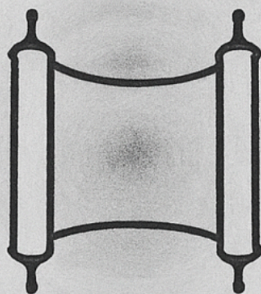


בס"ד

**Menachem Nachum
of Chernobyl
Me'or Einayim
Parshas Vayeishev**



Dedicated To:

טנייה מלכה בת דינה דבורה
דפואה שלמה

To find more Maamarim and to dedicate one visit:

ChassidusNow.com

Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl

Me'or Einayim

Parshas Vayeishev

Introduction

Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl (1730–1787), known as the author of *Me'or Einayim*, was one of the earliest disciples of the Baal Shem Tov and a foundational teacher of early Chasidut. In this maamar, he reveals how every detail of Torah, from creation to the exodus from Egypt to Yosef's spiritual role, instructs the inner work of a Jew in every generation. He teaches that Torah is the divine garment that allows the Infinite to be present within the finite, that every word a Jew speaks can become an exodus from constriction, and that the tzaddik lifts souls through speech just as Yosef clothed holiness in garments of this world.

And Yisrael loved Yosef etc. It is known that the Torah is eternal in every person and at every time, and it preceded the world, except that it became enclothed in stories of deeds according to the time, meaning that at the time when the Avot, Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov, existed, the Torah became enclothed in the stories of their deeds.

וישראל אהב את יוסף וכו' הנה נודע היות התורה נצחית בכל אדם ובכל זמן והיא קדמה לעולם אלא שנתלבשה בספורי מעשיות כפי הזמן והינו בעת שהיו האבות אברהם יצחק ויעקב נתלבשה התורה בספורי המעשיות שלהם

However, nevertheless, it must be so at every time, and it is called Torah from the expression that teaches a way, and if so, one must understand in this verse what way of guidance is here.

אבל מפל מקום צריך להיות פן בכל זמן ונקראת תורה מלשון מורה דרך ואם פן צריך להבין בפסוק זה מה הוראת דרך יש כאן

However, behold, it is known from the saying of our Sages, Bereishit bara etc., for the sake of the Torah and for the sake of Yisrael etc. And the matter is that the ultimate intention of the creation of the worlds was only to bestow good to His creations.

אמנם הנה נודע מאמר רבותינו זכרונם לברכה בראשית ברא וגו' בשביל התורה ובשביל ישראל וכו' והענין כי תכלית פונת בריאת העולמות היתה רק להיטיב לברואיו

For the Holy One, blessed be He, did not need to create the world for Himself like a person who needs something that exists because he lacks that thing and therefore needs it, but the Holy One, blessed be He, is not so, for He is complete in all forms of perfection.

כי השם יתברך לא היה צריך לברוא העולם בשביל עצמו כמו האדם שצריך לאיזה דבר שנמצא אם כי שהוא חסר אותו דבר כיון שהוא צריך לו אבל השם יתברך אינו כן כי הוא שלם בכל מיני השלמות

And no deficiency can be attributed to Him, Heaven forbid, to say that He needed the creation of the worlds, rather the intention of the creation was because the nature of the good is to bestow good, as the verse says, Hashem is good to all (Tehillim 145:9).

ולא יפל עליו שום חסרון חס ושלום עד שנאמר שהיה צריך לבריאת העולמות רק פונת הבריאה היתה כי מטבע הטוב להיטיב כמו שאמר הכתוב (Tehillim 145:9) טוב ה' לכל

And therefore He created the worlds so that the creations could benefit from His goodness, and the principal goodness is that Yisrael delight in the doing of His commandments, and through this they delight in Hashem.

ועל פן ברא העולמות לשיוכלו הבריות ליהנות מטובו ועיקר הטוב הוא מה שמתענגין ישראל בעשיית מצותיו ובזה מתענגין על ה'

Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl

Me'or Einayim Parshas Vayeishev

And then He also receives pleasure from this, as our Sages said, Yisrael sustain their Father in Heaven, like the parable of a father who delights in his delightful child.

ואז גם הוא מקבל תענוג מזה כמו שאמרו רבותינו זכרונם לברכה ישראל מפרנסים לאביהם שבשמים כמשל האב שמתענג בילד שעשועיו

And with this the meaning of the Mishnah is explained: Do not be like servants who serve the master in order to receive reward, but be like servants who serve the master not in order to receive reward.

ובזה מבאר פונת המשנה אל תהיו כעבדים המשמשים את הרב על מנת לקבל פרס אלא היו כעבדים המשמשים את הרב שלא על מנת לקבל פרס

For at first glance this is extra wording, for from the fact that it says, Do not be etc., it is automatically understood that it must be not in order to receive reward, so why did the Mishnah repeat in the latter clause.

דלכאורה הוא שפתי יתר דמקלל שאמר אל תהיו וכו' ממילא נשמע דצריך להיות שלא על מנת לקבל פרס ולמה חזר ושנה בסיפא

But the matter is from what was said, that one must delight in the doing of the commandments of Hashem, may He be blessed, with a spiritual delight similar to the World to Come.

אבל הענין הוא ממה שאמר שצריך להתענג בעשיית מצות השם יתברך תענוג רוחני מעין עולם הבא

And this is what they said: Do not be like servants who serve etc., meaning that the service should not be in order to receive reward afterward and to expect the payment of the reward of the World to Come that will be later.

וזהו מה שאמרו אל תהיו כעבדים המשמשים וכו' כלומר שלא תהיה העבודה לקבל שכר אחר זה ולצפות לתשלם שכר עולם הבא מה שיהיה אחר כך

Rather, immediately at the moment of doing the mitzvah, a spiritual delight from Above should be aroused upon you, and this is the meaning of not in order etc., meaning that it should not be in order that one receive afterward some good from it, rather the good is the involvement in the mitzvah itself.

אלא תיכף בעת עשיית המצוה יתעורר תענוג רוחני מלמעלה עליכם וזהו שלא על מנת וכו' רצונו לומר שלא יהיה על מנת דהינו שיקבל אחר פן איזה טובה מזה

And immediately when one engages in the mitzvah, he should delight in Hashem.

אלא הטובה הוא העסק במצוה גופה ותיכף שעוסק יתענג על ה'

And this is the meaning of Bereishit, for the sake of the Torah and for the sake of Yisrael. For behold, the Holy One, blessed be He, is without end, and how can He create the world which has an end.

וזהו בראשית בשביל התורה ובשביל ישראל דהנה השם יתברך הוא בלתי בעל תכלית ואיך יכול לברוא העולם שהוא בעל תכלית

But it is through the Torah, as it is written, Splendor and majesty You wear (Tehillim 104:1), and through this He contracted His Shechinah so there could be in the world limitation and end.

אבל הוא על ידי התורה כמו שכתוב הוד וקדר ועל ידי זה צמצם (Tehillim 104:1) לבשת שכנתו שיוכל להיות בעולם גבול ותכלית

And the entire intention of creation was for the sake of Yisrael, that they should walk in the Torah of Hashem and receive the complete goodness as stated.

וכל עיקר פונת הבריאה היתה בשביל ישראל שילכו בתורת ה' ויקבלו הטוב הגמור כאמר

Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl

Me'or Einayim

Parshas Vayeishev

But behold, He should have begun the Torah with its commandments, so why did it become en clothed in stories of deeds.

אבל הנה הנה לו להתחיל התורה ממצוותיה ולמה נתלבשה בספורי מעשיות

But the matter is that we are commanded to recount the exodus from Egypt, as the author of the Haggadah said, and whoever increases in recounting the exodus from Egypt, behold this is praiseworthy.

אבל הענין דמצוה עלינו לספר ביציאת מצרים כמו שאמר בעל ההגדה וכל המרבה לספר ביציאת מצרים הרי זה משובח

And behold, to understand the matter of increases which he said. But behold, our Sages said that the mundane speech of Torah scholars requires study.

והנה להבין הענין המרבה דקאמר אבל הנה אקרו רבותינו זכרונם לברכה שיחת חולין של תלמידי חכמים צריכה לימוד

For surely it is impossible to learn Torah constantly, and one must speak physical matters, and the righteous walk in them.

כי בודאי אי אפשר ללמוד תורה תמיד וצריך לדבר דברים גשמיים וצדיקים ילכו בהם

When they speak, even physical matters, they are attached to Him, may He be blessed, and literally their speech is Torah, for they elevate souls through this just as through involvement in Torah.

כשהם מדברים אפילו דברים גשמיים הם דבוקים בו יתברך וממש שיחתו תורה היא כי מעלים בזה נשמות כמו בעסק התורה

And there are souls that are able to be elevated through speech more than through involvement in Torah, for they do not have the power to be integrated in Torah and elevated with the Torah, but only through physical speech.

ויש נשמות שיכולים להתעלות בדבורים יותר מעסק התורה שאין להם כח להכלל בתורה ולהתעלות עם התורה רק עם הדבור הגשמי

And this is the concept of the exodus from Egypt, from the expression meitzar yam, meaning near the shore of the sea of true wisdom.

ונה ענין יציאת מצרים מלשון מיצר ים רצונו לומר סמוך לשפת ים החכמה האמיתית

Therefore it is a mitzvah to constantly recount the exodus from Egypt, meaning that at every moment and every hour, when one speaks any matter, his words should be of the exodus from Egypt.

ולכן מצוה לספר תמיד ביציאת מצרים פירוש בכל עת ובכל שעה כשמדבר איזה דבר יהיו דבריו ביציאת מצרים

And this is the meaning of whoever increases etc., not specifically on Pesach but even always his recounting should be of the exodus from Egypt.

ונהו וכל המרבה וכו' דלא דוקא בפסח אלא אפילו תמיד יהיה ספורו ביציאת מצרים

And this is, And Yisrael loved Yosef. For behold, it is brought in the holy Zohar that the Holy One, blessed be He, is called Yisrael Sava, and Yosef is the tzaddik, for he constantly adds in fear of Heaven to elevate lower levels to Him, may He be blessed.

ונהו וישראל אהב את יוסף דהנה איתא בזוהר הקדוש דהשם יתברך נקרא ישראל סבא ויוסף הוא הצדיק כי תמיד מוסיף בקראת שמים להעלות מדרגות תחתונות אליו יתברך

Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl

Me'or Einayim

Parshas Vayeishev

For he is a son of old age to him, and Onkelos translated, for he is a wise son to him, meaning that he elevates all souls through his speech, and all of them are clarified through wisdom.

פי בן זקנים הוא לו ותרגום אונקלוס ארי בן חכים
הוא ליה פירוש שמעלה כל הנשמות בדבורו וכולם
בהקמה אתגרירי

And he made for him a coat of many colors, for the tzaddik makes for the Holy One, blessed be He, garments in which the Holy One, blessed be He, is en clothed.

ועשה לו כתנת פסים פי הצדיק עושה לה' יתברך
לבושין במה שיתלבש בו השם יתברך

Pesim is the initial letters of peh sach yetziat Mitzrayim, and understand this. Blessed is Hashem forever, amen and amen.

פס"ם הוא ראשי תבות פה סח יציאת מצרים והבן
ברוך ה' לעולם אמן ואמן

[NOTE Summary:

The maamar begins with the teaching that Bereishit, at its root, means “for the sake of the Torah and for the sake of Yisrael.” The Infinite cannot relate directly to a finite world; only through Torah, described in the verse Splendor and majesty You wear, can Hashem contract His presence into a world of limit and boundary. The entire purpose of creation, therefore, is so that Yisrael will walk in His Torah and receive the complete goodness prepared for them.

The maamar then addresses why the Torah begins with stories instead of commandments. The answer is that recounting the exodus from Egypt is itself a mitzvah, and not only on Pesach but at all times. The author of the Haggadah says that whoever increases in recounting the exodus is praiseworthy, and the maamar explains this through the saying that even the mundane speech of Torah scholars requires study. Since it is impossible to learn Torah constantly, one must sometimes speak of physical matters. Yet for the righteous, even those words are attached to Hashem, elevate souls, and become Torah. Some souls can be elevated more through speech than through formal Torah study, for they cannot be integrated into the Torah's spiritual intensity but can rise through the light hidden within physical words.

This is the deeper meaning of the exodus from Egypt as meitzar yam, the boundary of the sea of true wisdom. Every moment of speech can become an exodus, lifting constricted consciousness toward divine wisdom. Therefore one is to recount the exodus constantly, meaning that all speech should express spiritual liberation.

The maamar concludes by connecting this to the verse And Yisrael loved Yosef. In the Zohar, Hashem is called Yisrael Sava and Yosef is the tzaddik who continually adds fear of Heaven and lifts lower levels upward. Onkelos translates ben zekunim as a wise son, meaning Yosef elevates many souls through his speech, for all souls are clarified in wisdom. The ketonet pasim represents the garments the tzaddik fashions for Hashem to dwell within creation. Pasim is interpreted as the initials of peh sach yetziat Mitzrayim, teaching that the tzaddik's speech itself is a perpetual exodus from bondage.

Practical Takeaway:

A Jew is invited to transform ordinary speech into an act of liberation. Even when speaking about physical matters, one can speak with presence, sincerity, humility, and awareness of Hashem, turning words into a garment for the soul and a vessel for divine light. Every conversation can be an inner exodus: leaving constricted patterns of ego and moving toward spaciousness, clarity, and connection. The tzaddik models this

Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl

Me'or Einayim

Parshas Vayeishev

by elevating others through speech; we emulate this whenever we use words to uplift, encourage, and awaken the goodness in others.

Chassidic Story:

A well-known episode from the life of the Chernobyler Maggid illustrates this maamar's teaching about the elevating power of speech. Once, a simple wagon driver came to the Maggid before Pesach, distressed because he could not understand even the basic parts of the Haggadah. He said that when people spoke of the mitzvah to recount the exodus, he felt excluded, for he lacked words of Torah and possessed only the coarse language of the marketplace.

The Maggid told him gently that recounting the exodus does not mean repeating sophisticated explanations but speaking from a place that brings one out of narrowness. He instructed the man to tell, in his own words, how Hashem had helped him in the hardships of his life, how there were times he felt trapped and yet a way opened. The Maggid told him these stories are also an exodus from Egypt, for they reveal how Hashem draws a person from constriction to openness.

That night, the wagon driver sat at his table and spoke simply about his struggles, his gratitude, and his faith. When he later returned to the Maggid, the Maggid said that his recounting had risen higher than many learned interpretations, because it was spoken with sincerity and became a garment for divine presence. The Maggid explained that this is what it means that the tzaddik fashions garments for Hashem: he teaches people how their everyday speech can become a vessel in which holiness rests.

TPX

Understanding the Teaching

The teaching explores a central Chasidic idea: that Torah is not only a divine text but the very mechanism that allows the Infinite to inhabit a finite world. According to this approach, Hashem's essence is beyond all boundaries, and the only way He can be revealed within limitation is through garments. Torah becomes that garment, contracting divine light so that it can be received within the structure of creation. The world exists so that human beings, especially Yisrael, can engage that divine will and experience the delight of aligning themselves with it.

From here the teaching shifts to a psychological and spiritual insight: human speech itself has the power to lift consciousness. The maamar explains that some souls can be elevated more by speech than by formal study, because speech carries emotional resonance, relational energy, and a quality of embodiment that learning alone sometimes cannot access. This is why recounting the exodus from Egypt is not merely a ritual obligation but a continuous inner practice. In psychological language, the "exodus" is the movement from constriction to freedom, from mental tightness to widened awareness. Any time a person speaks in a way that brings themselves or another out of emotional narrowness, they are reenacting the exodus.

The final layer explores the tzaddik as one who elevates others through speech. Yosef represents the archetype of the one whose words become garments of light. His ability to lift souls is not mystical alone; it is relational.

Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl

Me'or Einayim

Parshas Vayeishev

He speaks in a way that restores dignity, wisdom, and spaciousness. This is what it means that the tzaddik fashions garments for Hashem: he creates relational environments and inner states in which divine presence can be felt.

Therapeutic Integration

From a therapeutic perspective, this teaching reframes speech as a modality of transformation. Not every person can be uplifted through abstract principles or intellectual learning. Many people respond more profoundly to tone, presence, and the emotional quality of another's voice. Words can regulate the nervous system; they can open or close; they can free or constrict. When we use speech with intention, warmth, and clarity, we participate in a process of liberation.

The idea that speech can elevate certain souls more than study parallels what contemporary therapy calls somatic or relational access points. Not every client enters healing through insight. Some enter through a conversation that softens their body. Some heal through a narrative that reclaims their sense of agency. Some shift when they articulate their experience for the first time and feel genuinely heard.

"Recounting the exodus" in daily life becomes a psychological practice: speaking in ways that open emotional space, that shift the inner story from stuckness to movement, that transform overwhelming experiences into pathways of meaning. Every time someone says, "Here is where I used to feel trapped, and here is how I began to walk out," they are performing a living exodus.

Modern Story

A woman named Leah worked in a high-pressure corporate role. She carried years of self-doubt, reinforced daily by a critical supervisor. One evening, after a particularly harsh meeting, she called a close friend. Rather than offering advice, the friend simply said, "Leah, take a breath and tell me the story from the beginning, not from the fear but from the strength that carried you through today."

Something shifted. Leah spoke slowly, describing not only the tension but also the moments she had acted with integrity and resilience. As she spoke, her breathing eased. Her posture changed. She realized she had walked through the day with far more courage than she had allowed herself to recognize.

The next morning she entered work differently. Nothing external had changed. But the way she narrated her experience had changed her internal reality. It was, in the language of the maamar, a small exodus from Egypt invoked through speech. Speaking with presence had become a garment through which light could enter, and that shift rippled into her interactions, her choices, and her sense of self.

This is the heart of the teaching: when words are used with intention and compassion, they become instruments of liberation.

END NOTE]