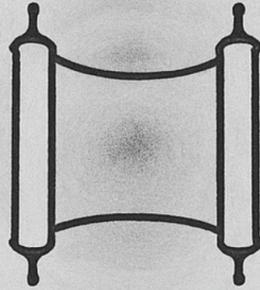


בס"ד

Reb Meir of Premishlan

Divrie Meir

Parshas Yisro



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וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה לְחַתָּנוּ כִּי יָבֹא אֵלַי הָעָם לְדַרְשׁ אֱלֹהִים יְהוָה, טו

Moses said to his father-in-law, "For the people come to me to seek God." (Exodus 18:15)

The holy Rabbi, our teacher, Rabbi Meir of Premishlan, may his merit protect us, explained the verse:

פֶּרֶשׁ הַרֵב הַקְדוֹשׁ מוֹרֵנוּ הַרֵב מְאִיר, מְפָרְעֵמִישְׁלָאן, זְכוּתוֹ יָגֵן עָלֵינוּ,

"And Moshe said to his father-in-law, 'For the people come to me to seek God'" (Exodus 18:15).

פְּרוּשׁ הַפְּסוּק: "וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה לְחַתָּנוּ: כִּי יָבֹא אֵלַי הָעָם לְדַרְשׁ אֱלֹהִים" (שְׁמוֹת י"ח, ט"ו)

That is, when they come to me in the aspect of "the people"—meaning regarding material concerns—

הֵינּוּ, כִּי יָבֹא אֵלַי בְּבַחֲיַנַּת "הָעָם"—דְּהֵינּוּ, עֲנִינֵי גִשְׁמִיּוֹת—

then I attach them to "Meir'l"—that is, I connect them to the light—

אֲזִי 'קְלַעֲבֵט זַיִיא אֵן מְאִירִיל" [מְדַבֵּק אוֹתָם לְאוֹר [מְאִיר'ל],

"to seek God"—so that they return home with fear of Heaven,

לְדַרְשׁ אֱלֹהִים"—אֲזִי זַיִיא פִּידְעֵן אֶהְיִים יִרְאַת שָׁמַיִם,

and conduct their household with fear of Heaven.

וְשִׁנְהִיגוּ בְּבֵיתָם יִרְאַת שָׁמַיִם.

[NOTE Summary:

Rabbi Meir of Premishlan offers a soul-stirring interpretation of the verse (Exodus 18:15), “For the people come to me to seek God.” He explains that when people approach with mundane, material concerns—as “the people” (הָעָם)—he doesn’t merely give practical advice. Instead, he attaches them to “Meir’l”—a reference to his own inner light or spiritual essence. This connection uplifts them, subtly reorienting their worldly concerns toward Godliness. The result: they return home not only with answers, but with newfound fear of Heaven (Yiras Shamayim), which transforms their daily life and home into a sanctuary of reverence.

Practical Takeaway:

Every encounter—even over mundane matters—can become a spiritual elevation. Whether giving advice, answering a question, or helping someone through their struggles, we can infuse the interaction with spiritual light and direct them toward awe of Heaven. The goal is not just to solve a problem, but to elevate the soul.

Chassidic Story:

One time, a distraught villager came to Rabbi Meir of Premishlan, asking for a blessing regarding a business loss. Reb Meir said nothing at first—he simply looked deeply at the man, then gently placed his hand on his shoulder. “You’re worried about your losses,” Reb Meir finally said. “But have you remembered that your home must still be full of fear of Heaven?” The man, surprised by the shift in focus, broke down in tears. Years later, he would recount, “That day, I didn’t just find comfort—I found direction. Our home became different from then on.” **END NOTE]**

Rabbi Meir of Premishlan

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לא תשא את שם ה' אלהיך לשוא כי לא ינקה ה' את אשר ישא את שמו לשוא כ, ז

Do not take the name of Hashem, your God, in vain, for Hashem will not absolve one who takes His name in vain. (Exodus 20:7)

"You shall not take the name of Hashem, your God, in vain, for Hashem will not cleanse one who takes His name in vain." (Exodus 20:7)

לא תשא את שם ה' אלהיך לשוא, כי לא ינקה ה'
'ה' את אשר ישא שמו לשוא" שמות כ', ז

Rabbi Meir of Premishlan asked: Why is it that for all sins, a person can be cleansed when he performs complete repentance, but regarding a false oath, the Torah states, "for He will not cleanse"? This is truly perplexing.

והקשה רבי מאיר מפרימישלאן: למה מכל העבירות יתנקה האדם בעשות תשובה שלמה, רק בשבועת לשוא פתוב בתורה "כי לא ינקה" ופלא הוא.

He explained with the following parable: If a person commits a sin and, for example, eats non-kosher food, Heaven records in the Book of Remembrance: "So-and-so ate non-kosher food."

והסביר הדבר במשל: אם אדם עושה עברה ואכל חזיר חס ושלום, נכתב בספר הזכרונות: "פלוגי אכל חזיר."

However, if he repents completely, the entire line is erased, leaving no trace.

ואם עושה תשובה שלמה, מוחקים מספר הזכרונות את כל השטה, ולא נפר שום רשע.

But if a person swears falsely using the name of Hashem, Heaven writes in the Book of Remembrance: "So-and-so swore falsely in Hashem's name."

אבל אם אדם נשבע בשם ה' לשוא, נכתב בספר: "פלוגי נשבע בשם ה' לשוא."

Even if he repents completely all his life, they cannot erase the entire line from the Book of Remembrance,

ואף אם עשה תשובה שלמה כל ימיו, אינם יכולים למחק כל השטה מספר הזכרונות,

because it is forbidden to erase the name of Hashem, blessed be He.

כי אסור למחק את שם ה' ברוך הוא.

Therefore, His name must remain in the record, and this is the meaning of "for He will not cleanse."

ומכרח להשאיר השם בספר, ונהו כוננת הכתוב: "כי לא ינקה."

[NOTE Summary:

Rabbi Meir of Premishlan addresses the perplexing exception found in the Torah: for most sins, sincere teshuvah (repentance) wipes the slate clean, yet for a false oath, the Torah states, "He will not cleanse." Why the harshness? He explains this with a parable: for any sin—say, eating non-kosher—the act is recorded in Heaven's Book of Remembrance, but full teshuvah erases the entire line. However, if one swears falsely using Hashem's name, that entry includes the holy Name itself. And since it's forbidden to erase the Name of Hashem, even sincere repentance cannot delete the line entirely—God's Name must remain, and thus the trace of sin remains. This is the deeper meaning of "He will not cleanse"—not due to lack of Divine mercy, but because of the sanctity of the Name.

Rabbi Meir of Premishlan

Divrie Meir
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Practical Takeaway:

Words carry immense spiritual weight—especially when invoking the Divine Name. Careless speech or swearing, even casually, creates lasting spiritual damage. We must guard our tongues and speak with awareness and reverence, knowing that teshuvah cannot erase every consequence.

Chassidic Story:

It is said that once a man came to Rabbi Meir of Premishlan and asked how he could cleanse his soul after taking an oath in vain during a business quarrel. The Rebbe remained silent for a long time, then sighed deeply and said, “For most stains, Heaven has soap. But when the ink is holy, you cannot scrub it away without also erasing the Name—and that we may not do.” The man burst into tears. “Then is there no hope for me?” he asked. “Hope?” the Rebbe said gently. “There is always hope. But from now on, speak only words that build—so that every word becomes a repair.” **END NOTE]**

לא תִּחְמַד בֵּית רֵעֶךָ לֹא תִחְמַד אִשְׁתִּי רֵעֶךָ וְעַבְדְּךָ וְאִמָּתְךָ וְשׂוֹרוֹ וְחֹמְרוֹ וְכֹל אֲשֶׁר לְרֵעֶךָ כִּי יֵד

Do not covet your fellow’s house; do not covet your fellow’s wife, his servant, his maidservant, his ox, his donkey, or anything that belongs to your fellow. (Exodus 20:14)

**"You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, nor his servant."
(Exodus 20:14)**

לֹא תִחְמַד אִשְׁתִּי רֵעֶךָ וְעַבְדְּךָ. "שמות כ', י"ד"

Rabbi Meir of Premishlan, of blessed memory, explained: Do not covet the servitude of your fellow.

פִּרַשׁ רַבֵּי מֵאִיר מִפְּרֵמִישְׁלָאן ז"ל: שְׁלֹא תִחְמַד אֶת הָעַבְדּוֹת שֶׁל חֲבֵרְךָ.

[NOTE Summary:

Rabbi Meir of Premishlan offers a novel insight into the commandment against coveting. Rather than only referring to physical possessions or people, he interprets "his servant" to mean *your fellow's servitude*—the burdens, challenges, and life circumstances he must carry. Don't envy someone else's situation, even if it appears that they are doing more spiritual work or have a path that seems more honorable or meaningful. Every person's service of God is uniquely tailored to their soul's journey.

Practical Takeaway:

True spiritual growth begins when you stop comparing your journey to someone else's. Your struggles, limitations, and triumphs are exactly what your soul needs. Don't wish for someone else's avodah (service)—embrace your own with joy and trust that it was designed just for you. **END NOTE]**