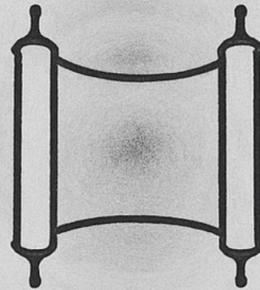


בס"ד

**Rebbe Elimelech  
of Lizhensk  
Parshas Bo**



*Dedicated in Honor of the  
Yahrzeit of*

לע"נ

שָׂרָה מְרִים בֵּית אַבְרָהָם

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# The Rebbe, Rebbe Elimelech of Lizhensk

Noam Elimelech

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## מאמר א

And the Lord said to Moses, “Come to Pharaoh,” etc. The precision is explained explicitly in the holy Zohar: it should have said, “Go to Pharaoh.” And furthermore, what is this giving of a reason, “for I have hardened his heart.”

ויאמר ה' אל-משה בא אל-פרעה כו'. הדקדוק מפרש בזהר הקדוש "לך אל-פרעה" הנה לו לומר. "ועוד מהנה נתינת טעם" כי אני הכבדתי את-לבו.

On the contrary, since He hardened his heart, why should he go for nothing. Surely he will certainly not listen to him.

אדרבה מאחר שהכביד את-לבו למה לו לילך בחנם, הלא בודאי לא ישמע לו.

And it appears to explain, that behold, when the righteous one sees the wonders of the Creator, or when he hears from his fellow the righteous one holy words, then he becomes inflamed in the service of the Creator, may He be blessed and exalted.

ונראה לפרש, דהנה בראות הצדיק נפלאות הבורא או כשישמע מחברו הצדיק דברים קדושים, אזי הוא מתלהב בעבודת הבורא ותברך ויתעלה.

Unlike the wicked: even when he sees wonders, or when the righteous speaks to him one time, then he returns for a short time, but it does not endure within him for any length of time, and he is like a dog that returns to its vomit.

מה-שאי-רן הרשע אף כשרוא נפלאות או שהצדיק מדבר אליו פעם אחת, אזי הוא חוזר לפי שעה אבל אינו מתקיים בקרבו אינה זמן, והוא ככלב שוב אליקאו.

But when the righteous speaks to him day after day, or when he sees the wonders of the Creator day after day, it can endure in his hand for a long time.

אבל כשהצדיק מדבר אליו יום יום או בראותו נפלאות הבורא יום אחר יום, יכול להיות מתקיים בקידו זמן רב.

And this is “Come to Pharaoh,” with constancy, day after day, and not in a temporary manner; therefore it is not said “Go,” which is an expression of something temporary.

וזהו "בא אל-פרעה" בקביעות יום אחר יום ולא בקרף אראי, ולכן לא נאמר "לך" שהוא לשון אראי.

And this is the giving of the reason, “for I have hardened, etc., in order that I place My signs,” meaning: My holy letters, that you will speak to him day after day.

וזהו נתינת הטעם "כי אני הכבדתי כו' למען שיתי אותתי", רצון לומר אותיותי הקדושות שתדבר אליו יום יום.

I will place them “within him,” specifically, meaning that they will endure within him for a long time, and not so when he listens to you the first time, when he will return to his way, as above.

אשים "בקרבו" דיקא, כלומר שיתקדמו בקרבו זמן רב, ולא כן כשישמע אליה בפעם הראשונה יחזור לסורו כנ"ל.

And therefore it is not said “wonders,” to allude that in the word “My signs” there are two meanings: signs in their plain sense and letters, as above.

ולזה לא נאמר "מופתים", לרמז במלת "אותתי" שתי משמעויות, לשון אותות כפשוטו וגם לשון אותיות כנ"ל.

And “so that you will tell in the ears of your son, etc.” Meaning: when the righteous sees the wonders of the Lord one time, his heart becomes inflamed for a long time, and when he returns

ולמען תספר באזני בנך כו", פרוש דהנה כשהצדיק רואה נפלאות ה' פעם אחת אזי מתלהב

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and sees additional wonders, he comes to an added level to tell His greatness, may He be blessed, for generations.

לבו זמן רב, וכשיקחזור ויראה עוד נפלאות אֵזִי בָּא לְמַדְרָגָה יְתֵרָה לְסִפּוּר גְּדוּלוּתָיו יְתִבְרַךְ לְדוֹרֵי דוֹרוֹת.

And it is found that this also is the giving of a reason for why Pharaoh does not listen the first time, “so that you will tell, etc.,” that you will come to an additional level to tell “in the ears of your son” for generations of generations. And this is sufficient.

וְנִמְצָא גַם-זֶה נְתִיבַת טַעַם לָזֶה שֶׁלֹּא יִשְׁמַע אֵלָיֶךָ פְּרִיעָה בַּפֶּעַם הָרִאשׁוֹנָה הוּא "לְמַעַן תִּסְפָּר כּו'", שֶׁתְּבוֹא לְמַדְרָגָה נּוֹסֶפֶת לְסִפּוּר "בְּאָזְנֵי בְנֶךָ" לְדוֹרֵי דוֹרוֹת. וְק"ל

### [NOTE Summary:

In this maamar, Rabbi Elimelech focuses on the precise wording of the verse “Come to Pharaoh” rather than “Go to Pharaoh,” and explains it through a deep psychological and spiritual lens. The core distinction is between an encounter that is temporary and one that is sustained. A righteous person, when exposed even once to divine wonders or holy words, is capable of being permanently stirred and elevated. By contrast, a wicked person, even when exposed to miracles or inspired speech, experiences only a fleeting awakening that quickly dissipates unless the encounter is repeated consistently.

For this reason, the command is “Come to Pharaoh,” implying a continuous, daily engagement rather than a single, isolated mission. The hardening of Pharaoh’s heart is not a deterrent to the mission but its very justification. The goal is not an immediate transformation but the long-term implantation of divine influence through repetition. Rabbi Elimelech reads “My signs” not only as miraculous signs, but also as divine letters, meaning the repeated holy speech addressed to Pharaoh. These words, delivered persistently, are meant to enter “within him” and endure over time, something impossible through a single confrontation.

This also explains why the Torah emphasizes the future telling of the story to one’s children. Each repeated exposure to divine acts does not merely reinforce the previous one but elevates the observer to a higher level of perception and articulation. Pharaoh’s initial resistance thus serves a broader purpose: it enables an ongoing process through which the righteous deepen their own understanding and transmit the greatness of God across generations.

### Practical Takeaway:

Lasting change, whether in oneself or in others, is rarely achieved through a single moment of inspiration. Genuine internalization requires consistency, repetition, and patience. One should not be discouraged by initial resistance or lack of visible results, whether in personal growth, teaching, or influencing others. Even when immediate impact is absent, steady exposure to truth and holiness creates the conditions for enduring transformation, and often elevates the one giving more than the one receiving.

### Chassidic Story:

Rabbi Elimelech of Lizhensk was known for his extraordinary patience in guiding people who seemed, on the surface, unreceptive or resistant to spiritual growth. There is a tradition among his students that he would

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sometimes welcome the same struggling individual day after day, offering the same simple words of encouragement or instruction, even when no immediate change was visible. When questioned as to why he invested so much time in people who appeared unmoved, Rabbi Elimelech reportedly explained that words spoken once may touch only the surface of the soul, but words spoken repeatedly have the power to sink inward and remain.

In one such account, a coarse and skeptical villager would regularly enter Rabbi Elimelech's presence, listen briefly, and leave unchanged. The students were frustrated and felt the effort was wasted. Rabbi Elimelech responded that the man's repeated exposure to holiness, even without visible results, was already reshaping something deep within him. Years later, after the Rebbe's passing, that same villager became known for his quiet piety and devotion, attributing his transformation not to a single turning point but to years of hearing the Rebbe's words again and again. Only with time did they finally take root. **END NOTE]**

### מאמר ב

**“Come to Pharaoh,” etc.** Rashi of blessed memory explained, “and he warned him.” And seemingly, what does Rashi want with this.

בא אל־פַּרְעֹה כו'. פֶּרַשׁ רַשִׁי ז"ל "וְהִתְרַה בּוֹ",  
וּלְכַאוֹרָה מֵהַ בְּעֵי רַשִׁי בְּזֶה.

And it appears to explain, that behold, take this principle in your hand, that the Creator, blessed be He and exalted, may His remembrance be eternal,

וְנִרְאָה לְפָרֵשׁ, דְּהִנֵּה נִקּוּט הָאֵי קָלָלָא בְּיָדָהּ, דְּהַבּוֹרָא  
בְּרוּךְ הוּא וְיִתְעַלֶּה זְכָרוֹ לְנֶצַח

this is His delight, to do good and to bestow to all the worlds and to all the created beings.

זֶהוּ תַעֲנוּגוֹ לְהִיטִיב וְלְהַשְׁפִּיעַ לְכָל הָעוֹלָמוֹת וְלְכָל  
הַבְּרוּאִים,

However, because the bestowal of the Creator, blessed be He, is very great, and it is impossible to receive His bestowal except through a mediator,

אִךְ מִחֲמַת שֶׁהַשְּׁפָעַת הַבּוֹרָא בְּרוּךְ הוּא הִיא רַבָּה  
מְאֹד, וּבִלְתִּי אֶפְשָׁרִי לְקַבֵּל הַשְּׁפָעַתוֹ כִּי אִם עַל־יְדֵי  
מְמוּצָע

that mediator is the righteous one, who receives influence from above, and he bestows to all,

הוּא הַצַּדִּיק הַמְּקַבֵּל הַשְּׁפָעָה מִלְּמַעְלָה וְהוּא מְשַׁפֵּיעַ  
לְכָל,

even to one who is not fitting or qualified to receive, nevertheless he bestows to him.

גַּם לְאִינוֹ הַגּוֹן וּמוֹכֵשׁ לְקַבֵּל אֶת־עַל־פִּי־כֵן הוּא  
מְשַׁפֵּיעַ לוֹ

And it is found that the bestowal which the righteous one bestows is nothing other than performing kindness with the entire world,

וְנִמְצָא הַשְּׁפָעָה שֶׁהַצַּדִּיק מְשַׁפֵּיעַ אִינוֹ אֶלָּא כְּגוֹמֵל  
חֶסֶד עִם כָּל הָעוֹלָם

for he receives influence from above and distributes to all, but the essence is from the Creator, blessed be He.

שֶׁהוּא מְקַבֵּל הַשְּׁפָעָה מִלְּמַעְלָה וּמְחַלֵּק לְכָל, אֲבָל  
הַעֲקָר הוּא מִהַבּוֹרָא בְּרוּךְ הוּא

And this is “To the One who does great wonders alone,” meaning that the Holy One, blessed be He, does wonders with His people Israel only alone.

וְנִהוּ "לְעוֹשֵׂה נִפְלְאוֹת גְּדוֹלוֹת לְבַדּוֹ", פֶּרוּשׁ שֶׁהַקְּדוֹשׁ  
בְּרוּךְ הוּא עוֹשֵׂה נִפְלְאוֹת עִם עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל אִינוֹ אֶלָּא  
לְבַדּוֹ.

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“For His kindness is forever,” meaning that “forever,” that is, the extension of bestowal that comes into the world,

כי לעולם חסדו, פרוש כי "לעולם" כלומר המושכת השפעה הבאה לעולם,

“His kindness,” meaning through the kindness of the righteous one, who performs kindness with every person, as above.

חסדו רצון לומר על ידי חסד של הצדיק שגומל חסד עם כל אדם כנ"ל.

And behold, the righteous one who bestows, when he wishes to receive influence from above, needs to make himself small with great submission,

והנה הצדיק המשפיע ברצונו לקבל השפעה מלמעלה צריך להקטין עצמו בהכנעה גדולה,

and afterward, at the time of his bestowal to the world, he expands himself and broadens himself to bestow to the entire world,

ואחר כך בעת השפעתו לעולם הוא מתפשט עצמו ומתרחב להשפיע לכל העולם,

like a person who spreads himself through all his rooms and upper chambers, to bring into them all that he has, to fill them with all good.

כאדם המתפשט עצמו בכל חדריו ועליותיו להכניס בהם כל אשר לו למלאות אותם כל טוב.

And a hint to this is the letter **צ**, which is a hint to the righteous one who receives and bestows,

ורמז לזה אות צ' הוא רמז על הצדיק המקבל ומשפיע

for the letter **צ** is written nun–yod like this: **צ**, the yod behind the nun,

דאות צ' נכתבת נו"ן יו"ד כזה צ', יו"ד מאחורי נו"ן הנו"ן

and the upper head of the nun is small, and the lower leg is wide,

והראש העליון של הנו"ן הוא קטן והרגל התחתון הוא רחב,

and all this is a hint to the righteous one who receives influence through wisdom, and the yod is wisdom,

וכל זה הוא רמז על הצדיק המקבל השפעה הוא על ידי חכמה והיו"ד הוא חכמה

and the righteous one needs to make himself small and humble at the time of his receiving,

וצריך הצדיק להקטין ולהכניע עצמו בעת קבלתו

as it is written, “And wisdom, from where shall it be found,” meaning one who is in his own eyes like “nothing,”

כמו שכתוב "והחכמה מאין תמצא", פרוש מי שיהא "בעיניו כ"אין"

in this righteous one wisdom will be found, to receive influence from there.

בצדיק הנה תמצא חכמה לקבל משם השפעה

Therefore the upper head of the nun is small, a hint that at the time of receiving his influence from the yod,

ולכן הראש העליון של הנו"ן הוא קטן, רמז בעת קבלתו השפעתו מן היו"ד

he must make himself small, that he be in his own eyes as nothing, as above.

צריך להקטין עצמו שיהיה בעיניו כאין כנ"ל

And the lower leg is wide, a hint as above, meaning that at the time he bestows to the world,

והרגל התחתון הוא רחב, רמז כנ"ל דהיינו בעת שהוא משפיע לעולם

he expands and spreads himself to distribute to all, as above.

הוא מתרחב ומתפשט לחלק לכל כנ"ל

And therefore the face of the nun turns away from the yod,

ולכן מהדר אפיה דנו"ן מן היו"ד

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to hint to that which I wrote, that even to one who is not so fitting to receive,	לְרִמּוֹ לָזֶה שֶׁפִּתְּבִי שָׁגַם לְמִי שֶׁאֵינּוּ הַגּוֹן כְּלִכְפֹּד לְקַבֵּל,
he bestows to him and inclines himself toward him to bestow to him as well.	הוּא מְשַׁפִּיעַ לוֹ וּמְטֵה עַצְמוֹ אֵלָיו לְהִשְׁפִיעַ גַּם לוֹ.
And this is, “Sing to the Lord, for He has done exaltation,” meaning sing to the good Name	וְזֵהוּ "זַמְרוּ ה' כִּי גֵאוֹת עָשָׂה", פְּרוּשׁ זַמְרוּ לְשֵׁם הַטּוֹב
who did and created exaltation as above, that the righteous one spreads and broadens himself	שֶׁעָשָׂה וּבָרָא גֵאוֹת כִּנְ"ל שֶׁהַצַּדִּיק מְתַפְשֵׁט וּמְתַרְחֵב עַצְמוֹ
like a person who exalts himself,	כְּעֵין אָדָם הַמִּתְגַּאֵה,
“this is known in all the land,” meaning that he bestows to the entire land	מִדַּעַת זֹאת כָּכָל הָאָרֶץ", רְצוֹן לִזְמַר שֶׁהוּא מְשַׁפִּיעַ לְכָל הָאָרֶץ
even to one who is not so fitting.	גַּם לְשֶׁאֵינּוּ הַגּוֹן כְּלִכְפֹּד
And according to our way, bestowal is called by the name “wonders,”	"וּלְפִי דְרָכֵינוּ הַשְׁפָּעָה נִקְרָא בְּשֵׁם "נִפְלְאוֹת
meaning the good things that the Holy One, blessed be He, does with His holy people Israel are called wonders.	דְּהֵינּוּ הַטּוֹבוֹת שֶׁהַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרַךְ עוֹשֶׂה עִם עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל הַקְּדוּשִׁים נִקְרָא נִפְלְאוֹת
But that which the Holy One, blessed be He, brings punishments and retribution upon the wicked is called “signs,”	אָבָל מֵהַשְׁקֵדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא מְבִיא פְּרַעֲנִיּוֹת וְעוֹנָשִׁים "עַל הַרְשָׁעִים נִקְרָא "אוֹתוֹת
as it is written, “From the signs of the heavens do not fear,”	"כִּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב "מֵאוֹתוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם אַל תִּירָאוּ
that Israel has no need to fear the signs.	שֶׁאֵין לְיִשְׂרָאֵל לְהִתְיַרֵּא מֵאוֹתוֹת
And also the extension of punishments and evils upon the nations is also through the righteous one,	וְגַם הַמְשָׁכַת עוֹנָשִׁין וְרַעוֹת עַל הָאֻמוֹת הוּא גַם-כֵּן עַל-יְדֵי הַצַּדִּיק
for “from the mouth of the Most High, evils do not go forth.”	"כִּי "מִפִּי עֲלִיוֹן לֹא תֵצֵא הַרַעוֹת
And this is the explanation of the verse, “Great is His glory in Your salvation,”	"וְזֵהוּ פְּרוּשׁ הַפְּסוּק "גָּדוֹל כְּבוֹדוֹ בִּישׁוּעָתְךָ
meaning that the righteous one is enlarged and expanded and his honor is broadened	פְּרוּשׁ שֶׁהַצַּדִּיק נִתְגַּדֵּל וְנִתְפַשֵּׁט וְנִתְרַחֵב כְּבוֹדוֹ
at the time of his bestowal to the world, which is “Your salvation,”	"בְּעַת הַשְׁפָּעָתוֹ לְעוֹלָם, שֶׁזֵּהוּ "ישׁוּעָתְךָ
for that which Israel is filled and satiated with all good is the salvation of the Shechinah.	דְּמָה שִׁישְׂרָאֵל מְלֵאִים וְשָׂבְעִים כָּל טוֹב הִיא הַיְשׁוּעָה לְשִׁכְנָה
And the verse explains, “Majesty and splendor You place upon him, for You set him as blessings forever,”	וּמִפְּרֵשׁ הַכְּתוּב "הוֹד וְהָדָר תְּשִׂיתָה עָלָיו כִּי תְשִׂיתָהוּ "בְּרָכוֹת לְעַד
meaning that You handed over to him the blessings to bless the house of Israel forever.	רְצוֹן לִזְמַר שֶׁמְסַרְתָּ לוֹ הַבְּרָכוֹת לְבָרֵךְ אֶת בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל לְעוֹלָם

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“You gladden him with joy by Your face,” meaning that you also gave the righteous one this level,

תחנהו בשמחה את פניך, פרוש וגם המדרגה  
הזאת נתת לצדיק

that you gladden him through this, that through his holy speech

שאמה משמחו בזה שהוא על-ידי דבורו הקדוש

he draws punishment and evils upon the wicked.

ממשיך עונש ורעות על הרשעים

And this is “Your face,” an expression of anger,

והינו "את פניך" לשון רגז

which the righteous one draws, for from You evils do not go forth.

ממשיך הצדיק כי מאתך לא תצא הרעות

And this is, “And the Lord said to Moses, ‘Come to Pharaoh,’”

"וזהו ויאמר ה' אל-משה בא אל-פרעה

Rashi explained, “and he warned him,” meaning that through your speech

פרש רש"י "והתרה בו", כלומר שעל-ידי דבורך

you will draw upon him the signs.

תמשיך עליו האותות

“For I have hardened, etc.” rather from Me evils do not go forth,

כי אני הכבדתי כו", אלא מאתי לא תצא הרעות

therefore you need to warn him,

לכן צריך אתה להתרות בו

“in order that I place these My signs within him,”

"למען שיתי אותתי אלה בקרבו"

that you will draw upon him the signs,

שאמה תמשיך עליו האותות

for from the mouth of the Most High evils do not go forth.

כי מפי עליון לא תצא הרעה. והבו

Understand.

### [NOTE Summary:

In this maamar, Rabbi Elimelech explains the deeper meaning behind Rashi's comment that Moses “warned” Pharaoh. The explanation is rooted in a fundamental principle of divine flow. The Holy One, blessed be He, desires only to bestow goodness and abundance upon all worlds and all creatures. However, divine influence is too great to be received directly by creation. Therefore, it must pass through an intermediary, namely the tzaddik, who receives abundance from above and distributes it to the world.

The tzaddik serves as a channel, bestowing not only upon those who are worthy, but even upon those who are unfit. Nevertheless, the tzaddik's role is not the source of the flow. The essential source of all influence remains the Creator Himself. This is the meaning of the verse “To the One who does great wonders alone,” emphasizing that the ultimate acts of salvation and blessing are performed by God alone. The phrase “for His kindness is forever” is explained as referring to the continuous extension of divine influence into the world through the kindness of the tzaddik, who distributes what he receives to all.

Rabbi Elimelech then develops a profound model of how the tzaddik functions. When receiving divine influence, the tzaddik must completely diminish himself with humility and submission. When bestowing, however, he must expand himself fully, spreading outward to provide for the entire world. This dynamic is symbolized by the letter צדיק, whose form reflects humility at the top and expansiveness below. The tzaddik

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receives through wisdom, represented by the yod, and must see himself as nothing in order to receive. Yet when he gives, he broadens himself without limit, inclining even toward those who are unworthy.

The maamar further distinguishes between two types of divine manifestations. Beneficial influence bestowed upon Israel is called “wonders,” while punishments and judgments brought upon the wicked are called “signs.” Even these judgments do not originate directly from God, for “from the mouth of the Most High, evil does not go forth.” Rather, they are drawn down through the tzaddik, often through speech. This explains why Moses is commanded to warn Pharaoh. Through Moses’ words, the signs are brought upon Pharaoh, not as an expression of divine cruelty, but as part of the cosmic order in which the tzaddik channels both kindness and judgment into the world.

### Practical Takeaway:

True leadership and spiritual influence require a paradoxical balance. When receiving guidance, insight, or blessing, a person must cultivate deep humility and self-nullification. When giving to others, however, one must expand fully, offering generosity, presence, and responsibility even to those who seem undeserving. At the same time, one must remember that being a conduit does not mean being the source. All good originates from God, and the role of the human being is to transmit it faithfully, without ego or self-importance.

### Chassidic Story:

Rabbi Elimelech of Lizhensk was renowned not only for his teachings but for the way he embodied them. It was said that when people came to him seeking blessing, he would often appear withdrawn and almost diminished, sitting quietly with lowered eyes. Those close to him understood that at that moment he was nullifying himself entirely in order to receive divine influence on behalf of others.

Yet once the blessing was given, his manner changed completely. He became animated, attentive, and expansive, speaking at length and with warmth, even to individuals who were known to be spiritually lax or morally compromised. When questioned by his students as to why he invested such effort in people who seemed unworthy, Rabbi Elimelech explained that the channel must widen below even when the vessel is small above. The more one humbles oneself before Heaven, the more one is obligated to open oneself to others.

There are accounts that some who initially approached him mockingly or skeptically later became deeply transformed, not because of a single dramatic moment, but because they experienced a tzaddik who consistently gave without discrimination while remaining utterly humble before God. In this way, Rabbi Elimelech lived the very teaching he articulated: humility in reception, expansiveness in giving, and unwavering awareness that all blessing flows from the Holy One alone.

**END NOTE]**

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### מאמר ג

Or it may be said, “Come to Pharaoh, etc., in order that I place, etc.” For behold it is written, “I am the Lord who brought you out of the land of Egypt,” and the world asks why the Exodus from Egypt is mentioned more than the creation of the world, which was a greater renewal and a greater beneficence.

But the truth is that the essence of the creation of the world was for the sake of the holy Torah, as it is stated, “In the beginning” meaning for the Torah, which is called beginning, and then at the Exodus from Egypt the renewal of the Torah began.

Therefore He said, “I am the Lord who brought you out,” for this was the essence, that there was the beginning of the Torah, for whose sake the essence of the creation was.

And behold, the Holy One, blessed be He, desires the prayers of the righteous, and sometimes the Lord, blessed be He, decrees a decree so that the righteous one will pray and annul it.

And this is, “Come to Pharaoh, for I have hardened, etc.,” that he should not send Israel, and you will annul this,

“in order that I place My signs,” meaning My letters of the Torah, which would be at the time of their going out of Egypt, when there was then the beginning of the holy Torah. And this is sufficient.

#### [NOTE Summary:

In this maamar, Rabbi Elimelech addresses why the Torah introduces faith in God through the Exodus from Egypt rather than through the creation of the world, even though creation appears to be the greater act. He explains that the true purpose of creation was the Torah itself, as expressed by the teaching that “In the beginning” means “for the sake of the Torah, which is called beginning.” While the physical world was created earlier, the actual beginning of Torah revelation started with the Exodus from Egypt. Therefore, “I am the Lord who brought you out of the land of Egypt” refers to the essential purpose of creation, the initiation of Torah into the world.

Rabbi Elimelech further explains that God desires the prayers of the righteous. At times, God deliberately allows a decree to stand in order that a tzaddik will pray and nullify it. This sheds new light on the command “Come to Pharaoh, for I have hardened his heart.” Pharaoh’s refusal to release Israel is not merely an obstacle but part of a divine design, giving Moses the opportunity to annul the decree through prayer. The phrase “in order that I place My signs” is understood as referring not only to miracles but to the letters of the Torah itself.

או יאמר "בא אל-פרעה כו" למען שיתי כו", דהנה פתיב "אני ה' אשר הוצאתיך מארץ מצרים", ומקשים העולם למה מזכיר יציאת מצרים יותר מבריאת עולם שנה הוא חדוש והטבה גדולה יותר,

אך האמת שעקר בריאת העולם הנה בשביל התורה הקדושה כדאיתא "בראשית – בשביל התורה שנקראת ראשית", ואז ביציאת מצרים התחיל חדוש התורה,

לכן אמר "אני ה' אשר הוצאתיך", שנה העקר שהיתה התחלת התורה אשר בשבילה היתה עקר הבריאה.

והנה הקדוש ברוך הוא מתאנה לתפלתן של צדיקים, ולקעים השם יתברך גוזר גזרה כדי שיתפול הצדיק, ויבטלנה,

ונהו "בא אל-פרעה כי אני הכבדתי כו", שלא ישלח את ישראל, ואתה תבטל זאת,

למען שיתי אותי רצון לומר אותיותי של התורה שיהיה בעת צאתם ממצרים שהיה אז התחלת התורה הקדושה. וק"ל.

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These divine letters would be revealed at the time of the Exodus, marking the true beginning of the holy Torah in the world.

### Practical Takeaway:

Obstacles and delays are not always signs of failure or divine rejection. Sometimes they exist precisely to awaken deeper prayer, effort, and spiritual engagement. When a person encounters resistance, it may be an invitation to strengthen connection to Torah and prayer, thereby transforming the challenge into the very means through which divine purpose is fulfilled. **END NOTE]**

### מאמר ד

And Moses said, “With our youths and with our elders we will go,” etc. It appears to explain, for it is stated in the Gemara, “At the joy of the Water Drawing they would say: fortunate is our youth that did not shame our old age,” meaning that they conducted themselves properly already in their youth.

וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה בְּנַעֲרֵינוּ וּבְזַקְנֵינוּ גֵּלְךָ כֹּי'. נִרְאָה לְפָרֵשׁ דְּאִיתָא בְּגִמְרָא "בְּשִׂמְחַת בֵּית הַשְּׂוֹאֵבָה הָיָה", "אוֹמְרִים אֲשֶׁרֵי יְלָדוּתֵינוּ שְׁלֵא בִּישָׁה אֶת זַקְנוֹתֵינוּ

And they were not ashamed in their old age of the deeds of their youth, for those deeds too were in holiness. But one who does not conduct himself in holiness in his youth, then in the time of his old age he is ashamed of his earlier deeds.

דְּהֵינּוּ שְׁהָיוּ מִתְנַהֲגִים מִיָּד בְּנַעֲוִירֵיהֶם כְּשׁוֹרָה וְלֹא הָיָה מִתְבַּיְשִׁים בְּזַקְנוֹתָם מִמַּעֲשֵׂי נַעֲוִירֵיהֶם שְׁהָיוּ גַם־כֵּן בְּקִדּוּשָׁה

And he must depart from his previous path. Therefore it is good that a person sanctify himself immediately, from the beginning of his life and conduct.

אָבָל מִי שְׂאִינוּ מִתְנַהֵג בְּקִדּוּשָׁה בְּנַעֲוִירוֹתָיו אֲזַי לֵעֵת זַקְנוֹתוֹ הוּא מִתְבַּיֵּשׁ מִמַּעֲשָׂיו הַקְּדוּמִים וְצָרִיךְ לְסוּר מִדְּרָכּוֹ, עַל־כֵּן טוֹב שְׂיִתְקַדַּשׁ עֲצָמוֹ מִיָּד

And this is what the verse says, “Train a youth according to his way; even when he grows old he will not depart from it,” meaning that he will not need to depart from his earlier path.

וְזֶהוּ שְׂאָמַר הַתּוֹב "תִּנְוֶה לְנַעַר עַל־פִּי דְרָכּוֹ גַם כִּי יִזְקֵן לֹא יִסוּר מִמִּנְהָ", כְּלוּמַר שְׁלֵא יִצְטָרֵךְ לְסוּר מִדְּרָכּוֹ הַקְּדוּם

And he will be able to walk in the footsteps of his youth, as he conducted himself until now, and easily be able to serve the Lord, blessed be He.

וְיִוָּכַל לְלַכֵּת בְּעַקְבוֹת נַעֲוִרָיו כְּמוֹ שְׁהָיָה מִתְנַהֵג עַד עַתָּה, וּבְקָל יִוָּכַל לַעֲבֹד אֶת הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרַךְ בְּרוּךְ הוּא

And this is “With our youths and with our elders we will go,” meaning that we will conduct ourselves and go in holiness, both in our youth and in our old age alike.

וְזֶהוּ "בְּנַעֲרֵינוּ וּבְזַקְנֵינוּ גֵּלְךָ", רִצָּה לֹמַר שְׂנִתְנַהֵג, וְגֵלְךָ בְּקִדּוּשָׁה הֵן בְּנַעֲוִירֵינוּ וְהֵן בְּזַקְנוֹתֵינוּ

“With our sons and with our daughters we will go,” meaning that we will guide them in holiness and proper conduct from the outset.

בְּבָנֵינוּ וּבְבָנוֹתֵינוּ גֵּלְךָ", הֵינּוּ שְׂנִדְרִיךְ אוֹתָם" בְּקִדּוּשָׁה

“With our flocks and with our cattle we will go,” a hint that even in physical activities such as commerce, eating, and drinking,

בְּצִאֲנֵינוּ וּבְבִקְרֵינוּ גֵּלְךָ", רָמַז גַּם בְּעִבּוּדוֹת הַגְּשָׁמִיּוֹת" כְּמוֹ מִשָּׂא וּמִתָּן וְאֲכִילָה וְשִׂתְיָה וְכִיּוֹצֵא בָּהֶן

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we will go in all of this to the service of the Lord, “for it is a festival of the Lord for us.”

"גלגל בכל זה לה' יתברך, "פי חג ה' לנו

Meaning that a burning fire of enthusiasm burns within us to serve Him, may His Name be blessed and His remembrance exalted. And this is sufficient.

רצון לומר כי התלהבות אש בווער בנו לעבודתו יתברך שמו ויתעלה זכרו. וק"ל

### [NOTE Summary:

In this maamar, Rabbi Elimelech explains Moses' declaration, “With our youths and with our elders we will go,” as a foundational principle of lifelong avodat Hashem. He draws on the teaching of the Sages who praised their youth for not shaming their old age, meaning that their conduct in early life was already aligned with holiness. Because their youthful actions were pure, they could continue along the same path in old age without regret or rupture.

By contrast, one who does not live with sanctity in youth eventually becomes ashamed of earlier behavior and is forced to abandon previous habits later in life. This inner break makes spiritual service more difficult. Therefore, the Torah emphasizes early consecration, as expressed in the verse “Train a youth according to his way; even when he grows old he will not depart from it.” When holiness is embedded from the beginning, spiritual growth becomes continuous rather than corrective.

Rabbi Elimelech expands this idea beyond age alone. “With our sons and our daughters” refers to guiding the next generation toward holiness from the outset. “With our flocks and our cattle” teaches that even physical and material activities such as business, eating, and daily transactions must be infused with divine intent. True service of God is not confined to sacred moments alone but extends across all stages of life and all areas of activity. The phrase “for it is a festival of the Lord for us” expresses the inner fire and enthusiasm that accompanies such integrated service, where every aspect of existence becomes part of avodat Hashem.

### Practical Takeaway:

Consistency in spiritual values from an early stage creates continuity, ease, and joy later in life. When holiness is postponed, it often requires painful restructuring later on. The goal is not merely to behave properly at isolated moments but to build a life path that does not need to be abandoned or corrected with age. Educating oneself and others early, and integrating holiness even into ordinary, physical activities, allows spiritual growth to feel natural, unified, and enduring. **END NOTE]**

### מאמר ה

Or it may be said, “Come to Pharaoh, etc., and in order that you will tell, etc.” It appears that the primary intention of the Creator, may He be blessed, in striking Pharaoh and his servants, was so that there would be a sign for the children of Israel.

או יאמר "בא אל-פרעה כו' ולמען תספר כו'". נראה כי עקר פגנת הבורא יתברך בהכותו את פרעה, ונעבדיו, למען יהיה אות לבני ישראל

and that the letters of the Torah would increase through him by means of these matters that are spoken about him,

ושיתרבו אותיות התורה על-ידו באלה הדברים, הנאמרים בו

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and that the Torah scroll would not be lacking even a single letter.

וְלֹא יִהְיֶה הַסֵּפֶר תּוֹרָה חָסֵר אֶפְלוּ אוֹת אַחַת.

And behold, the man Moses, when he went to Pharaoh, was not going of his own good will,

וַהֲגִיחַ הָאִישׁ מֹשֶׁה כְּשֶׁהִלָּךְ אֶצֶל פַּרְעֹה, לֹא הָיָה הוֹלֵךְ בְּרָצוֹנוֹ הַטּוֹב,

for he did not desire to look upon the likeness of a wicked man.

,כִּי לֹא הָיָה חֹפֵץ לְהִסְתַּכֵּל בְּדַמוּת אָדָם רָשָׁע,

Therefore the Holy One, blessed be He, said to him in the language of “come,” meaning that you shall come to him with your will,

לְכֵן אָמַר לוֹ הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרַךְ בְּלִשׁוֹן "בֹּא", רָצוֹן לוֹמַר שְׂמֵבֹא אֵלָיו בְּרָצוֹנָה,

for I have through him an addition of holiness, through the letters of the Torah that are spoken because of him.

כִּי יֵשׁ לִי עַל-יָדוֹ לְהַתּוֹסֵף קְדוּשָׁה עַל-יְדֵי אוֹתִיּוֹת הַתּוֹרָה הַנִּצְאָמְרוֹת בְּעִבּוּרוֹ,

And therefore it does not belong here to say the expression “go,”

,וְלִזְוָה אֵין שְׂמֵךְ כָּאֵן לוֹמַר לִשׁוֹן "הֵלֵךְ",

for going is called such even when a person goes not of his will,

,כִּי הִלִּיכָה מִקְרִי אִף שְׂאָדָם הוֹלֵךְ שְׂלֵא בְּרָצוֹנוֹ,

for even though he goes not of his will, nevertheless the act of going with his feet is done.

כִּי אִף-עַל-פִּי שֶׁהוּא הוֹלֵךְ שְׂלֵא בְּרָצוֹנוֹ אִף-עַל-פִּי-כֵן מַעֲשֵׂה הִלִּיכָה בְּרַגְלָיו בַּעֲשֵׂה

But “coming” applies when a person comes of his will,

,וְ"בִיאָה" הִיא שְׂמֵכַת כְּשֶׁהָאָדָם בָּא בְּרָצוֹנוֹ

and his thought is what brings the person to that matter.

וּמַחְשַׁבְתּוֹ הִיא הַמְבִיאָה לְאָדָם אֶל הַדָּבָר הַהוּא

And this is “in order that I place My signs,” which is from the language of letters, as explained above.

וְזֶהוּ "לְמַעַן שִׂיתִי אוֹתֹתַי" הוּא מִלִּשׁוֹן אוֹתִיּוֹת כַּנִּלְ

### [NOTE Summary:

In this maamar, Rabbi Elimelech offers another explanation of the command “Come to Pharaoh,” focusing on the phrase “so that you shall tell.” He explains that the primary intention of the Holy One, blessed be He, in striking Pharaoh and his servants was not only punishment, but the creation of a lasting sign for the Children of Israel. Through Pharaoh, additional words and expressions entered the Torah, increasing its letters, so that the Torah would not be lacking even a single letter. Every encounter with Pharaoh generated further articulation of Torah, and this itself was a form of added holiness.

Rabbi Elimelech emphasizes that Moses did not naturally wish to go to Pharaoh. Moses recoiled from looking upon the image of a wicked person and had no personal desire for such an encounter. For this reason, God specifically used the term “come” rather than “go.” “Going” can describe movement that occurs even against one’s will, since the physical act of walking still takes place. “Coming,” by contrast, implies inner willingness and conscious intention. God therefore told Moses “come,” meaning that he should approach Pharaoh willingly and with awareness, knowing that this encounter would result in an increase of holiness through the letters of Torah spoken because of Pharaoh.

This explains the phrase “so that I may place My signs.” Here, “signs” is understood as “letters,” indicating that Pharaoh’s role in the narrative was to serve as a catalyst for the expansion of Torah expression. Even the

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confrontation with evil was ultimately transformed into a vehicle for sanctity, embedded permanently within the Torah itself.

### Practical Takeaway:

Unwanted or uncomfortable encounters may carry hidden spiritual purpose. Situations a person naturally resists can nevertheless become sources of lasting holiness when approached with conscious intent and clarity of purpose. When one understands that even difficulty can generate enduring spiritual gain, resistance can be transformed into willingness, and aversion into meaningful engagement. **END NOTE]**

### מאמר ו

“**And in order that you shall tell in the ears of your son.**” For when the Holy One, blessed be He, in His mercy performs a miracle for Israel one time and avenges them from their enemies, then the mercies are aroused, and this is effective even for the future in every generation, when Israel needs vengeance against some enemy who stands against them to burden them with a yoke of rule or a king.

Then the Holy One, blessed be He, takes vengeance upon him, since those mercies have already been aroused in such a matter. And this is, “and in order that you shall tell, etc., what I wrought upon Egypt,” and when you tell this you will arouse those mercies, and He will avenge you from your enemies, so that they will not be able to oppress you at all. Understand.

### [NOTE Summary:

In this maamar, Rabbi Elimelech explains the phrase “so that you shall tell in the ears of your son” as a mechanism for activating enduring divine mercy across generations. When the Holy One, blessed be He, performs a miracle for Israel and takes vengeance upon their enemies, an awakening of mercy occurs in the supernal realms. Once aroused, this mercy does not dissipate. Rather, it remains effective for the future, such that in later generations, when Israel faces oppression from enemies who seek to burden them through political power or royal authority, that same awakened mercy can be drawn upon again.

The act of recounting the miracles done in Egypt is therefore not merely historical remembrance. By telling of how God “wrought upon Egypt,” Israel actively reawakens those original mercies. Through this retelling, divine vengeance against oppressors is renewed, ensuring that enemies are unable to cause lasting harm or distress. The narrative itself becomes a spiritual trigger, sustaining protection and deliverance long after the original miracle occurred.

### Practical Takeaway:

Remembering and articulating past salvations is not only an act of gratitude but a form of spiritual continuity.

וּלְמַעַן תִּסְפָּר בְּאָזְנֵי בְנֵךְ. הַיּוֹת שְׁכַשְׁהָקְדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא בְּרַחֲמָיו עוֹשֶׂה גַם לְיִשְׂרָאֵל פְּעַם אַחַת וְנוֹקֵם לָהֶם מֵאוֹיְבֵיהֶם, אִזְ נִתְעוֹרְרוּ הַרְחָמִים וּמוֹעִיל אֶפְלוּ לְעַתִּיד בְּכָל דּוֹר, כְּשִׁישְׁרָאֵל צָרִיכִין לְהִנָּקֵם מֵאִיזָה שׁוֹנֵא הָעוֹמֵד עֲלֵיהֶם לְהַכְבִּידֵם בְּעוֹל שְׂרָרָה אוּ מְלָךְ.

אִז הַקְדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא עוֹשֶׂה נִקְמָה בּוּ פִּיּוֹן שְׁכַבְרָה נִתְעוֹרְרוּ אוֹתָם הַרְחָמִים בְּעִנְיַן כְּזֶה. וְזֶהוּ "וּלְמַעַן תִּסְפָּר כּוּ" אֲשֶׁר הִתְעַלְלָתִי בְּמִצְרַיִם", וְכִשְׁתִּסְפְּרוּ זֹאת תִּתְעוֹרְרוּ אוֹתָם הַרְחָמִים וְיִנָּקֵם לָכֶם מֵאוֹיְבֵיכֶם לְבַל יוֹכְלוּ לְהַצִּיר לָכֶם כְּלָל. וְהִבֵּן.

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By consciously recalling moments of divine help, one strengthens trust and activates inner resources of faith and resilience for present and future challenges. Telling the story, especially across generations, transforms memory into an active force that empowers endurance and hope in times of difficulty. **END NOTE]**

### מאמר ז

**And the Lord said to Moses,** “Stretch out your hand over the land of Egypt with the locust.” And one must be precise about the wording “with the locust,” and it appears to explain according to this a verse in the portion of Va’era, where it is written there concerning the plague of hail.

ויאמר ה' אל-משה נטה ידך על-ארץ מצרים בארבה. ויש לדקדק על הלשון "בארבה". ונראה לפרש על-פיה פסוק בפרשת וארא, דכתיב שם במכת ברד

“For now I have sent forth My hand and struck you with pestilence, but for this reason I have let you stand,” and one must be precise why specifically in the plague of hail He said this to him.

כי עתה שלחתי את-ידי ואף אותך בדבר ואולם בעבור זאת העמדתי כו", ויש לדקדק למה דוקא במכת ברד אמר לו זאת

But the matter is that all the plagues that came upon Pharaoh were for some merit that Israel had or would have, and according to that merit, specifically, the plague came corresponding to it.

אף הענין הוא, כי כל המכות שבאו על פרעה, הנה על איזה זכות שהיה להם לישראל או שיהיה להם, ועל אותו זכות במקוון באה המכה כנגדו

And this is the explanation of the aforementioned verse, that the plague of hail came in the merit of speech, that they speak and give thanks constantly to the Lord, blessed be He, and since so, the law would have required that in its place the plague of pestilence should come.

ונהו פרוש הפסוק הנ"ל, כי מכת ברד הנה בא בזכות הדבור שמדברים ומודים תמיד לה' יתברך, וכיון שכן הנה הדין נותן שיבוא במקומו מכת דבר

For they are the very letters of speech, as explained above, and regarding this He said, “For now I have sent forth My hand and struck you with pestilence,” instead of the plague of hail, for thus the law would have required.

כי הם האותיות ממש של הדבור כנ"ל, ועל-זה אמר "כי עתה שלחתי את-ידי ואף אותך בדבר" תחת מכת "ברד", כי כך הדין נותן כנ"ל

But “however, for this reason I have let you stand, in order to recount My name,” meaning that I transformed the letters of “diber” into the letters of “barad,” and not into the letters of “dever.”

ואולם בעבור זאת העמדתי למען ספר שמך", הפכתי את האותיות "דבר" לאותיות "ברד" ולא "לאותיות "דבר"

And this is “with the locust,” for the sake of what I said, “I will greatly multiply your seed,” as above. And this is sufficient.

ונהו "בארבה" בשביל שאמרתי "הרבה ארבה את ירעה" כנ"ל. וכן"ל

### [NOTE Summary:

In this maamar, Rabbi Elimelech examines the wording of the command “Stretch out your hand over the land of Egypt with the locust,” focusing on the unusual phrasing “with the locust.” He connects this to a deeper pattern that runs through all the plagues: each plague corresponded precisely to a particular merit that Israel possessed,

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or would come to possess. The punishment visited upon Egypt was not arbitrary, but carefully aligned with the spiritual qualities of Israel.

He explains that the plague of hail is linked to the merit of speech, specifically Israel's constant speaking and thanking of God. Since speech itself is composed of letters, strict justice would have dictated that the corresponding plague be *dever*, pestilence, whose very name is composed of the same letters as *diber*, speech. Scripture itself alludes to this when God says, "For now I have sent forth My hand and struck you with pestilence." This indicates that *dever* was the plague demanded by strict  $\text{דן}$ . However, God did not choose *dever*. Instead, He transformed the letters of *diber* into *barad*, hail. This letter transformation expresses divine mercy overriding strict judgment, while still preserving the inner structure of justice. The letters remain, but their arrangement is altered, softening the outcome while maintaining cosmic balance.

Rabbi Elimelech then applies this principle to the plague of locusts. "With the locust" is interpreted as rooted in the promise "I will greatly multiply your seed." The plague of locusts corresponds to the merit of Israel's destined multiplication. Thus, even a destructive plague ultimately reflects and reinforces Israel's future blessing. Throughout, the *maamar* reveals a consistent pattern: punishment and mercy are intertwined through the letters of Torah, with divine justice expressed not through annihilation, but through transformation.

### Practical Takeaway:

Life's harsh decrees are often shaped by deeper merits that are not immediately visible. Even when judgment appears severe, it may be a transformed expression of mercy rather than pure  $\text{הדין}$ . Recognizing this allows a person to respond to difficulty not with despair, but with trust that underlying goodness is present, even if rearranged into a challenging form.

### Chassidic Story:

There is a well-known tradition among  $\text{רבי אלימלך}$  of Lizhensk that he was extraordinarily careful with words, both spoken and written. One account relates that a  $\text{תלמיד}$  once brought him a petition written on behalf of a suffering community. Rabbi Elimelech read it silently and then rewrote several lines himself, changing nothing of the meaning, only the order and wording of the phrases. When asked why this was necessary, he explained that letters are vessels, and when they are arranged improperly, they can draw strict judgment. By reordering them, the same content can become a channel for mercy.

Shortly thereafter, the crisis facing that community eased in an unexpected way. No miracle occurred in the dramatic sense, but circumstances shifted just enough to relieve the danger. Rabbi Elimelech later remarked that this was not a cancellation of the decree, but its transformation. The  $\text{הדין}$  had remained intact, but its form had been softened, just as *dever* became *barad*. Through this, his students learned that even when judgment cannot be removed, it can often be reshaped through Torah, prayer, and the careful sanctification of speech.

**END NOTE]**