדוֹ בְּצִנְעָה מְחֻכָּם שְׁנֵאמַר

as it is said becomes wise in private in his study who wearies and anyone forgets he quickly

מִשְׁלֵי יֵא ב "וְאֵת צְנוּעִים חֻכְמָה". וְכָל הַמְּשַׁמִּיעַ קוּלוֹ בְּשַׁעַת

at the time of his voice who makes heard and anyone is wisdom" the modest "and with 2 11 Mishlei

תִּלְמוּדוֹ תִּלְמוּדוֹ מִתְקַיֵּם בְּיָדוֹ. אֲבָל הַקּוֹרֵא בְּלֶחֶשׁ בְּמַהֲרָה הוּא שׁוֹכַח:

forgets he quickly in a whisper one who reads but in his hand is established his study his study

This halacha outlines the physical dedication, humility, and vocal study required to permanently acquire and retain Torah knowledge.

ה'י"ג

חֲשִׁיבוֹת לְמוֹד תּוֹרָה כְּלִילָה וְהַעֲנֵשׁ עַל כְּשׁוּלָה

Halacha 13 · The Supreme Importance of Nighttime Torah Study and the Severity of Neglecting It

אִף עַל פִּי שֶׁמִּצְוָה לְלַמֵּד בְּיוֹם וּבְלִילָה אֵין אָדָם לֵמֵד רַב חֻכְמָתוֹ

his wisdom most of acquires a person not and by night by day to study that it is a mitzvah though . Even

אֶלֶּא כְּלִילָה. לְפִיכָךְ מִי שֶׁרָצָה לְזַכּוֹת בְּכֹתֶר הַתּוֹרָה יִזָּהֵר בְּכָל

with all should be careful the Torah the crown of to merit desires whoever therefore at night except

לִילוֹתָיו וְלֹא יֵאָבֵד אֶפְלוּ אֶחָד מֵהֶן בְּשֵׁנָה וְאָכִילָה וּשְׂתִיָּה
 and conversation and drinking and eating to sleep of them one even lose and not his nights
 וְכִיּוֹצֵא בָּהֶן אֵלָּא בְּתִלְמוּד תּוֹרָה וְדִבְרֵי חֻכָּמָה. אָמְרוּ חֻכָּמִים אֵין
 there is no the Sages said wisdom and words of Torah in study of except with them and the like
 רִנָּה שֶׁל תּוֹרָה אֵלָּא בְּלֵילָה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר אֵיכָּה ב יט "קוּמִי רִנֵּי בְּלֵילָה".
 at night sing out Arise 19 2 Eichah as it is said at night except Torah of song
 וְכָל הָעוֹסֵק בַּתּוֹרָה בְּלֵילָה חוּט שֶׁל חֶסֶד נִמָּשֵׁךְ עָלָיו בַּיּוֹם
 by day over him is extended favor of a strand at night with Torah who occupies himself and anyone
 שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר תְּהִילִים מִב ט "יוֹמָם יֵצֵהָ ה' חֶסְדּוֹ וּבְלֵילָה שִׁירָה עִמִּי
 is with me His song and at night His kindness Hashem He ordains By day 9 42 Tehillim as it is said
 תִּפְקֶלָה לֹאֵל חַיִּי". וְכָל בֵּית שְׂאִין נִשְׁמָעִים בּו דִּבְרֵי תּוֹרָה בְּלֵילָה
 at night Torah words of in it heard in which is not house and any my life to the God of a prayer
 אֵשׁ אוֹכֵלָתוֹ שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר אִיּוֹב כ כו "כָּל חֹשֶׁךְ טָמוּן לְצִפּוֹנָיו תִּאָּכְלֵהוּ אֵשׁ
 a fire shall consume him for his treasures is hidden darkness All 26 20 Iyov as it is said consumes it fire
 לֹא נִפָּח". בַּמִּדְבָּר טו לֹא "כִּי דָּבָר ה' בָּזָה" זֶה שֶׁלֹּא הִשְׁגִּיחַ
 pay attention who does not this he has despised Hashem the word of Because 31 15 Bamidbar blown not
 עַל דִּבְרֵי תּוֹרָה כָּל עֶקֶר. וְכֵן כָּל שֶׁאִפְשָׁר לוֹ לְעֹסֵק בַּתּוֹרָה
 with Torah to occupy himself for him for whom it is possible anyone and likewise all at Torah words of to
 וְאֵינוֹ עוֹסֵק אוֹ שֶׁקָּרָא וְשָׁנָה וּפָרַשׁ לְהִבְלִי עוֹלָם וְהֵנִיחַ
 and left the world to the vanities of and turned away and studied who read or occupy himself and he does not
 תִּלְמוּדוֹ וְזָנְחוּ הָרִי זֶה בְּכָלל בּוֹזֵה דָּבָר ה'. אָמְרוּ
 said Hashem the word of one who despises is in the category of this one behold and abandoned it his study
 חֻכָּמִים כָּל הַמְּבַטֵּל אֶת הַתּוֹרָה מֵעֶשֶׂר סוּפּוֹ לְבִטְלָה מֵעֲנִי וְכָל
 and whoever from poverty is to neglect it his end from wealth the Torah — neglects whoever the Sages
 הַמְּקִיִּים אֶת הַתּוֹרָה מֵעֲנִי סוּפּוֹ לְקִיּוּמָהּ מֵעֶשֶׂר. וְעֲנִין זֶה מְפָרֵשׁ הוּא
 it explicit this and this matter from wealth is to maintain it his end from poverty the Torah — maintains
 בַּתּוֹרָה, הָרִי הוּא אוֹמֵר דְּבָרִים כַּח מִז "תַּחַת אֲשֶׁר לֹא עָבַדְתָּ אֶת ה'
 Hashem — you served not that Because 47 28 Devarim says it behold in the Torah
 אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּשִׂמְחָה וּבְטוֹב לֵב מְרַב כָּל דְּבָרִים כַּח מִח
 48 28 Devarim everything from an abundance of heart and with goodness of with joy your God
 "וְעָבַדְתָּ אֶת אֱיִבֶיךָ". וְאוֹמֵר דְּבָרִים ח ב "לְמַעַן עֲנִיתֶךָ" דְּבָרִים ח טז
 16 8 Devarim to afflict you In order 2 8 Devarim and it says your enemies — And you shall serve
 "לְהִיטְבֶּךָ בְּאַחֲרִיתֶךָ":
 in your end To do you good

The Rambam explains that a person acquires the majority of their wisdom through nighttime study, and warns against neglecting Torah study when one has the opportunity to learn.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The Rambam begins by explaining that while the crowns of priesthood and royalty were given to Aaron and Dovid respectively, the crown of Torah is set aside for every Jew to acquire through diligent effort. Because the Torah is more precious than anything else, the study of Torah is equated to all the other mitzvos combined, as study ultimately leads to proper deed. Practically, if a Yid is learning and is confronted with a mitzvah that can be performed by someone else, he should not interrupt his learning; however, if there is no one else available to perform the mitzvah, he must interrupt his study to fulfill Hashem's will.

לְמַעֲשֶׂה WHAT TO TAKE HOME

My dear talmid, look at the beautiful words of the Rambam. The crown of priesthood was given to Aaron and his children; the crown of royalty was given to Dovid HaMelech and his descendants. But the crown of Torah? It is not a closed dynasty. It is sitting in the corner, waiting, ready for any single Yid who wants to come and take it. It does not matter where you come from or what your background is. The Rambam tells us that even a *manzer* who is a talmid *chacham* takes precedence over an ignorant *Kohen Gadol* who enters the Holy of Holies. The crown of Torah is yours for the taking, but it requires you to step forward and claim it.

How do we claim it? The Rambam gives us the secret: "Make your Torah fixed and your work temporary." The yetzer hara loves to whisper, "Just wait until I finish this business deal, or until I get my finances in order, then I will sit down and learn properly." Do not fall into this trap! If you wait until you are free, you may never be free. The Torah is compared to water, which only flows down to the lowest place. It does not stay with the haughty or those who seek luxury and ease. It rests with the humble, with those who are willing to squeeze themselves, to minimize their worldly involvements, and to put their learning first.

True acquisition of Torah comes when a person is willing to exert himself, especially in the quiet hours of the night when the world is asleep. The Sages tell us that the sweet song of Torah is heard most clearly at night. When you make sacrifices for your learning, even small ones, that Torah becomes a part of your very essence. It is not about angelic perfection; it is about a real, working Yid choosing to carve out holy time from the physical demands of this world.

Today, do not say "when I have time, I will learn." Instead, set a fixed, unbreakable time for your learning today, even if it is just fifteen minutes, and treat it as the most important appointment on your calendar, letting nothing else push it aside.