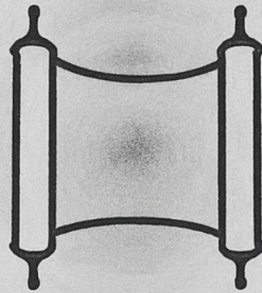


בס"ד

**Rebbe Elimelech
of Lizhensk
Parshas Miketz**



*Dedicated To :
the Holy Victims
of the Bondi Terror attack:*

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The Rebbe, Rebbe Elimelech of Lizhensk

Noam Elimelech

Parshas Miketz

מאמר א

And it came to pass at the end, etc. It seems to me, according to what is stated: "The Sages taught in the language [of the Mishnah]," etc. At first glance, what does this teach us? In what other language could they have taught?

ויהי מקץ כו'. נראה לי על פי דאיתא "שנו חכמים בלשון [המשנה]" כו', ולכאורה מה משמיענו בזה, וכי באיזה לשון אחר היה להם לשנות?

Rather, it appears that when a person engages in the study of Torah or in a mitzvah, he must place within it two aspects. The first is the act itself, the engagement in that matter, which in itself is holiness.

אלא נראה לפי שפשהאדם עוסק בלמוד תורה או במצוה צריך להניח בה שתי בחינות, והם האחד העסק שעוסק בדבר ההוא שהוא בעצמו קדשה

And to add to it a higher thought of awe and love, to draw into that engagement the supernal light from the upper worlds. This is "they taught," from the language of doubling, like "repeat" or "triple."

ולהוסיף בה מחשבה עליונה של יראה ואהבה להמשיך בעסק ההוא אור העליון מעולמות העליונים, וזהו "שנו" מלשון כפול כמו שנו שלשו

The explanation is that when they would study the Mishnah, they would study it with the two aspects mentioned above. This is also what they said: "Anyone who reviews laws," etc.

פרוש כשהיו לומדים המשנה, היו לומדים אותה בשתי בחינות הנ"ל. וזהו גם כן מה שאמרו "כל השונה הלכות כו'"

For it should have said "anyone who studies laws." Rather, they intended to allude through this wording to the intentions mentioned above.

והיה לו לומר כל הלומד הלכות, כגון בזה לרמז על הפניות הנ"ל

And this is "at the end of two years of days," etc. "Days" is a hint to holiness, which is called "day." Scripture says that if it enters a person's mind and thought that he is already complete in this level of the two aspects mentioned above.

וזהו "מקץ שנתים ימים" כו', "ימים" הוא רמז על הקדשה שנקרא יום, ואמר הפתוב אם יעלה על דעת ומחשבת אדם שכבר הוא גמור במדרגה זו של הב' בחינות הנ"ל

This is "at the end of two years of days," meaning when a person says that he is already in the two aspects mentioned above. He should know faithfully that his thought is not true.

וזהו "מקץ שנתים ימים" רצון לומר באשר יאמר האדם שכבר הוא בשתי בחינות הנ"ל, ידע נאמנה שאין מחשבתו אמת

Rather, this thought comes to him from the material body, which weakens him in the service, and makes him think that he has already been perfected with all good.

רק המחשבה הזאת באה לו מצד הגוף החמר, המרשילו בעבודה וסוכר שהוא נגמר בכל טוב

And this is "and Pharaoh dreams." Pharaoh has the same letters as "oref," the back of the neck, a hint to the body. It is the body that raises this thought to him, which has no substance, like dreams that speak falsehood.

וזהו "ופרעה חלם", פרעה הוא אותיות ערף, רמז על הגוף הוא המעלה לו ההרהור שהוא שאין בו ממש, כמו החלומות שאין ידברו

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“And behold, he was standing by the river.” “River” means like “light,” that is, his thought is that he is already standing upon the light.

“והנה עומד על הַיָּאָר”, יאָר פֿרוּשׁוֹ כְּמוֹ אוֹר, הֵינּוּ שְׂמֵחַ שֶׁבָּתוֹ הִיא שְׂכָכָר עוֹמֵד עַל הָאוֹר

But in truth, great exertion is required in the two aspects mentioned above, without interruption.

אַבְל בְּאַמֶּת צָרִיךְ הִתְאַמְּצוֹת גָּדוֹל בְּשְׁתֵּי בְּחִינּוֹת הַנִּלְכָּד בְּלִי הַפְּסָק.

“And behold, from the river there came up seven cows, etc.” It may be said that Scripture alludes here to great matters, since Joseph also saw two dreams.

“והנה מן הַיָּאָר עָלוּ שֶׁבַע פָּרוֹת וְכִיּוּצָא בּוֹ” יֵשׁ לומר דִּהְפָּתוּב מְרַמֵּז עַל, (Genesis 41:2) דְּבָרִים גְּדוֹלִים, הֵיחֵד שִׁיוּסָף גַּם כֵּן רָאָה שְׁנֵי חֲלוֹמוֹת

One dream was of grain: “And behold, we were binding sheaves,” etc., and one dream of the sun and the moon.

חֲלוֹם אֶחָד נָשַׁל תְּבוּאָה “והנה אֲנַחְנוּ” וְכִיּוּצָא בּוֹ (Genesis 37:7) וְחֲלוֹם שֶׁל שֶׁמֶשׁ וְיָרֵחַ, (Genesis 37:9).

Since Joseph is the attribute of Yesod, the righteous one whose desire and will are always to bestow upon Israel all good fitting for them.

וְלֵהֵיוֹת שִׁיוּסָף הוּא מִדְּרַגַּת הַיְסוֹד, שֶׁהוּא הַצַּדִּיק אֲשֶׁר רְצוֹנוֹ וְחֶפְצוֹ תָּמִיד לְהַשְׁפִּיעַ לְיִשְׂרָאֵל כָּל טוֹב הֶרָאוּי לָהֶם כְּרִצּוֹנוֹ

The first dream of grain alludes to sustenance, that the righteous must draw mercy for Israel so that their livelihood be readily available with abundance.

וְהַחֲלוֹם הֶרָאוּשׁוֹן שֶׁל תְּבוּאָה לְרַמֵּז עַל הַפְּרִנָּסָה, שֶׁהַצַּדִּיק צָרִיךְ לְהַמְשִׁיךְ לְיִשְׂרָאֵל רַחֲמִים שֶׁתִּהְיֶה פְּרִנָּסָתָם מְזוּמָּנָה לָהֶם בְּרִיחַ

Afterwards he saw what the righteous effects by his righteousness in the upper worlds, alluded to by the sun, moon, and eleven stars.

וְאַחֵר כֵּךְ רָאָה מַה שֶׁהַצַּדִּיק פּוֹעֵל בְּצַדִּיקוֹ בְּעוֹלָמוֹת הָעֲלִיּוֹנִים הַמְרֻמָּזִים בְּשֶׁמֶשׁ וְיָרֵחַ וְאַחֵד עֶשֶׂר כּוֹכָבִים

Here as well Pharaoh saw these two dreams with the same allusions.

וְכַאֲכֵן גַּם כֵּן פָּרְעֹה רָאָה שְׁנֵי חֲלוֹמוֹת אֵלּוּ עַל אוֹתָם רְמֻזִּים

Since the nations had nourishment from the bulls that Israel would offer, but Pharaoh was from the feminine aspect, therefore he saw them as cows.

וְלֵהֵיוֹת שֶׁתִּהְיוּ הָיָה לָהֶם זְנוּקָה מִן הַפָּרִים שֶׁהָיוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל מְקַרִּיבִים, אֲלָא שֶׁפָּרְעֹה הָיָה מִצַּד הַנּוֹקְבָא וְלִכֵּן רָאָה בְּדַמּוּת פָּרוֹת

It is known that seven alludes to the seven days of construction, and “seven healthy and good cows” alludes to the nations dwelling in tranquility and calm.

וְיָדוּעַ שֶׁשֶׁבַע הוּא רְמֵז לְשֶׁבַע יָמֵי הַבְּנוּי, וְ“שֶׁבַע רָמֵז (Genesis 41:2) פָּרוֹת בְּרִיאֹת וְטוֹבוֹת” לְאַמּוֹת הַיּוֹשְׁבִים שְׁלֹוִים וְשָׁקֵטִים

“And seven thin cows, of bad appearance,” alludes to Israel, sick and oppressed in the bitter exile.

(Genesis 41:3) “וְשֶׁבַע פָּרוֹת דָּלוֹת וְרַעוֹת תֹּאֲרֶ” רְמֵז עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל הַדּוּיִם וְסָחוּפִים בְּגִלוֹת הָעָר.

“And the cows of bad appearance swallowed,” etc., “the healthy and full ones,” alludes that Israel will consume the nations through the abundance of their holiness.

“וְתִבְלַעְנָה הַפָּרוֹת רַעוֹת הַמְרָאָה כּוֹ” אֵת הַבְּרִיאֹת רְמֵז שֶׁיִּכְלּוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל, (Genesis 41:4) וְהַמְלָאוֹת” אֵת הָאַמּוֹת מְרִב קִדְשָׁתָם

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Scripture explains from where they came to consume the nations, and therefore says: "And they entered into their inward parts, yet it was not known."

Meaning that the good Lord planted in His mercy within the righteous, in their hearts that burn with awe and cleaving, a hidden and concealed matter.

They appear like madmen before the world, which does not know this, as I explained in ancient days on the verse "How great is Your goodness," etc.

There too the explanation is that great goodness of love and awe is hidden in the hearts of the righteous.

"Opposite mankind" means it stands in opposition to those people who dwell in darkness.

They do not know the abundance of goodness, awe, and desire of love for our blessed and exalted Creator.

This is "and they entered," meaning that a good thing entered within them, "yet it was not known," meaning a matter unknown to the masses.

This refers to awe, love, and complete cleaving, which remain hidden.

And the second dream was of "ears of grain," to allude to sustenance that the righteous must bestow upon Israel through his righteousness. This too follows the path explained above.

"And they swallowed," meaning that Israel absorbs all the good desire of the nations, for everything was created only for Israel.

This is also what Joseph said to his brothers: "You are spies," meaning that he wanted them to place themselves in the level of "feet."

That is, to think constantly about the needs of Israel's livelihood. They replied: "We are upright." The Targum explains: "We are properly directed."

Meaning: we desire to walk in great levels in the upper worlds, with great intentions in unifications at all times.

He said to them: "By this you shall be tested, by the life of Pharaoh, if etc., for you are spies."

ומפרש הפתוב מהיכן באו לזה שיכלו את האמות, ולזה אמר "ותבאנה אל קרבנה ולא נודע כי באו אל קרבנה" (Genesis 41:21),

פרוש היות שנטע השם הטוב ברחמיו בקרב הצדיקים בתוך לבם שבוער בקרבם אש היראה, והדבקות, ומצנע ומכסה בהם הדבר

והם כמשתגעים בפני העולם אשר אין יודעים מזה, וכפי אשר אמרתי פרוש בימים הקדמונים על פסוק "מה רב טובך פו' נגד בני אדם" (Psalms 31:20),

גם כפרוש הנ"ל, שנצפן בלב הצדיקים רב טוב, והאהבה והיראה וההתלהבות

וזהו "נגד בני אדם", הנינו שהוא התנגדות לאותם בני אדם, יושבי חשך

אשר אין יודעים מרב טוב היראה וחשק האהבה של בוראנו יתברך ויתעלה

וזהו שאמר "ותבאנה פו'", פרוש שבא לתוכם דבר טוב, "ולא נודע כי באו אל קרבנה"

פרוש דבר שאין יודעים בו רב הקמון, והם יראה ואהבה ודבקות שלם

וחלום שני היה "שבלים", לרמז על הפרנסה שצריך הצדיק להשפיע לישראל בצדקתו, והוא גם כן על הדבר הנ"ל

"ותבלענה" פרוש שישפאל בולעים את כל חפץ טוב האמות, כי הכל לא נברא אלא בשביל ישראל

וזה גם כן מה שאמר יוסף לאחיו "מרגלים אתם" פרוש שרצה שיכניסו עצמם, (Genesis 42:9) במדרגת "מרגלים"

והוא לחשב תמיד צורך פרנסות ישראל, והם אמרו והתרגום פירש, (Genesis 42:11) "בנים אנחנו", פנינו אנחנו

פרוש אנחנו רוצים לקחת במדרגות גדולות בעולמות העליונים ובכונות גדולות ביהודים תמיד

והוא אמר להם "בזאת תבחנו חי פרעה אם פו' כי" (Genesis 42:15), "מרגלים אתם"

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Meaning: through the Shechinah, called “this,” you will come to this level. “By the life of Pharaoh,” that you will take vitality from Pharaoh, namely from the husks.

פרוש נשעל ידי השכינה הנקראת “זאת,” “תבחנו” פרוש תבואו לבחינה זו, “חי פרעה” שתקחו את החיות מפרעה הם הקליפות,

“For you are spies,” that you will bestow by your power upon Israel.

“כי מרגלים אתם” ותשפיעו בכחכם לישראל

“And he gathered them into custody for three days,” meaning that from here they learned that Israel does not dwell in distress for more than three days.

(Genesis 42:17) “ויאסר אותם אל המשמר שלשת ימים” פרוש שמכאן למדו שישראל אינם שרויים, בצרה יותר משלשת ימים,

This was also his own intention in this act, to effect by his holy action that Israel’s distress never be extended beyond three days.

וזה גם כן הנה כונתו בעצמו בפעולה הזאת שאסר את אחיו במשמר שלשה ימים, לפעול בפעולתו הקדושה שתמיד לא יוסיפו לישראל בעת צרה יותר משלשה ימים,

Thus is the way of the righteous: they perform actions and within them intend great intentions, effecting good for generations through their deeds. Understand this.

וכן דרך הצדיקים שעושים עבודות ופעולות ומחשבים באותן העבודות כונות גדולות ופועלים במעשיהן טובה לדור דורים. והבן

[NOTE Summary:

Rabbi Elimelech of Lizhensk explains the opening of Miketz as a foundational teaching about authentic avodat Hashem. True Torah study and mitzvah observance must always contain two inseparable dimensions. The first is the concrete act itself, which already possesses inherent holiness. The second is inner consciousness, the deliberate attachment of awe and love of God, through which supernal light is drawn from the upper worlds into the act. This dual structure is alluded to in the rabbinic phrase “they taught” rather than “they learned,” indicating repetition and doubling, meaning that Torah must be engaged on both the external and inner planes simultaneously.

He warns against spiritual self satisfaction. When a person imagines that they have completed these two dimensions and reached a stable spiritual plateau, this itself is a sign of illusion. The verse “at the end of two years of days” is read as a warning that believing one has fully achieved both holiness of action and holiness of intention is a deception originating from the physical body. Pharaoh symbolizes this bodily force, hinted by the word “oref,” the back of the neck, which blocks inner awareness. His dreamlike confidence is compared to false dreams that feel vivid but lack substance. Even when a person believes they are “standing upon the light,” continuous effort without interruption is required.

Rabbi Elimelech then interprets Pharaoh’s dreams through the inner role of Yosef HaTzaddik, identified with the attribute of Yesod, whose purpose is to channel divine flow into the world. Yosef’s two dreams correspond to two forms of influence. The dream of grain represents material sustenance, the responsibility of the righteous to draw compassion so that Israel’s livelihood flows with ease. The dream of the sun, moon, and stars reflects the spiritual impact of the tzaddik in the higher worlds. Pharaoh’s dreams mirror these themes, but distorted through the lens of the nations.

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The seven healthy cows symbolize the nations living in tranquility, while the seven thin cows represent Israel suffering in exile. Yet the swallowing of the healthy cows by the thin ones points to the future spiritual dominance of Israel, not through physical power but through hidden inner holiness. The source of this power is concealed. God plants within the hearts of the righteous a burning fire of awe, love, and deep attachment that remains invisible to the outside world. The righteous may appear simple or even strange outwardly, while inwardly they contain immense spiritual wealth, echoing the verse “How great is Your goodness which You have hidden.”

This hidden inner life enables Israel to ultimately absorb the spiritual vitality of the nations. Even the material good of the world exists only to be elevated by Israel. Yosef’s accusation that his brothers were “spies” is explained as a demand that they descend into the level of “feet,” meaning practical responsibility for the material needs of Israel. Their response that they were “upright” reflects a desire to remain focused on lofty spiritual unifications alone. Yosef teaches that true service requires drawing vitality even from the realm of impurity and redirecting it toward sustaining Israel.

Finally, Yosef’s act of imprisoning his brothers for three days is understood as a deliberate spiritual action. Through this deed, he established a principle that Israel would never remain in a state of suffering for more than three days without relief. This exemplifies the way of the righteous, who perform physical actions while embedding within them far reaching spiritual intentions that generate blessing for generations.

Practical Takeaway:

Authentic spiritual life demands constant balance. One must never rely on inner inspiration alone, nor on external action alone. Torah and mitzvot require both disciplined practice and conscious inner attachment of awe and love. Spiritual confidence should always be met with humility and renewed effort, as complacency signals bodily illusion rather than true growth. At the same time, holiness often operates in hidden ways. One should not measure spiritual worth by outward appearance, neither in oneself nor in others. Quiet consistency, responsibility for the material and spiritual needs of others, and perseverance during difficulty are the marks of genuine avodat Hashem.

Chassidic Story:

It is related that Rabbi Elimelech once stayed overnight in a small village inn, dressed as a simple wanderer. The innkeeper treated him with indifference, assuming he was an unlearned pauper. Late at night, the innkeeper awoke and saw a faint glow coming from the corner of the room where Rabbi Elimelech lay. Approaching quietly, he heard whispered prayers spoken with intense awe and tenderness. Trembling, the innkeeper realized that a hidden tzaddik stood before him.

In the morning, Rabbi Elimelech departed without revealing himself. Only later, when the innkeeper shared the story with a visiting scholar, did he learn whose presence he had merited. Rabbi Elimelech later explained to his students that the greatest blessings are often concealed, and that God delights in planting immense light

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within vessels that appear ordinary. True holiness does not announce itself. It works silently, shaping worlds while remaining unseen. **END NOTE]**

מאמר ב

And this is what they said to him: “We are twelve, etc., the youngest is with our father,” also following the path explained above. (Genesis 42:13)

וזהו שאמרו לו "שנים עשר וגו' הקטן את אבינו וגו'", גם כן על הדרך הנ"ל

They were responding to what he said, that they should oversee the sustenance of Israel, alluded to in the word “spies,” meaning the level of the feet, as explained.

שהשיבו על מה שאמר וישראל להשיג על פרנסת ישראל הרמזו בתיבת "מרגלים" שפרשו של הרגלים כנ"ל

Therefore they said to him: we walk in great levels, for our intention is to rectify the twelve diagonal boundaries.

לזה אמרו לו אנחנו הולכין במדרגות גדולות, כי כונננו לתקן הי"ב גבולי אלכסון

Our thoughts are bound to supernal holy names. “And the youngest is today with our father” alludes to King Messiah.

ומחשבותינו קשורה בשמות קדושים עליונים, ונהקטן היום את אבינו, רמז למלך המשיח

He is David the small one, who dwells in the upper world called the Bird's Nest, as explained in the Zohar.

הוא דוד הקטן שהוא יושב בעולם העליון הנקרא קן צפור כמבאר בזוהר

He replied to them: “You shall not leave this place unless your youngest brother comes here.” (Genesis 42:15)

והוא השיב להם "אם תצאו מזה כי אם בבוא אחיכם הקטן הזה"

Meaning: you will not leave this level of “spies,” that is, constant concern for influence in the lower realms.

פרוש לא תצאו מזה המדרגה של "מרגלים", פרוש לחשוב תמיד עבור ההשפעה בתחתונים

This continues until the coming of the Messiah, speedily in our days. Then you will no longer need this concern.

עד ביאת המשיח במהרה בימינו, ואז לא תצטרכו לחשוב זה

Then you will leave this level for what is above, namely contemplation of the upper worlds and the holy names.

ואז תצאו מזה המדרגה אל מה שקמעלה, דהיינו לחשב בעולמות עליונים ובשמות הקדושים כנ"ל.

Understand this.

והבן

[NOTE Summary:

In this continuation, Rabbi Elimelech deepens the tension between lofty spiritual consciousness and responsibility for the material and spiritual needs of Israel. When the brothers respond, “We are twelve... the youngest is with our father,” they are not merely giving biographical information. They are explaining their spiritual orientation. They understand Yosef’s accusation of being “spies” as a demand to descend into the level of raglayim, practical engagement with sustenance and influence in the lower world. Their reply asserts that they are already engaged in exalted spiritual labor, repairing the twelve diagonal boundaries and binding their thoughts to supernal holy names, a reference to advanced mystical intentions and cosmic rectifications.

The phrase “the youngest is today with our father” is interpreted as an allusion to Mashiach, identified with David the small one. Mashiach, in this teaching, dwells in a concealed supernal realm known in the Zohar as the Bird’s Nest, awaiting the moment of revelation. The brothers imply that since their consciousness is already

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bound to such elevated realities, they should not need to remain preoccupied with material distribution and worldly oversight.

Yosef's response reframes the entire hierarchy. His insistence that they cannot leave unless the youngest brother comes is not a political condition but a spiritual directive. As long as Mashiach has not yet arrived, the task of the righteous is not to escape upward into abstract contemplation, but to remain stationed in the role of "spies," meaning constant awareness of the needs of the lower worlds. Their avodah must focus on drawing divine vitality downward, sustaining Israel materially and spiritually, and even extracting holiness from realms associated with concealment and limitation.

Only with the arrival of Mashiach will this order reverse. At that point, the burden of maintaining constant focus on worldly provision will fall away, and souls will be free to ascend fully into contemplation of the upper worlds and divine names. Until then, remaining grounded is not a spiritual compromise but the highest fidelity to God's will.

Practical Takeaway:

Rabbi Elimelech teaches that spiritual greatness is measured not by how high one can ascend in thought, but by willingness to remain engaged with responsibility. Until redemption, the task of those capable of deep spirituality is to stay present in the needs of others, especially in sustaining faith, dignity, and livelihood. Seeking constant transcendence while neglecting practical obligation is a subtle form of avoidance. True elevation lies in serving God precisely where the world still lacks redemption.

Chassidic Story:

It is told that a תלמיד once complained to Rabbi Elimelech that he felt pulled downward by communal obligations. He longed to retreat into solitude, prayer, and mystical study, but found himself constantly interrupted by people seeking advice, charity, or mediation. Rabbi Elimelech listened quietly and then said that before Mashiach comes, a soul is tested not by how high it can soar, but by how faithfully it remains where it is needed.

He explained that when a person is capable of flight but chooses to walk among others, lifting them step by step, that walking itself becomes a higher ascent than any secluded meditation. Only when the world itself is ready to rise will those who carried it be allowed to rest in the heights.

END NOTE]

מאמר ג

Alternatively, one may explain "And it came to pass at the end of two years of days, etc." At first glance, it should have said "at the end of two years."

או יאמר "ויהי מקץ שנתים ימים כו'", לכאורה
היה לו לכתב מקץ שתי שנים.

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It appears proper to explain by way of allusion. The righteous must constantly serve the blessed Holy One and bind the physical to the spiritual.

וְנִרְאָה לְפָרֵשׁ עַל דְּרוֹךְ הַרְמָז, דְּהֵנָּה הַצַּדִּיק צָרִיךְ לַעֲבֹד תָּמִיד לַהֲשֵׁם יִתְבָּרֵךְ, וּלְקַשֵּׁר הַגִּשְׁמִיּוֹת בְּרוּחָנִיּוֹת

In everything he does, whether eating, drinking, or any physical act, his intention must be directed upward to the supernal worlds, with intentions of supernal unifications.

דְּהֵינּוּ בְּכָל דְּבַר שְׁעוֹשֶׂה, הֵן אֲכִילָה וְשִׁתְיָה וְהֵן כָּל דְּבַר גִּשְׁמִי, צָרִיךְ לִהְיוֹת כּוֹנֵנְתּוֹ לְמַעַלָּה בְּעוֹלָמוֹת הָעֲלִיּוֹנִים בְּכוֹנֵנַת יְחֻדִּים עֲלִיּוֹנִים

At the same time, below, his eating must be in holiness. Thus his service is doubled, below and above.

וְגַם לְמִטָּה צָרִיךְ לִהְיוֹת אֲכִילָתוֹ בְּקִדְשָׁהּ, וְנִמְצָא שֶׁהִיא עֲבֹדָה כְּפוּלָה לְמִטָּה וּלְמַעַלָּה

He must conduct himself this way all the days. Then a day is called a "day." If not, the day is not called a day, for it is not truly his day.

וְכֵן צָרִיךְ לְהִתְנַהֵּג כָּל הַיָּמִים וְאִזּוּ יִקְרָא הַיּוֹם "יוֹם", וְאִם לֹא, אֵין הַיּוֹם קָרוֹי יוֹם שְׁאֵין זֶה יוֹמוֹ

This is what is said about Abraham: "And Abraham was old, advanced in days," meaning days conducted in holiness.

וְזֶהוּ שְׁנֵאמַר בְּאַבְרָהָם "וְאַבְרָהָם זָקֵן בָּא בַּיָּמִים" רָצוֹן לוֹמַר בַּיָּמִים שֶׁהָיָה מְתַנַּהֵג, (Genesis 24:1) בְּקִדְשָׁהּ

He came to complete holiness, to the level of "elder," meaning one who has acquired wisdom.

בָּא אֶל קִדְשָׁהּ גְּמוּרָה לְמַדְרַגַּת זָקֵן, זֶה קִנָּה חֲכָמָה

This explains "And it came to pass at the end of two years of days." "Two" means doubled.

וְזֶהוּ "וַיְהִי מִקֵּץ שְׁנַתִּים יָמִים", שְׁנַתִּים פְּרוּשׁוֹ כְּפוּל

After the righteous reaches the end of the rectification of the days, which is this doubled service, and becomes complete in holiness at this level.

וְרָצוֹן לוֹמַר אַחֲרֵי שִׁגְיַע הַצַּדִּיק לְסוֹף הַתְּקוּן עֲבֹדַת הַיָּמִים שֶׁהִיא עֲבֹדָה כְּפוּלָה כַּפִּ"ל, וַיְהִי גְּמוּר בְּקִדְשָׁהּ וּבְמַדְרַגָּה זוֹ

Then he merits an additional level, namely "and Pharaoh dreams." "Pharaoh" denotes revelation, as in uncovering the head of the woman.

אִזּוּ יוֹכָה עוֹד לְמַדְרַגָּה יְתֵרָה, דְּהֵינּוּ "וּפְרָעָה חֵלֶם" פְּרָעָה לְשׁוֹן גְּלוּי כְּמוֹ "וּפְרָעָה אֵת", (Genesis 41:1) רֹאשׁ הָאִשָּׁה

Meaning that a supernal perception is revealed to him, enabling attainment of great perceptions and upper worlds.

דְּהֵינּוּ שְׁתַּגְלָלָה לוֹ הַשְׁגָּה עֲלִיּוֹנָה שְׂיוֹכַל לְהַשְׁיג הַשְׁגוֹת גְּדוּלוֹת וְעוֹלָמוֹת עֲלִיּוֹנִים

This is alluded to by a dream, for a dream is one sixtieth of prophecy, a perception from the upper worlds.

וְלִזְנָה רְמָז חֲלוֹם, דְּחֲלוֹם הוּא אֶחָד מִשִּׁשִּׁים בְּגִבּוּאָה, וְהִיא הַשְׁגָּה מְעוֹלָמוֹת הָעֲלִיּוֹנִים אֶחָד מִשִּׁשִּׁים

Scripture speaks of sleep because during sleep the senses that hinder perception are removed.

וְדָבָר הַכְּתוּב בְּהִנֵּה מְשׁוּם שֶׁבִּשְׁעַת הַשְׁנָה תְּסוּר מִן הָאָדָם כָּל הַחוּשִׁים הַמַּעֲכָבִים אוֹתוֹ מִהַשְׁיג הַשְׁגוֹת עֲלִיּוֹנוֹת

Therefore Scripture says the dream was revealed to him.

וְלִכֵּן אָמַר הַכְּתוּב שְׁתַּגְלָלָה לוֹ הַחֲלוֹם

In truth, the righteous who is separated from worldly matters, whose senses are not bound to this world.

אֲבָל בְּאַמַּת הַצַּדִּיק הַמִּפְרָשׁ וּמַבְדִּיל מֵעֵנִי עוֹלָם הֵנָּה, וְאֵין חוּשָׁיו בְּעֵנֵי עוֹלָם הֵנָּה

Can always attain supernal perceptions, whether awake or asleep.

אִזּוּ יוֹכַל לְהַשְׁיג תָּמִיד הַשְׁגוֹת עֲלִיּוֹנוֹת בֵּין עֵר בֵּין יָשׁוּן

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“And behold, he was standing by the river,” meaning that this righteous person always stands close to the supernal lights.

“River” is a term for light, for we can only refer to the upper worlds by the name “light,” in order to accustom the ear to something lofty.

Light is the most valued concept in our perception.

The yod of “river” hints to the upper worlds created with the letter yod.

As Scripture says: “For with Yod and Heh, the Lord formed the worlds.”

This world was created with the letter Heh, and the World to Come with the letter Yod.

“And behold, from the river there came up seven cows.” “Cows” is a term for “produce.”

The righteous produces fruits, namely mitzvot. Scripture hints that there are many types of righteous people.

No one is like another, for each has a distinct hold in one of the seven supernal levels.

One who studies Mishnah for its own sake is attached to the world designated for Mishnah.

One who studies Talmud is attached to the world designated for Talmud.

Each person according to his path and his mode of study has his attachment.

He is attached in one of the seven levels of the upper worlds.

Likewise, any deed done for its own sake has an attachment in a corresponding upper level.

“Beautiful of appearance and healthy of flesh.” “Beautiful of appearance” alludes to righteous individuals whose facial radiance shines to all, as wisdom illuminates a person’s face.

“And healthy of flesh” alludes even to one who is not learned, but conducts himself with integrity according to his ability.

פרוש, (Genesis 41:1) “וַהֲנִה עֹמֵד עַל הַיָּאֵר”

הַצִּדִּיק הַזֶּה עֲמִידָתוֹ תָּמִיד אֶצְל הָאוֹרוֹת הָעֲלִיּוֹנִים

“הַיָּאֵר” הוּא לְשׁוֹן אוֹר, שְׁאִין אֲנִי יְכוּלִים לִכְנוֹת אֶת

הָעוֹלָמוֹת הָעֲלִיּוֹנִים רַק בְּשֵׁם אוֹר, כְּדִי לְשַׁבֵּר אֶת

הָאָזֶן בְּדִבְרֵי הַחֲשׁוֹב לְהַשְׁגִּיתֵנוּ

שֶׁהוּא הָאוֹר שֶׁהוּא יוֹתֵר דָּבָר חָשׁוֹב אֶצְלֵנוּ

וְהַיּוֹד שֶׁל “יָאֵר” הוּא רֶמֶז לְעוֹלָמוֹת הָעֲלִיּוֹנִים

לְשֶׁנִּבְרָאוּ בְּיוֹד

(Isaiah 26:4) כִּמוֹ שֶׁאָמַר הַכָּתוּב “כִּי בָּיָה יְיָ צוֹר עוֹלָמִים”

26:4),

עוֹלָם הַזֶּה נִבְרָא בְּהֵא וְעוֹלָם הַבָּא נִבְרָא בְּיוֹד

(Genesis 41:2) “וַהֲנִה מִן הַיָּאֵר עֹלוֹת שִׁבְעַת פָּרוֹת”

פָּרוֹת הוּא לְשׁוֹן פָּרוֹת.

שֶׁהַצִּדִּיק עוֹשֶׂה פָּרוֹת וּמִצְוֹת, וּמִרְמֵז הַכָּתוּב שֶׁיֵּשׁ

כַּמָּה גִּנְיֵי צִדִּיקִים

שְׁאִין אֶחָד דּוֹמֶה לַחֲבֵרוֹ, שֶׁכָּל אֶחָד יֵשׁ לוֹ אַחִיזָה

בְּכַנִּי עֲצָמוֹ בְּעוֹלָם אֶחָד מִשְׁבַּע מַדְרָגוֹת עֲלִיּוֹנוֹת

הָעוֹסֵק בְּמִשְׁנָה לְשִׁמְיָה אַחִיזָתוֹ בְּעוֹלָם הַמִּיחָד לְמִשְׁנָה

וְהָעוֹסֵק בְּתַלְמוּד נֶאֱחָז בְּעוֹלָם הַמִּיחָד לְתַלְמוּד

וְכֹן כָּל אֶחָד וְאֶחָד לְפִי דְרָכּוֹ וְעִנְיָנוּ בְּלִמּוּדוֹ, בְּאִיזָה

אֲפֹן שִׁיחֶיזָה לְמוּדוֹ כֹּן הִיא אַחִיזָתוֹ

בְּעוֹלָם אֶחָד מִשְׁבַּע מַדְרָגוֹת עֲלִיּוֹנוֹת

וְכֹן כָּל דָּבָר אֲשֶׁר יַעֲשֶׂה לְשִׁמְיָה יֵשׁ לוֹ אַחִיזָה בְּעוֹלָם

בְּאִיזָה מַדְרָגָה עֲלִיּוֹנָה הַשִּׁיבֶת לְאוֹתוֹ הַדָּבָר

רֶמֶז, (Genesis 41:2) “יָפוֹת מְרָאָה וּבְרִיאוֹת בְּשָׂר”

“יָפוֹת מְרָאָה” לְצִדִּיקִים אֲשֶׁר אוֹר פְּנֵיהֶם יָאִיר לְעֵינֵי

כָּל אָדָם, חֲכָמַת אָדָם תָּאִיר פָּנָיו

וּבְרִיאוֹת בְּשָׂר” רֶמֶז גַּם אִם אֵינוֹ לְמַדָּן, רַק שֶׁהוּא

מִתְנַהֵג עֲצָמוֹ בְּיִשָּׁר לְפִי יְכָלָתוֹ

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He guards his flesh so that it not be corrupted through sins, God forbid, especially guarding the holy covenant, which is primary.

וְשׁוֹמֵר אֶת בְּשָׂרוֹ שֶׁיִּהְיֶה בְּרִיאָה שְׁלֵמָה יִתְקַלְקַל עַל יְדֵי עֲוֹנוֹתָיו חֹס וְשֹׁלֵם, בְּפֶרֶט שֶׁשׁוֹמֵר הַבְּרִית הַקְּדוּשָׁה, שֶׁהוּא הַעֲקָר,

Such a person too has an attachment in one of the upper levels.

גַּם זֶה אֲחִיזָתוֹ בְּאַחַד מִמַּדְרָגוֹת הָעֲלִיּוֹנִים

This is what the Sages hinted: “A small limb there is in a person, hungry or satisfied.”

וְזֶהוּ שֶׁרָמְזוּ חֲזו"ל "אֵיבָר קָטָן יֵשׁ בְּאָדָם רָעֵב שָׂבֹעַ"

“Hungry” may be explained as in the verse: “Not a hunger for bread, but to hear the word of God.”

יֵשׁ לוֹמֵר הַפְּרוּשׁ "רָעֵב" כְּמוֹ שֶׁאָמַר הַכְּתוּב "לֹא רָעֵב (Amos 8:11), לֵלֶחֶם כִּי אִם לְשִׁמְעַת דְּבַר ה'"

Even if he is “hungry,” meaning not very learned and unable to engage constantly in Torah, he can still be “satisfied” if he guards the limb.

דְּהֵינּוּ גַם אִם הוּא רָעֵב שֶׁאֵינּוּ כָּל כָּף לְמַדּוֹן שִׁיּוּכָל לַעֲסוֹק בַּתּוֹרָה תָּמִיד, אָף עַל פִּי כֵן יוּכַל לְהִיּוֹת שָׂבֹעַ, אִם שׁוֹמֵר אֶת הָאֵיבָר

This refers to guarding the covenant of circumcision, the covenant of the tongue, and the eyes from gazing at women.

שֶׁהוּא בְּרִית הַמְעוֹר וּבְרִית הַלְשׁוֹן וְהַעֲיֵנִים מִהֶסְתַּכְּל בְּנָשִׁים

“Satisfied and hungry” hints to the opposite case.

"שָׂבֹעַ רָעֵב" רָמַז הַהֶפֶךְ מִזֶּה

If one does not guard the covenant and defiles himself through immoral acts and impure gazes.

אִם אֵינּוּ שׁוֹמֵר הַבְּרִית וּמַטְמֵא עַצְמוֹ חֹס וְשֹׁלֵם בְּנִיאוֹפִים וּטְמָאוֹת שׁוֹנוֹת בְּהֶסְתַּכְּלוֹת בְּנָשִׁים וּשְׂאָר דְּבָרִים כְּדוֹמָה

Through this he defiles his flesh, the holy covenant.

אֲשֶׁר עַל יְדֵיהֶם יְטַמֵּא אֶת בְּשָׂרוֹ בְּרִית הַקְּדוּשָׁה

Of what benefit is it if he is “satisfied” with Torah? He is still hungry from it, for the husks swallow it, God forbid.

מִה זֶה מוֹעִיל אִם הוּא שָׂבֹעַ בַּתּוֹרָה, אָף עַל פִּי כֵן הוּא רָעֵב מִמֶּנָּה, כִּי יִבְלַעְנוּ הַקְּלִיפּוֹת חֹס וְשֹׁלֵם

A person must greatly exert himself and guard his soul through his flesh, not defiling it.

וְצָרִיד הָאָדָם לְהִתְאַמֵּץ מְאֹד וּלְשׁוֹמֵר אֶת נַפְשׁוֹ עַל יְדֵי בְּשָׂרוֹ שְׁלֵמָה יְטַמֵּא אֶת בְּשָׂרוֹ כְּנ"ל

Then he will be “beautiful of appearance and healthy of flesh,” among the righteous attached to one of the seven upper levels.

וְיִהְיֶה "יְפוֹת מַרְאֶה וּבְרִיאוֹת בְּשָׂר" מִן הַצַּדִּיקִים הַנִּצָּחִיִּים בְּאַחַד מִשְׁבַּע מַדְרָגוֹת עֲלִיּוֹנוֹת

“And they grazed in the meadow.” This hints that the righteous have love, friendship, and brotherhood with one another.

רָמַז שֶׁלְצַדִּיקִים, (Genesis 41:2) "וַתִּרְעֶינָה בָּאָחוּי" יֵשׁ לָהֶם אֲהָבָה וְרַעֲיוּת וְאַחֻזָּה זֶה לָזֶה

“Meadow” is a term of brotherhood.

"בָּאָחוּי" לְשׁוֹן אֲחֻזָּה

Scripture says that in contrast there are also other people.

וְאָמַר הַכְּתוּב וּלְעוֹמֵת זֶה יֵשׁ גַּם כֵּן בְּנֵי אָדָם

“And behold, seven other cows,” hinting to the wicked whose deeds resemble those of the righteous in outward appearance.

(Genesis 41:3) "וַהֲנִיחָה שִׁבְעַת פָּרוֹת אֲחֵרוֹת כּו'" רָמַז שֶׁיֵּשׁ רָשָׁעִים אֲשֶׁר מַעֲשֵׂיהֶם כְּמַעֲשֵׂי צַדִּיקִים לְפִי רְאוּת עֵינֵי אָדָם

Yet they have seven abominations in their hearts.

וְשִׁבְעַת תּוֹעֲבוֹת בְּלִבָּם

“Other cows” means other fruits, fruits of wicked action.

וְזֶהוּ "פָּרוֹת אֲחֵרוֹת" פָּרוֹת אֲחֵרִים מַעֲשֵׂה רָשָׁע

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“Coming up after them,” meaning they rise with the back side, hinting to acts of the husks.

“עלות אחריהן” שעולים עם אחרים, רמז למעשי קליפות

“From the river,” meaning from the light of Torah they, God forbid, produce acts of husks.

“מן הַיָּאָר” רצון לומר מן האור של תורה עושים חס ושלום מעשי קליפות

This occurs if they defile themselves through transgressions.

אם מטמאים עצמם חס ושלום בעברות

“Of bad appearance” means that although they present themselves as righteous to people.

ואמר הפתוב “רעות מראה” פרוש הגם שהם עושים עצמם בצדיקים לעיני בני אדם

Their inner truth will nevertheless be known, as their countenance testifies against them.

אף על פי כן יודע תכן לבכם לבני אדם, והכרת פניהם ענה כם

God grants understanding to perceive their evil deeds.

שהשם יתברך נותן לב להבין את מעשיהם הרעים

This is “of bad appearance,” and “thin of flesh,” meaning they have corrupted their flesh.

וזהו “רעות מראה”, ו”דקות בשר” שקלקלו את הבשר כנ”ל

This is what Joseph said: “And the food shall be held in reserve.” This alludes to the need for extreme care in all material matters.

(Genesis 41:36) וזהו שאמר יוסף “והיה האכל לפקדון” רמז שצריך לזהר מאד מאד בכל עניני הגשמיות

They must be conducted in holiness, binding the physical to the spiritual, as explained above.

שהיהו בקדושה לשמר גשמיות ברוחניות כנ”ל

Through this, whatever the righteous appoints and decrees will indeed be fulfilled.

כדי שעל ידי זה מה שיפקד ויגזר אומר בן יקום

For the righteous decrees and the Holy One, blessed be He, fulfills.

שהצדיק גוזר והשם יתברך מקיים

It is also stated there: “And the land produced in handfuls.” This hints that a person must be exceedingly careful to distance himself from the traits of stinginess and miserliness.

(Genesis 41:47) וגם נאמר שם “ותעש הארץ לקמצים” רמז שצריך האדם לזהר מאד ממדות, השקמנות והכילות

As it is stated in Sefer HaYashar by Rabbeinu Tam: “If a person is stingy.”

כמו דאיתא בספר הישר לרבנו תם “אם יהיה אדם כילי”

Meaning a miser, “this evil trait is not alone within him, but another accompanies it.”

הינו קמצן, “אין זאת המדה הרעה לבדה בו, רק אחרת מלבד אלה”

“And this one rises above all,” and he concludes: “Therefore it is impossible for a miser to be a servant of God.”

“וזאת עלתה על כלנה”, וסוף דבריו “על פן אי אפשר לפילי להיות עובד ה'”

See there his sweet and truthful words at length.

עין שם דבריו המתוקים והאמתיים באריכות

This is “and the land produced,” meaning Joseph was repairing the land during the seven years of plenty.

וזהו “ותעש הארץ כו'”, דהינו יוסף הנה מתקן את הארץ בשבע שני השבע

He was repairing the trait of stinginess within it.

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This is “in handfuls,” for no person is completely free of this trait.

וְזֶהוּ “לְקַמְצִים,” כִּי אֵין לָהּ אָדָם גְּמִלֻט מִמֶּדָּה זוֹ

Even if one does not have it entirely, he has some trace of it.

אִם לֹא כֻלּוֹ יֵשׁ בּוֹ מִקְצָתוֹ

There are those in whom there is at least a small remnant of stinginess.

וַיֵּשׁ אֲשֶׁר בָּהֶם אֶפְסֵס קֶצֶת קֶצֶתוֹ דְּבָר מִן הַקְּמִצְנוּת

A person must remove himself from this trait.

וְצָרִיךְ הָאָדָם לְהִסִּיר עֲצָמוֹ מִמֶּדָּה זוֹ

[NOTE Summary:

In this segment, Rabbi Elimelech presents a comprehensive vision of avodat Hashem as the constant integration of physical life with spiritual consciousness. The phrase “at the end of two years of days” is understood as an allusion to a doubled form of service. The righteous person must work simultaneously on two planes. Above, he binds his intentions to supernal unifications and higher worlds. Below, he sanctifies physical actions themselves, such as eating, drinking, and all bodily conduct. Only when both dimensions are present does a day truly count as a “day.” A day lacking holiness is not considered part of one’s true spiritual life. This is the meaning of “Abraham was old, advanced in days,” that all his days were filled with sanctified living, leading him to the level of true wisdom.

When a tzaddik completes this doubled service consistently, he merits an additional spiritual revelation. This is the deeper meaning of “Pharaoh dreamed.” Pharaoh here is interpreted as revelation and uncovering, indicating that higher perception becomes revealed to the righteous. Dreams are described as a diminished form of prophecy, because during sleep the physical senses are quieted. However, a tzaddik who has already separated himself inwardly from worldly distractions can attain supernal perception at all times, whether awake or asleep.

The phrase “standing by the river” teaches that such a tzaddik stands constantly near divine light. The upper worlds are described only as “light” because this is the closest metaphor accessible to human understanding. The letter yod in the word “river” hints to the World to Come, created through yod, while this world was created through the letter heh. From these lights emerge “seven cows,” interpreted as spiritual fruits and mitzvot. Rabbi Elimelech emphasizes that there are many distinct types of righteous individuals. No two are alike. Each tzaddik has a unique spiritual root and attachment within one of seven supernal levels. One who studies Mishnah, one who studies Talmud, and one who serves God through other sincere paths each attach to a corresponding upper realm. Any action done purely for its own sake creates a bond with a specific spiritual level.

The description “beautiful of appearance and healthy of flesh” expands the definition of righteousness. “Beautiful of appearance” refers to those whose inner wisdom shines visibly. “Healthy of flesh” includes those who may not be scholars but live with integrity and guard their physical holiness, especially the covenant. Guarding one’s physical sanctity is presented as foundational. Rabbi Elimelech cites the teaching about the “small limb” that determines spiritual fullness or emptiness. Even one who is not learned can be spiritually full

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if he guards his body, speech, and sight. Conversely, even great Torah knowledge can be swallowed by destructive forces if one defiles the covenant, rendering Torah spiritually ineffective.

The righteous are described as grazing together in brotherhood, reflecting love and unity among them. In contrast, the “other cows” represent individuals who appear righteous outwardly but internally distort Torah into destructive behavior. Such people draw energy from Torah itself and convert it into spiritual harm through corrupted actions. Ultimately, their inner state becomes visible, as God grants discernment to recognize their true nature.

Joseph’s instruction that the food be held in reserve is understood as a warning to exercise extreme care in all material matters. Sanctified engagement with the physical world enables the righteous to decree and effect change, with divine support. The phrase “the land produced in handfuls” is interpreted as a rectification of the trait of stinginess. Rabbi Elimelech stresses that miserliness is incompatible with genuine service of God and that nearly every person carries some trace of this trait. True spiritual repair requires conscious effort to uproot it, replacing grasping with generosity and trust.

Practical Takeaway:

Segment three teaches that holiness is not achieved by abandoning the physical world but by elevating it. Every action matters. A day lived without awareness and sanctity is a day lost, while even simple acts done with integrity and restraint build lasting spiritual connection. Guarding physical boundaries, especially in areas of desire and consumption, is as essential as Torah study. Likewise, generosity is not optional but central. Stinginess blocks spiritual flow, while openness allows blessing to circulate. The goal is not uniformity but sincerity, finding one’s authentic path of service and committing to it fully, in both body and soul.

Chassidic Story:

Rabbi Elimelech once encountered a simple villager who could barely read but was known for his honesty, modesty, and careful conduct. When scholars questioned the man’s spiritual standing, Rabbi Elimelech replied that Heaven measures not only what enters the mind, but what a person allows to pass through the body and heart.

He explained that some souls serve God through great learning, while others serve Him by guarding themselves in silence and purity. When such a person eats, speaks, and walks with restraint, each step creates a bond above. The world is upheld not only by great minds, but by guarded lives.

END NOTE]