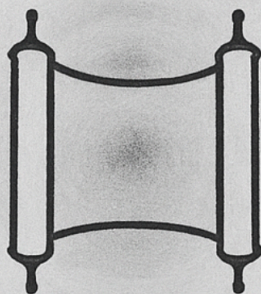


בס"ד

**Menachem Nachum
of Chernobyl
Me'or Einayim
Parshas Va'eira**



*Dedicated in Honor of the
Yahrzeit of*

לע"נ

שְׁרָה מְרִים בֵּית אֲבִרָה

To find more Maamarim and to dedicate one visit:

ChassidusNow.com

Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl

Me'or Einayim

Parshas Va'eira

מאמר א

Introduction

Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl (Hebrew year four thousand nine hundred ninety to five thousand five hundred fifty seven [1730–1797]) was a leading disciple of the Maggid of Mezritch and the author of Me'or Einayim, renowned for integrating deep kabbalistic teaching with avodah rooted in lived human struggle. In this maamar, he develops a unified framework of da'at, nisayon, tzimtzum, and geulah, explaining how divine conduct through kindness, mercy, and judgment is one integrated revelation, and how true redemption is the maturation of da'at that can receive Elokus in every mode.

And I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, with the Name El Shaddai, etc. Rashi explains: "Woe for those who are lost and are not found," etc.

וַאֲרָא אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק וְאֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב בְּאֵל שַׁדַּי
וְגו' פְּרוּשׁ רַש"י חֶבֶל עַל דָּאבְדִין וְלֹא מִשְׁתַּכְחִין
וְכו'

The matter is that it is known that the secret of the exile of Egypt was that true knowledge was in exile, for they were not attaining the knowledge to serve the Creator, blessed be He, as in the matter that is stated: "Know the God of your father and serve Him" (I Chronicles 28:9).

הַעֲנֵן הוּא דְנוֹדֵעַ סוּד גְּלוּת מִצְרַיִם הוּא כִּי הִדְעַת
הָאֱמִיתִי הָיָה בְּגִלוּת שְׁלֹא הָיוּ מְשִׁיגִין הִדְעַת לַעֲבוֹד
הַבּוֹרָא פְּרוּשׁ הוּא כְּעֵנֶן שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר דְּבָרֵי הַיָּמִים (א'
כ"ח ט') דַּע אֵת אֱלֹהֵי אֲבִיךָ וְעַבְדֵהוּ

For in truth, knowledge is the essential factor that brings one to complete awe and love, because after he knows and believes that the whole earth is filled with His glory and that there is no place devoid of Him, and that He is the delight of all delights, blessed be He and blessed be His Name, the Life of all life.

כִּי בְּאֵמַת הִדְעַת הוּא הָעֵיקָר הַמְכִּיָּא לִידֵי יִרְאָה
וְאַהֲבָה הַגְּמוּרָה כִּי אַחֵר שְׂיָדַע וַיֵּאֱמִין כִּי מְלֵא כָּל
הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדוֹ וְלִית אֶתֶר פְּנוּי מִיָּנִיָּה וְהוּא תַעֲנוּג כָּל
הַתַּעֲנוּגִים פְּרוּשׁ הוּא וּבְרוּךְ שְׁמוֹ חַי הַחַיִּים

If so, in all delights, if it could be imagined, Heaven forfend, the absence of the flow of His light and His vitality, blessed be He, within created things, the created beings would return to chaos and void; and so too in all the upper and lower worlds, if it could be imagined, Heaven forfend, the absence of His vitality from them, they would be as though they were not.

אִם כֵּן בְּכָל הַתַּעֲנוּגִים אֵלּוּ יִצְוִיר חֶסֶד וְשְׁלוֹם הָעֶדֶר
שְׁפַעַת אוֹרוֹ וְחַיּוּתוֹ יִתְבָּרַךְ בְּדִבְרֵים הַנִּבְרָאִים הָיוּ
חוֹזְרִים הַנִּבְרָאִים לְתַהוֹ וְבָהוּ וְכֵן בְּכָל הָעוֹלָמוֹת
עֲלִיוֹנִים וְתַתְּחוֹנִים אֵלּוּ יִצְוִיר חֶסֶד וְשְׁלוֹם הָעֶדֶר
חַיּוּתוֹ מֵהֶם הָיוּ כְּלֵא הָיוּ

If so, He is the essential element in all things, and if so, when one believes this, certainly he will not desire any pleasure in the world, since its essence is the Creator, blessed be He.

וְאִם כֵּן הוּא הָעֵיקָר בְּכָל הַדִּבְרִים וְאִם כֵּן כְּשִׁינְאִמִּין
בְּזֶה וְדֹא לֹא יִתְאַוֶּה לְשׁוּם תַּעֲנוּג בְּעוֹלָם מֵאַחֵר
שְׁעִיקָרוֹ הוּא הַבּוֹרָא בְּרוּךְ הוּא

And if so, it is better to cleave oneself to the true delight and not to separate it, Heaven forfend, from its root, to take the pleasure as he sees with the physical eye; and he is called, Heaven forfend, "a quarrelsome separatist, separating the

וְאִם כֵּן טוֹב יוֹתֵר לְדַבֵּק אֵת עַצְמוֹ בְּתַעֲנוּג הָאֱמִיתִי
וְלֹא לְהַפְרִידוֹ חֶסֶד וְשְׁלוֹם מִשְׁרָשׁוֹ לְקַח הַתַּעֲנוּג כְּמוֹ
שְׂרֹאָה בְּעֵין הַגִּשְׁמִי וַיִּקְרָא חֶסֶד וְשְׁלוֹם נֶרְגֵן מִפְּרִיד
אֵלּוּף (מִשְׁלִי ט"ז כ"ח) מִפְּרִיד אֵלּוּפוֹ שֶׁל עוֹלָם
מִשְׁכִּינִתִּיהָ

Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl

Me'or Einayim

Parshas Va'eira

Master” (Proverbs 16:28), separating the Master of the world from His Shechinah.

For all things are called by the name Shechinah, that is, the vitality of the Name, blessed be He, that dwells within all things; and if he performs the matter as the masses of people do, then he separates, Heaven forbid.

Therefore, certainly, one who has this knowledge will see in every thing the inner aspect that sustains it, which is His Shechinah, blessed be He, and he will cleave to Him and come to awe and love.

And love is called, as they said in the Mishnah: “And you shall love, etc., with all your might, with every measure and measure” (Mishnah Berakhot 9:5). What is “with every measure and measure”?

For it is known that the Name, blessed be He, is without end, and if so He is something that has no boundary or limit, while the world is something that has a boundary.

If so, how is it possible for the world to bear the light of the flow of His vitality that dwells in all created beings, as stated above, since He, blessed be He, has no boundary?

Rather, He, blessed be He, conducts His world through His attributes, and the attributes are called that which the Name, blessed be He, measured and contracted Himself, as it were, in a manner that the world could bear it.

And this is the expression “measure,” and all of this is according to what His wisdom, blessed be He, decreed, which is not apprehended; at times He measures with this measure and at times with another.

As His wisdom, blessed be He, decrees that at that time He must conduct His world through the flow of His vitality.

And so for every person of Israel, He measures Himself and contracts His Godliness, blessed be He, according to the strength of the person and his intellect at that time, at times with kindness and at times with compassion.

כי כל הדברים מכונים בשם שכינה דהינו חיות השם יתברך השוכן בכל הדברים ואם הוא עושה הדבר כמו שעושים אנשי המונים אזי מפריד חס ושולם

על כן בודאי מי שיש לו דעת זה יראה בכל דבר הפנימיות המקימו שהוא שכינתו ברוך הוא וידבק בו ויבוא לידי יראה ואהבה

ואהבה נקראת כמו שאמרו במשנה ואהבת וגו' בכל מאדך בכל מדה ומדה מהו בכל מדה ומדה

דנוע כי השם יתברך אין סוף ואם כן הוא דבר שאין לו גבול ותכלית והעולם הוא דבר שיש לו גבול

ואם כן איך אפשר לעולם לסבל אור שפעת חיותו השוכן בכל הנבראים כנ"ל מאחר שאין לו יתברך גבול

אלא הוא יתברך מנהיג עולמו על ידי מדותיו והמדות נקראים מה שמדד השם יתברך וצמצם את עצמו בכיכול באופן שיוכל העולם לסבלו

ונהו לשון מדה וכל זה כפי שגזרה חכמתו יתברך שאינה משגת פעם מודד במדה זו ופעם במדה אחרת

כפי שגזרת חכמתו יתברך שצריך בעת ההיא להנהיג עולמו על ידי שפעת חיותו

וכן לכל אדם מישראל מודד את עצמו ומצמצם אלהותו יתברך כפי כח האדם ושכלו בזמן ההוא פעם בחסד ופעם ברחמים

Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl

Me'or Einayim

Parshas Va'eira

For it is impossible for a person to receive His Godliness, blessed be He, at that time except through this measure specifically.

כי אי אפשר לאדם לקחת אלהותו ותברך בעת ההיא
כי אם בזאת המדה דוקא

And if a person has understanding, he certainly receives His Godliness, blessed be He, according to how He measured Himself toward him at that time, and he will rejoice in receiving His Godliness upon himself.

ואם האדם יש לו דעת בודאי מקבל אלהותו ותברך
כפי מה שמדד את עצמו אליו בעת ההיא וישמח
בקבלת אלהותו ותברך עליו

And he will give thanks to Him exceedingly, exceedingly, and serve Him with awe and complete love, since he has understanding, and understanding encompasses them, as is known.

ויהא מודה לו במאד מאד ועובד אותו ביראה ואהבה
גמורה מאחר שיש לו דעת והדעת הוא הכולל אותן
בנדע

For this reason, each person must accept upon himself, at the time of the recitation of Shema, in the four of "Echad," the four deaths in the four letters, and to unify His Name in truth, as it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all the day" (Psalms 44:23).

ולזה הטעם צריך כל אחד לקבל עליו בשעת קריאת
שמע בד' דאחד ארבע מיתות בארבע וליחד שמו
באמת כמו שכתוב (תהלים מ"ד, כ"ג) כי עליך
הורגנו כל היום

This refers to one who accepts upon himself the four deaths of the court for the sake of the unification of His great Name, blessed be He, for certainly a unification of Havayah, which is mercy, and Elokim, which is judgment, is effected, since he accepts His Godliness, blessed be He, in both.

זה שמקבל עליו ארבע מיתות בית דין למען יחיד
שמו הגדול ותברך כי בודאי נעשה יחיד הוי"ה שהוא
רחמים ואלקים שהוא דין מאחר שמקבל אלהותו
ותברך בשתיקה

And this is: "The Lord our God, the Lord is One" (Deuteronomy 6:4) whether He conducts Himself with him through the attribute of Havayah or through the attribute of Elokeinu, everything is the Lord, Who is kindness, the Almighty, blessed be He.

ונהו (דברים ו', ד') ה' אלקינו ה' אחד בין שמתנהג
עמו במדת הוי"ה בין במדת אלקינו הכל ה' שהוא
חסד האל ותברך

In order that he be able to receive His Godliness, blessed be He, in that matter, since that is what he needs at that time.

בכדי שיוכל לקבל אלהותו ותברך בדבר ההוא
מאחר שצריך לו בעת ההיא

And this is: "For the Lord, He is God" (ibid. 4:39), and all of this is through understanding, as it is written at the beginning of the verse: "And you shall know today," etc.

ונהו (שם ד', ל"ט) כי ה' הוא האלקים וגו' וכל זה
על ידי הדעת כמו שכתוב בתחלת הפסוק וידעת
היום וגו'

And when one serves in this manner with this understanding, judgment also becomes mercy, since he believes and accepts it with joy and gives thanks exceedingly, and upholds the judgment as though it were kindness, and it indeed becomes so.

ובשעבוד כך בדעת זה נעשה גם כן הדין רחמים
מאחר שמאמין ומקבלו בשמחה ומודה לו מאד
ומחזיק את הדין כאלו הוא חסד נעשה כן באמת

Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl

Me'or Einayim

Parshas Va'eira

And this is: the righteous transform the attribute of judgment into the attribute of mercy; and the wicked, even when the Creator, blessed be He, conducts Himself with them with the attribute of mercy, do not accept His Godliness through this, since they have no understanding, and they separate it from the Creator, blessed be He, and transform it into the attribute of judgment.

And the righteous can also repair this which the wicked corrupted, and transform it into the attribute of mercy.

And this is: Ben Bag Bag says, "Turn it and turn it," for through the Torah, which is understanding, he will transform that which the Creator, blessed be He, conducts with him through the attribute of judgment into the attribute of mercy.

And he will also transform what the wicked corrupted, as stated above; and understand.

However, it is necessary that each and every person come to trials, even though he accepts His Godliness in his thought, as stated above.

Nevertheless, they test every person with ten trials, as they said regarding Abraham: "With ten trials Abraham our father was tested, and he stood in all of them."

And the trial is that they remove from him the attachment with which he was attached to the Name, blessed be He, through understanding, at the time when he comes to a trial, and only choice remains with him.

For were it not so, it would not be called a trial, for certainly through attachment the righteous would grasp his path.

And through this, understanding is diminished for him, not a complete removal of understanding; and he stands in the trial by virtue of what was fixed in his heart beforehand, when he had expansive understanding.

And behold, when Israel were in Egypt, understanding was in exile, for the husk precedes the fruit; for understanding was covered by husks, like the husk of the nut.

As the verse states: "I went down to the garden of nuts" (Song of Songs 6:11), which refers to the exile of Egypt.

וזהו צדיקים מהפכים מדת הדין למדת הרחמים והרשעים אף שמתנהג הבורא ברוך הוא עמם במדת הרחמים אין מקבלים אלהותו עליהם זה מאחר שאין להם דעת ומפרידים אותו מהבורא יתברך והופכים למדת הדין

והצדיק יוכל לתקן גם זה ששלקלו רשעים ומהפכים למדת הרחמים

וזהו בן בג בג אומר הפך בה והפך בה כי עליהם התורה שהוא הדעת יתברך מה שמתנהג עמו הבורא יתברך במדת הדין יתברך למדת הרחמים

וגם יתברך מה ששלקלו הרשעים כאמור לעיל והבן

אף שצריך כל אחד ואחד לבוא לידי נסיונות אף שמקבל אלקותו במחשבתו כנ"ל

מכל מקום מנסין את כל אדם בעשר נסיונות כמו שאמרו באברהם עשרה נסיונות נתנסה אברהם אבינו ועמד בכלם

והנסיון הוא שמסלקין ממנו ההתקשרות שהיה קשור בהשם יתברך עליהם הדעת בעת שבא לידי נסיון ונשאר אצלו רק הבחירה

כי לולא זה לא היה נקרא נסיון כי בודאי עליהם ההתקשרות יאחז צדיק דרכו

ועליהם זה נתמעט הדעת אצלו לא סילוק הדעת ממש ואם עומד בנסיון עליהם שנקבע בלבו מקודם כשהיה לו דעת רחב

והנה כשהיו ישראל במצרים היה הדעת בגלות כי קליפה קדמה לפרי כי הדעת היה מכסה בקליפות כמו קליפת האגוז

כמו שאמר הכתוב (שיר השירים ו', י"א) אגוז גנת אגוז ירדתי שהוא על גלות מצרים

Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl

Me'or Einayim

Parshas Va'eira

And in a nut there is an outer husk, the hardest, which covers the food, and beneath it another hard husk, so that they are able to see the food, even though fine husks still remain.

Although fine husks still remain, until our Messiah comes, speedily in our days, when the inner aspect will be revealed completely.

Nevertheless, the primary covering was revealed, for "Egypt" is letters of "meitzar yam," for there is a sea of wisdom, which is understanding, from which it comes.

And one who has no understanding at all is also today in "meitzar yam," for he has not yet entered the sea of wisdom.

Therefore, the author of the Haggadah said: "Not only our fathers did the Holy One, blessed be He, redeem, but He redeemed us with them," for every year there is an Exodus from Egypt in the manner stated above.

And the wicked, who do not yet have understanding, have not gone out of Egypt; therefore the author of the Haggadah said, "Not only our forefathers did the Holy One, blessed be He, redeem, but He also redeemed us with them" (Passover Haggadah), for in every year there is an exodus from Egypt in the manner stated above.

Therefore the wicked one says: "What is this service?" since he has no understanding, the service is difficult for him.

And you too shall say to him, etc., "for me and not for him"; had he been there, he would not have been redeemed, since even today he is in Egypt, that is, his understanding.

Therefore it is stated: "And God saw the children of Israel, and God knew," meaning that understanding came, to discern with understanding that even the aspect of Elokim is the acceptance of His Godliness, blessed be He.

And this is: "And God spoke to Moses and said to him, I am the Lord," for Moses our teacher, peace be upon him, said, "Why have You done evil to this people," and the Name, blessed be He, answered him: What evil is this? Is it not that the essence of redemption is that they know that Elokim and the Name of mercy are one and a single unification, as stated above?

ובאגוז יש קליפה חיצונה היותר קשה ומכסה את האכל ותחתיה קליפה הקשה כדי שיוכלו לראות האכל

הגם שנשארו עדין הקליפות הדקות עד שיבוא משיחנו במהרה בנמינו שיתגלה הפנימיות לגמרי

מכל מקום עיקר ההתכסות נתגלה כי מצרים אותיות מצר ים כי יש ים החכמה שהוא הדעת שפא משם

ומי שאין לו דעת כלל הוא גם היום במיצר ים שלא נכנס עדין בים החכמה

על פן אמר בעל ההגדה לא את אבותינו בלבד גאל הקדוש ברוך הוא אלא אף אותנו גאל עמקם כי בכל שנה יש יציאת מצרים באופן הנ"ל

והרשעים שאין להם דעת עדין לא יצאו ממצרים על פן אמר בעל ההגדה לא את אבותינו בלבד גאל הקדוש ברוך הוא אלא אף אותנו גאל עמקם כי בכל שנה יש יציאת מצרים באופן הנ"ל

על פן אמר רשע מה הוא אומר מה העבודה וכו' מאחר שאין לו דעת קשה לו על העבודה

ואף אתה אמר לו וכו' לי ולא לו אלו הנה שם לא הנה נגאל מאחר שגם היום הוא במצרים דהינו דעת שול

על פן נאמר וירא אלקים את בני ישראל וידע אלקים שפא הדעת להבחין בהדעת שאף בחינת אלקים הוא קבלת אלהותו יתברך

ונה וידבר אלקים אל משה ויאמר אליו אני ה' כי משה רבינו ע"ה אמר למה הרעת לעם הנה והשיב לו השם יתברך מה רעה הוא זה הלא עיקר הגאולה הוא שיגיעו שאלקים ושם הרחמים הוא אחד ויחיד אחד באמור לעיל

Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl

Me'or Einayim

Parshas Va'eira

And that which appears to be evil is for one who has no understanding, but in truth, according to His wisdom, blessed be He, which is not apprehended, it is necessary at that time to contract specifically in that measure.

ומה שנראה שהוא רעה הוא למי שאין לו דעת אכל
באמת לפי חכמתו יתברך שאינה משגת צריך בעת
ההיא להתצמצם במדה ההיא דוקא

And this is what He, blessed be He, instructed Moses and said to him: in the attribute of Elokim that you said that I did evil, know that I am the Lord, as stated.

וזהו שהורה הוא יתברך זה למשה ואמר אליו במדת
אלקים זה שאמרתי שהרעותי תדע שאני ה' באמור

“And I appeared to the fathers with El Shaddai,” Who said to His world “enough,” which is contraction and judgment, for I conducted Myself with them through contractions and judgments, for I tested them by removing expansive understanding from them through the removal of attachment, in order that it be called a trial.

וארא אל האבות בא-ל שדי שאמר לעולמו די שהוא
צמצום ודין כי נהגתי עמם על-ידי צמצומים ודינים
שנסיתי אותן בסילוק הדעת הרחב מהם על-ידי
סילוק ההתקשרות שסלקתי מהם בכדי שיהיה נקרא
נסיון

And they stood in the trial because they stood upon this understanding, from that which remained with them of understanding after the removal of attachment, for His Godliness, blessed be He, also contracts in judgment, and they had this faith.

והם עמדו בנסיון מחמת שעמדו על דעת זה במה
שנשאר אצלם מן הדעת אחר סילוק ההתקשרות כי
אלהותו יתברך מתצמצמת גם כן בדין והיתה להם
האמונה זו

And this is: “And My Name, the Lord, I did not make known to them,” for I removed from them the expansive understanding which is through attachment, for the Name Havayah is called understanding, as is known.

וזהו ושמי ה' לא נודעתי להם כי סלקתי מהם הדעת
הרחב שהוא על-ידי ההתקשרות כי ה' נקרא הדעת
בנודע

And this is: “I did not make Myself known to them,” in understanding, as before the trial; nevertheless they accepted His Godliness in everything that I measured to them.

וזהו לא נודעתי להם בהדעת במקודם הנסיון ומכל
מקום קבלו אלהותו בכל מה שמדדתי להם

And this is: “Woe for those who are lost,” meaning that they lost at the time of the trial an aspect that they had previously; “and are not found” is from the language of forgetting, that they did not forget the understanding to accept His Godliness in all the attributes.

וזהו חבל על דאבדין רצה לומר שאבדו בעת הנסיון
בחינה שהיתה להם מקודם ולא משתכחין הוא
מלשון שכחה שלא שכחו דעת לקבל אלהותו בכל
המדות

It follows from all that has been stated that a person who serves must serve his Creator, blessed be He, specifically in the manner stated above, whether in His goodness or in hardship; and if he sees that the Creator, blessed be

ונמצא מכל האמור שצריך האדם העובד לעבוד את
בוראו ברוך הוא דוקא באופן הנ"ל בין בטובו בין
בעקצו ואם רואה שהבורא ברוך הוא

Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl

Me'or Einayim

Parshas Va'eira

He, conducts Himself with him for some time with the attribute of kindness, and afterward he sees that he has begun to falter, he should be like a peg firmly fixed in a faithful place, that he not move from his level, for perhaps they are testing him with this, as stated.

And this is the explanation of the verse: "For You are our Father, for Abraham did not know us, and Israel..." (Isaiah 63:16); and our Sages of blessed memory expounded: "For You are our Father" refers to Isaac, for Abraham said, "Let them be erased for the sanctification of Your Name," and Jacob as well, etc., see there.

At first glance, how can this be the reverse, for Abraham, who is the attribute of kindness, should say so, and Isaac, who is judgment, should plead merit?

But the truth is as stated: one who serves the Creator, blessed be He, only when He conducts Himself with him through the attribute of Abraham, which is kindness, or through the attribute of Jacob, which is mercy, and not when He conducts Himself with him through the attribute of Isaac, certainly still has no understanding and does not recognize His Godliness, blessed be He.

And one who serves in this way is called, Heaven forbid, "a quarrelsome separatist, separating the Master" (Proverbs 16:28), and he transforms, Heaven forbid, the attribute of mercy into the attribute of judgment, as stated above.

Therefore, through the attribute of kindness, judgment comes upon him, to say: "Let them be erased for the sanctification of Your Name," and likewise Jacob.

But one who accepts His Godliness, blessed be He, according to how He measures Himself to him, even through the attribute of Isaac, then he transforms the attribute of judgment into the attribute of mercy.

And therefore Isaac said: "Half is upon me," etc., since it became mercy, as stated above.

And this is: "For Abraham did not know us"; one who accepts His Godliness, blessed be He, only through the attribute of Abraham, "did not know us," he still has no understanding.

מתנהג עמו זמן מה במדת הדין ואחר זה רואה שהתחיל להתמוטט יהיה כיתד תקוע במקום נאמן שלא יזוז ממדרגתו כי אולי מנסין אותו בזה באמור

ונהו פרוש הפסוק (ישעיה ס"ג, ט"ז) כי אתה אבינו כי אברהם לא ידענו וישראל וגו' ודרשו רז"ל כי אתה אבינו קאי על יצחק כי אברהם אמר ימחו על קדשת שמך ויעקב גם כן וכו' עין שם

לכאורה איך הוא הדבר להפך כי אברהם שהוא מדת חסד יאמר כנ"ל ויצחק שהוא דין ילמד זכות

אבל האמת הוא באמור כי מי שעובד הבורא ברוך הוא כשמתנהג עמו במדת אברהם שהוא חסד או במדת יעקב שהוא רחמים לבד ולא כשמתנהג עמו במדת יצחק בודאי אין לו דעת עדין ואין מכיר אלהותו יתברך

ונהו שעובד כן נקרא ח"ו נרגז מפריד אלוף (משלי ט"ז, כ"ח) ומהפך ח"ו מדת הרחמים למדת הדין באמור למעלה

ועל כן עלי ידי מדת החסד בא עליו הדין לומר ימחו על קדשת שמך וכן יעקב

אבל מי שמקבל אלהותו יתברך כפי מה שמוזד את עצמו אליו אף במדת יצחק אפי' הוא מהפך מדת הדין למדת הרחמים

ועל כן אמר יצחק פלגא עלי וכו' מאחר שנעשה רחמים באמור לעיל

ונהו כי אברהם לא ידענו מי שמקבל אלהותו יתברך על ידי מדת אברהם לבד לא ידענו אין לו דעת עדין

Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl

Me'or Einayim

Parshas Va'eira

And "Israel did not recognize us"; one who accepts His Godliness only through the attribute of Jacob still does not recognize His Godliness, blessed be He.

וישראל מי שמקבל אלהותו על-ידי מדת יעקב לבד לא יכירנו אין מכיר אלהותו יתברך עדין

Rather, "For You are our Father," and then he unifies His Godliness, blessed be He, in a complete unification; and understand.

אלא כי אתה אבינו ואז מיחד אלהותו יתברך ביחוד גמור וקבן

And the matter of the ten plagues that were in Egypt: the matter is that it is known that the Creator, blessed be He, conducts His world through ten intellects, and they are understanding.

וענין העשר מכות שהיו במצרים הענין הוא כי נודע שהבורא ברוך הוא מנהיג עולמו על-ידי עשר שכליים והן הדעת

Therefore, in Egypt, when He wished to reveal the secret of understanding, through each of the ten plagues one of the intellects was revealed, until the entire revelation of understanding was completed.

ועל כן במצרים שהיה רוצה לגלות סוד הדעת על כן על-ידי כל אחת מעשר מכות נתגלה אחד מן השכליים עד שנגמר כל התגלות הדעת

However, that which the attachment is removed at the time of trial, through which understanding is diminished, as stated above, that diminution is also a revelation of understanding, for so is the need always.

אף כי מה שמסלקין ההתקשרות בעת הנסיון שעל-ידי זה נתמעט הדעת כאמור לעיל המעוט הוא גם כן התגלות הדעת כי כך הוא הצורך תמיד

And it follows that there are two aspects in the revelation of understanding: one through its increase, and one through its diminution, as stated at the time of trial; and both together are the revelation of understanding.

ונמצא כי יש שתי בחינות בהתגלות הדעת אחד על-ידי רבוי ואחד על-ידי מעוטו כאמור בעת הנסיון ושניהם כאחד הם התגלות הדעת

And understand, for this is the need specifically, even after the husk that covers was broken.

וקבן כי כן הוא הצורך דוקא אף אחר שנשברה הקליפה המכסה

Therefore, there were some of the plagues in which there was no warning, such as hail, darkness, and lice, for this purpose.

לכן יש קצת מן המכות שלא היתה בהן התראה כגון ברד חשך וכנים לפניה זו

Since each of the ten plagues was to reveal understanding with its two aspects, as stated, therefore corresponding to the aspect of the revelation of understanding through its increase, there was warning.

מאחר שכל אחת מעשר מכות היתה לגלות הדעת עם שתי בחינותיו כאמור לכן נגד בחינת התגלות הדעת שהוא על-ידי רבוי היתה התראה

For it is known that all those liable to capital punishment are not executed until understanding is brought into them through witnesses who warn them and inform them through words, bringing understanding, as is known.

דנודע שכל חייבי מיתות אין ממיתין אותו עד שיקניסו להם הדעת על-ידי עדים המתרים אותו ומודיעים להם על-ידי דבורים הדעת כנודע

For without warning, even if one acts intentionally, nevertheless he is without understanding.

כי לולא ההתראה אף שעושה במזיד מכל מקום הוא בלא דעת

Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl

Me'or Einayim

Parshas Va'eira

Therefore here, where it was necessary to bring understanding into the world through the plagues, warning was required for this purpose, to break the husk that covers the aspect of understanding that needs to be increased.

לכן כאן שהיה צריך להכניס הדעת בעולם עליידי המכות הצרכה ההתראה לפניה זו לשבר הקליפה המכסה בחינת דעת שצריך שיתרבה

And the plagues regarding which warning was not stated were to break the husk that covers this aspect of understanding that needs to be diminished at the time of trial; and understand.

והמכות שלא נאמר בהן התראה הן לשבר הקליפה המכסה בחינת הדעת זה שצריך למעטו בעת הנסיון והבן

[NOTE Summary:

The maamar establishes that the essence of avodat Hashem is da'at, conscious recognition and acceptance of Elokus in every circumstance. Galut Mitzrayim is defined not merely as physical bondage but as exile of da'at, a state in which divine vitality is obscured by kelipot, likened to the layers of a nut. Redemption begins when da'at emerges, allowing a person to perceive that both Havayah, mercy, and Elokim, judgment, are one unified divine reality.

Central to the teaching is nisayon. A true test requires partial removal of felt attachment and expansive awareness so that only bechirah remains. Without this concealment there is no test. The tzaddik does not succeed through present inspiration but through inner fixing of da'at achieved earlier, which continues to guide action even when perception is dimmed. This principle explains the trials of the Avot and the divine name El Shaddai, a mode of contraction and limitation through which they were tested, yet remained faithful by accepting Elokus even within din.

The maamar explains Shema as an act of radical acceptance: by receiving all four forms of death implied in Echad, one unifies mercy and judgment, affirming that every divine mode is an expression of the same Elokus. With da'at, judgment itself becomes mercy. Without da'at, even mercy is experienced as judgment, since the person separates divine attributes rather than unifying them.

This framework resolves the teaching that Yitzchak defends Israel while Avraham and Yaakov do not. One who serves God only when life is kind or compassionate lacks full da'at. True recognition occurs only when one accepts Elokus even in the mode of Yitzchak, din. Only then is divine unity complete.

The ten plagues are understood as a progressive revelation of da'at through ten intellectual channels. Some plagues required warning, corresponding to revelation through expansion of awareness. Others had no warning, corresponding to revelation through constriction, paralleling nisayon. Both expansion and diminution are necessary expressions of da'at. Even concealment, when accepted consciously, is itself revelation.

Thus, true yetziat Mitzrayim occurs every year and in every life. One who has not acquired da'at remains in Mitzrayim, constrained from entering the sea of wisdom. Redemption is not escape from difficulty but the ability to receive Elokus fully within it.

Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl

Me'or Einayim

Parshas Va'eira

Practical Takeaway:

Avodah is not measured by how inspired one feels but by whether one accepts Elokus consistently across kindness, mercy, and judgment. When spiritual clarity fades or life constricts, this is not necessarily failure but nisayon. The task is to remain anchored in previously integrated da'at and to choose fidelity even without felt connection. By consciously affirming that every experience is a measured divine expression necessary for that moment, one transforms din into rachamim and lives continual yetziat Mitzrayim.

Chassidic Story:

Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl lived through periods of intense concealment, both spiritual and material. In his later years, he experienced prolonged illness and poverty. Students reported that at times his physical weakness was so great that he could barely speak, and his earlier radiant intensity seemed withdrawn. A younger chassid once confided to another that he feared the Rebbe had lost his former spiritual fire.

When the Rebbe sensed this unease, he addressed his followers quietly. He explained that there are times when the light must be drawn inward so that it can be received more deeply by the vessels. He said that when inspiration is taken away, it is not absence but invitation, a call to serve from commitment rather than sensation. He added that a person who can serve only when the heart is aflame has not yet learned to serve from truth.

After his passing, close students testified that during those years of concealment, the Rebbe maintained exacting avodah, prayer, and inner attachment, though without outward expression. His writings from that period show no diminution in depth. Later generations recognized that these years embodied precisely the teaching of this maamar: that da'at is revealed not only in expansion but also in contraction, and that the greatest unity is forged when Elokus is accepted without illumination. Only afterward did his students understand that they had witnessed a living example of transforming din into rachamim through conscious, unwavering acceptance.

TPX – Therapeutic Psychological Integration

The Core Dynamic

This maamar reframes spiritual struggle as a psychological and existential process rather than a failure state. The central mechanism is da'at, not as abstract knowledge, but as integrated awareness that allows a person to hold complexity without fragmentation. When da'at is present, opposing experiences such as kindness and hardship, clarity and confusion, closeness and distance are metabolized into a single coherent inner narrative. When da'at is absent, the psyche splits, and even goodness can feel threatening or destabilizing.

From a therapeutic lens, this is the difference between integration and dissociation. A person with integration can experience pain without losing meaning. A person without it experiences the same pain as abandonment, punishment, or chaos.

Nisayon as Therapeutic Exposure

The maamar's definition of nisayon is remarkably precise: true testing requires removal of felt attachment

Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl

Me'or Einayim

Parshas Va'eira

while preserving choice. This mirrors controlled exposure in modern therapy. If comfort, reassurance, or emotional warmth remain intact, there is no real test of internalized values. Growth happens only when the external supports are reduced and the person must act from internalized commitments.

Importantly, the text insists that da'at is not erased during a trial; it is reduced. This is crucial. In psychological terms, this means the person is not regressing or breaking, but being invited to operate from a deeper layer of self rather than from emotional reinforcement. The success of a nisayon depends on what was stabilized earlier, when awareness was wide and accessible.

Why Judgment Feels So Dangerous

The teaching explains that din feels destructive only to someone who relates to God, and by extension to life, conditionally. If goodness is expected to arrive only through kindness and mercy, then contraction feels like rejection. This is a classic conditional attachment pattern. The moment conditions change, the bond feels broken.

The tzaddik, by contrast, has unconditional attachment. Judgment is not experienced as loss of relationship but as a different expression of the same relationship. Psychologically, this is secure attachment. The environment may shift, but the bond remains intact.

Reframing Collapse

The maamar directly addresses a common psychological crisis: a person experiences a period of growth, clarity, or success, and then begins to unravel. The instinctive response is panic or self-blame. Here, collapse is reframed as possible nisayon. The instruction is strikingly practical: become "a peg firmly fixed," do not abandon your internal commitments just because emotional feedback has changed.

This is emotional regulation at a high level. Stability is not maintained by mood management but by meaning anchoring. The self does not chase relief; it holds position.

Expansion and Constriction as One Process

The explanation of the ten plagues introduces a sophisticated model of growth: da'at is revealed both through increase and decrease. Expansion builds capacity; constriction tests whether that capacity has been integrated. Both are necessary. Without expansion, there is no substance. Without constriction, there is no ownership.

In therapeutic language, insight without stress testing remains intellectual. Stress without insight becomes trauma. Healing occurs when both are present in sequence.

Modern Story

A man in his early forties entered therapy after a sudden collapse in motivation. For years he had been deeply engaged in learning, prayer, and community leadership. Then, over the course of months, everything felt empty. He described it as being "cut off from the plug." He assumed he had failed spiritually.

Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl

Me'or Einayim

Parshas Va'eira

Rather than trying to restore inspiration, his therapist asked one question: "When the feeling disappeared, what did you stop doing?" The answer was immediate. He had stopped praying consistently, stopped learning seriously, and stopped showing up emotionally for others. Not out of rebellion, but because it no longer felt real.

They reframed the experience. The earlier years were expansion. Now came constriction. The work was not to feel inspired again, but to act from values without emotional reinforcement. Slowly, he rebuilt consistency, not chasing feelings. Months later, warmth returned, but it was quieter and more stable. He later said that the second phase felt less dramatic, but more real.

This is exactly the movement of the maamar. Da'at matured. The relationship no longer depended on constant illumination. What once felt like loss revealed itself as integration.

Closing Integration

This TPX teaches that spiritual and psychological health are not measured by intensity, clarity, or comfort. They are measured by continuity under change. When a person can accept both expansion and constriction as meaningful expressions of the same underlying truth, judgment no longer fractures the self. It becomes another path to wholeness.

END NOTE]