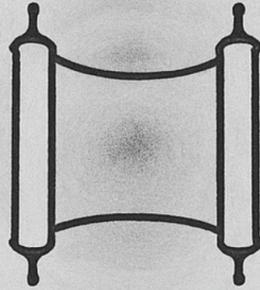


בס"ד

**Reb Meir of Premishlan**

**Divrie Meir**

**Parshas Mishpatim**



*Dedicated To:*

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## Rabbi Meir of Premishlan

Divrie Meir

Parshas Mishpatim

אם כפר יושת עליו ונתן פדיון נפשו ככל אשר יושת עליו כא, ל

**If ransom is imposed upon him, then he shall give for the redemption of his soul according to all that is imposed upon him. (Exodus 21:30)**

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I heard that once a villager came before Rabbi Meir of Premishlan with a complaint, saying that he wanted specifically to move his residence to the city and did not want to live in the village, because it was neither fitting nor proper to live in a village, but rather in the city among people.

שמעתי שפעם אחד בא לפניו [לפני רבי מאיר מפרמישלאן] איש כפר בקובלנה שרוצה דיקא לעקור דירתו בעיר ואינו רוצה לדור בכפר, כי לא נאה ולא יאה לדור בכפר רק בעיר בין אנשים

Rabbi Meir, of blessed memory, said to him that the verse applies to him: "If ransom is imposed upon him"—meaning, if it was decreed upon his soul's root that he should be a villager—the word כפר being a reference to "village"),

ואמר לו הרב רבי מאיר ז"ל שיעליך אומר קרא 'אם כפר יושת עליו', היינו באם נגזר עליו בשרש נשמתו, שיהיה בן כפר, 'כפר' לשון כפר

Then "he shall give for the redemption of his soul"—he must fulfill the root of his soul's mission "according to all that is imposed upon him," meaning according to what has been decreed upon him from Heaven, and it is impossible to change that he should be a city-dweller.

אזי ונתן פדיון נפשו' מחיב להשלים שרש נשמתו ונפשו כאשר יושת עליו, דהינו כאשר נגזר עליו מן השמים, ואי אפשר לשנות שיהיה בן עיר

### [NOTE Summary:

Rabbi Meir of Premishlan interpreted the verse "If ransom is imposed upon him..." (Exodus 21:30) not merely as a legal formula, but as a profound spiritual teaching about destiny. When a man came to him expressing dissatisfaction with being a villager and longing to live in the city, Rabbi Meir explained that if one's soul-root was decreed from Heaven to dwell in a certain environment—be it a village—it is that very placement that holds the key to his mission. The word "כפר" (ransom) is reinterpreted to mean "כפר" (village), teaching that one's external station in life is a direct extension of their soul's inner purpose.

### Practical Takeaway:

Rather than striving to escape one's external circumstances in search of prestige or comfort, a person should recognize the divine placement of their soul's mission. One's environment—no matter how humble—is tailor-made from Heaven for fulfilling their unique spiritual purpose.

### Chassidic Story:

A simple man from the village of Kobelna once approached Rabbi Meir of Premishlan, lamenting his fate and pleading to relocate to the city, convinced that village life was beneath him. Rabbi Meir responded with the verse, "If ransom is imposed upon him..."—teaching that the soul's placement, even in a small village, is no

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accident but a decree from Heaven. “כפר” (ransom) is also “כפר” (village), he said, and thus the man’s spiritual task lies precisely where he is, not where he dreams of being. The man left with peace of heart, embracing his village life as sacred destiny. **END NOTE]**

**אם לא ימצא הגנב ונקרב בעל הבית אל האלהים אם לא שלח ידו במלאכת רעהו כב, ז**

**If the thief is not found, then the owner of the house shall approach the judges to swear that he has not laid his hand upon his neighbor’s property. (Exodus 22:7)**

**In the name of the righteous Rabbi of Premishlan: "Then the owner of the house shall approach the judges to swear that he has not laid his hand upon his neighbor’s property."**

That is, how does a simple person, who is not deeply engaged in Torah and prayer, bring himself closer to God? By ensuring that "he has not laid his hand upon his neighbor’s property"—that is, by conducting business with integrity, as it is stated (Shabbat 31a) that one of the first questions asked is, "Did you deal honestly in business?"

The holy Rabbi Meir of Premishlan, may his merit protect us, explained the verse later in this portion: "Then the owner of the house shall approach the judges to swear that he has not laid his hand upon his neighbor’s property."

This means that if a Jew wishes to draw close to God, that is, to begin serving Him, he must first examine and verify whether he has not harmed others in matters between man and his fellow. He must ensure that he has not taken another’s money unjustly, nor caused them distress, harm, or anguish.

### [NOTE Summary:

Rabbi Meir of Premishlan teaches that the verse “Then the owner of the house shall approach the judges to swear that he has not laid his hand upon his neighbor’s property” (Exodus 22:7) holds deep spiritual relevance beyond its legal context. A Jew seeking closeness to God must begin not with lofty spiritual practices, but by ensuring that he has not harmed his fellow. The simplest way to "approach God" is through upright behavior and honest dealings—what the Sages call *emunah* (faithfulness) in business.

### Practical Takeaway:

Before aspiring to spiritual heights, examine how you treat others. Make sure your hands are clean in matters between man and man—honesty, fairness, and integrity are the true beginning of divine service.

**בשם הרב הצדיק מפרימישלאן ונקרב בעל הבית אל האלהים אשר לא שלח ידו במלאכת רעהו**

היגו במה מקרב את עצמו האיש פשוט אשר אינו עוסק כל כך בתורה ותפלה, במה מקרב את עצמו אל ה', 'אם לא שלח ידו במלאכת רעהו' היגו משא ומתן באמונה, על דרך דאיתא (שבת לא). 'ששוואלין ועסקת באמונה

פריש הרב הקדוש רבי ר' מאיר מפרימישלאן זכותו יגן עלינו את הכתוב להלן בפירוש זה 'ונקרב בעל הבית אל האלהים אם לא שלח ידו במלאכת רעהו

ונקרב בעל הבית אל האלהים' אם בר ישראל רוצה להתקרב אל האלהים היגו להתחיל בעבודת ה', אזי בראשונה עליו לעיין ולבדק 'אם לא שלח ידו במלאכת רעהו', אם לא פגם בענינים שבין אדם לחברו, שלא נטל ממון חברו שלא כדיון ולא גרם לו צער ונזק ועגמת נפש



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### [NOTE Summary:

Rabbi Meir of Premishlan explains the verse "And you shall serve the Lord your God, and He will bless your bread and your water, and I will remove sickness from your midst" (Exodus 23:25) in both spiritual and practical terms. When a Jew serves Hashem sincerely, Hashem grants him the power to bless others. "Your bread and your water" becomes a channel of healing—whoever eats or drinks from them is healed. This is not merely allegorical: in 1848, during a terrible epidemic, Rabbi Meir gave literal bread and water to hang in a designated home, saying that this was the secret of the verse—and miraculously, the plague was held back.

### Practical Takeaway:

True service of Hashem empowers a person to be a source of healing and blessing to others. Even simple acts like offering someone bread and water can become vessels for Divine compassion—if done with sincere holiness.

### Chassidic Story:

In 1848, when a deadly plague threatened a city, members of the community went to Rabbi Meir of Premishlan to request a *pidyon nefesh*. He gave them a loaf of bread and a jug of water, instructing them to hang it in the house of a distinguished individual. He quoted the verse: "And He will bless your bread and your water, and I will remove sickness from your midst." True to his word, the city was spared. The ordinary became miraculous through the holiness of his blessing. **END NOTE]**

וְעַבַדְתֶּם אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וּבִרְךְ אֶת לַחֲמֶה וְאֶת מִימֵיךָ וְהִסְרֵתִי מִחֲלָה מִקִּרְבְּךָ כִּג, כה

"And you shall serve the Lord your God, and He will bless your bread and your water, and I will remove sickness from your midst."

Once, the holy Rabbi of Premishlan spent Shabbat with the holy Rabbi of Apta, of blessed memory.

פעם אחת היה הרב הקדוש מפרמישלאן על שבת אצל הרב הקדוש מאפטא זצ"ל

At that time, Rabbi Meir explained the verse: "And you shall serve the Lord your God, and He will bless your bread and your water, and I will remove sickness from your midst."

ואמר אז רבי מאיר פרוש הפסוק 'וְעַבַדְתֶּם אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וּבִרְךְ אֶת לַחֲמֶה וְאֶת מִימֵיךָ וְהִסְרֵתִי מִחֲלָה מִקִּרְבְּךָ'

He explained: "And you shall serve"—if one serves Hashem through prayer, which is called 'service' (Avodah), then "He will bless"—a righteous person is granted the power to bless the people of Israel.

ויפרש 'וְעַבַדְתֶּם'—אם עובדים ה' בתפלה שנקרא עבודה, אזי 'וברך'—יש כח בהצדיק לברך את ישראל.

"Your bread"—if one engages in acts of kindness, as it is written, "Surely, you should share your bread with the hungry" (Isaiah 58:7),

לחמה'—ואם עוסקים בגמילות חסדים, הלא 'פרס (לרעב לחמה' (ישעיה נח, ז

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Then "I will remove sickness from your midst"—the righteous person is then empowered to bless, and Hashem will heal the sick of Israel and remove illness from among them.

אָזי 'וְהִסְרֵתִי מִתְּלֶהּ מִקְרָבָה'—גַּשׁ בְּכַח לְהַצְדִּיק  
וּלְבָרֶךְ, וְהוּא אוֹתוֹ לְרַפְאוֹת אֶת חוֹלֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וּלְהַסִּיר  
מִתְּלֶהּ מִקְרָבָם.

Thus spoke Rabbi Meir, of blessed memory.

כָּהָ אָמַר לוֹ הָרַב מֵאִיר זצ"ל.

#### [NOTE Summary:

Rabbi Meir of Premishlan, while spending Shabbat with the holy Rabbi of Apta, offered a layered interpretation of the verse: "And you shall serve the Lord your God, and He will bless your bread and your water, and I will remove sickness from your midst" (Exodus 23:25). He explained that serving Hashem through prayer (called *Avodah*) empowers a tzaddik to bless others. If that service includes acts of kindness—such as feeding the hungry—then Hashem, in turn, empowers the tzaddik to heal others and remove illness. The verse thus outlines a spiritual progression: Avodah (prayer), Gemilus Chasadim (kindness), and healing.

#### Practical Takeaway:

Through sincere prayer and acts of lovingkindness, a person not only draws close to God but becomes a conduit for blessings and healing to others. One's spiritual work uplifts not only the self, but the community.

#### Chassidic Story:

While visiting the holy Rabbi of Apta for Shabbat, Rabbi Meir of Premishlan shared this profound insight into the power of a righteous individual's Avodah. He said that when a tzaddik prays and performs kindness—such as feeding the hungry—his hands are entrusted with blessing, and his presence can bring healing to an entire people. His words were not theory; they were lived truth, and many witnessed how his very being brought spiritual and even physical healing wherever he went. **END NOTE]**