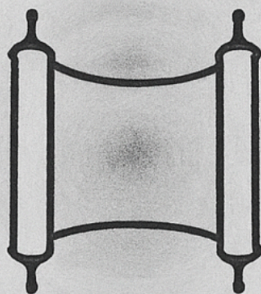


בס"ד

# **Rebbe Elimelech of Lizhensk Parshas Ki Savo**



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# The Rebbe, Rebbe Elimelech of Lizhensk

Noam Elimelech

Parshas Ki Savo

## Introduction

This teaching is from Rabbi Elimelech of Lizhensk (1717–1787), one of the greatest disciples of the Maggid of Mezritch and a leading early Chassidic master. Rabbi Elimelech, known for his sefer *Noam Elimelech*, lived in Poland and became the spiritual guide of many of the next generation of Chassidic leaders. His approach emphasized inner avodah, humility, and the sanctification of daily life. In this discourse on *Ki Savo*, he distinguishes between two types of tzaddikim—those who serve Hashem primarily through fear and elevate to love on Shabbos, and those who serve always with love, who themselves are called “Shabbos.” From there he connects Shabbos, delight, unity, and the flow of divine blessing (*Nachal Hashem*) that comes without obstruction when Israel is united in love and awe together.

**And it shall be, when you come, etc.** It seems possible to explain: behold, there are two levels of tzaddikim. There is a tzaddik who serves Hashem with fear all the days of the week, and when Shabbos Kodesh arrives, an additional holiness rests upon him, so that he serves with love. For the aspect of Shabbos is love, and the tzaddik then comes into the level of love.

And there is a tzaddik who even during the weekdays serves Hashem with love. This tzaddik is called by the name “Shabbos,” as it is stated in the holy Zohar that a Torah scholar is called Shabbos. This is because Shabbos is the aspect of love, and this tzaddik too is always in this aspect. Therefore he too is called Shabbos.

And this is what our Sages said: “Whoever delights in the Shabbos is given an inheritance without boundaries.” That is, the tzaddik who is always in the aspect of love is considered as one who delights with the Shabbos, for they delight with one another. Since he is always in the aspect of love like the Shabbos, he is given an inheritance—meaning the inheritance of Hashem, the supernal stream, from which the tzaddik draws down abundance to Israel.

וְהָיָה כִּי תָבֹא כו'. נִרְאֶה לְפָרֵשׁ דְּהַנָּה יֵשׁ שְׁנֵי מַדְרִיגוֹת צַדִּיקִים, יֵשׁ צַדִּיק עוֹבֵד ה' מִיָּרְאָה כָּל יָמֵי הַחֹל, וּבְהִגִּיעַ שַׁבָּת קָדָשׁ נִיתוּסָף עָלָיו קְדוּשָׁה יִתְיַרָה שְׁעוֹבֵד מֵאַהֲבָה, כִּי בְחִינַת שַׁבָּת הִיא אַהֲבָה, וּבֹא יָבוֹא הַצַּדִּיק בְּמַדְרִיגַת אַהֲבָה.

וְיֵשׁ צַדִּיק שֶׁגַּם בְּיָמֵי הַחֹל עוֹבֵד ה' בְּאַהֲבָה, וְזֶה הַצַּדִּיק נִקְרָא בְּשֵׁם "שַׁבָּת" כְּדֹאִיתָא בְּזוֹהַר הַקָּדוֹשׁ תַּלְמִיד חֶכֶם נִקְרָא שַׁבָּת, וְהֵיכָנּוּ כִּי שַׁבָּת הִיא בְּחִינַת אַהֲבָה, וְהַצַּדִּיק הַזֶּה גַּם כֵּן תַּמִּיד בְּבְחִינַת הַזֹּאת לָכֵן גַּם כֵּן נִקְרָא שַׁבָּת.

וְזֶהוּ שֶׁאָמְרוּ חז"ל "כָּל הַמַּעֲנֵג אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת נוֹתֵנִין לוֹ נַחֲלָה בְּלֵי מִצְרַיִם", ר"ל הַצַּדִּיק שֶׁהוּא תַּמִּיד בְּבְחִינַת אַהֲבָה וְהוּי כְּמַעֲנֵג עִם הַשַּׁבָּת שֶׁמִּתְעַנֵּגִין זֶה עִם זֶה, כִּי הוּא תַּמִּיד בְּבְחִינַת אַהֲבָה כְּמוֹ הַשַּׁבָּת, נוֹתֵנִין לוֹ נַחֲלָה כו' ר"ל נַחֲלָה ה', הוּא הַנַּחֲלָה הַעֲלִיּוֹן אֲשֶׁר מִשָּׁם מוֹשָׁף הַצַּדִּיק הַשֹּׁפֵעַ לְיִשְׂרָאֵל.

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And this is what we find regarding Eliyahu the Prophet, may his memory be blessed: “And he sat by the brook of Keris, and the ravens brought him bread.” Seemingly, why did Hashem choose the ravens—who are cruel to their children—that they should bring him bread? But according to the above, its meaning is: “And he sat by the brook”—he was drawing down influences from the supernal stream. The way of the ravens represents the forces of impurity, to snatch away the flow of influence. But one who serves Hashem with love—even they will complete and agree with him not to touch the flow. And this is the hint: “And the ravens brought him bread”—that even the forces of impurity agreed with him.

And this is the meaning of “Whoever delights... is given an inheritance”—as explained above, to draw influences from the stream of Hashem—“without boundaries,” meaning without any accusations or obstruction. And this is the meaning of “Ki Savo” (when you come), in singular form: when all Israel are in unity. “That Hashem your G-d [gives you],” meaning that within the totality of Israel there are both of these aspects—love and awe. “Hashem” is love, and “Elokim” is judgment, which is awe. Then, when you are all in unity, “He will give you an inheritance, and you shall possess it,” meaning that then the stream of Hashem will be in your hand, to draw down influences of holiness and blessing to all Israel.

וְזֶהוּ דְּמַצִּינוּ בְּאֵלֵיהוּ הַנִּבְיָא ז"ל ל"וּיֵשֶׁב בְּנַחַל כְּרִית וְהָעוֹרְבִים מְבִיאִים לוֹ לֶחֶם", וְלִפְנֵיהֶם לָמָּה בָּחַר ה' בְּעוֹרְבִים שֶׁהֵם אֲכֻזִּים עַל בְּנֵיהֶם שֶׁהֵם יְבִיאוּ לוֹ לֶחֶם? וְעַל פִּי דְּבָרֵינוּ הֵנָּה ל' כֶּף פְּרוּשׁוֹ, "וּיֵשֶׁב בְּנַחַל" שֶׁהִיא מְמִשִּׁיף הַשְּׁפָעוֹת מִנַּחַל הָעֶלְיוֹן, וְדַרְכֵי הָעוֹרְבִים הֵם הַקְּלִיפּוֹת לְטָרוֹף טָרֵף הַשְּׁפָעוֹת, אֲלֵא הָעוֹבֵד ה' מֵאֲהָבָה גַּם הֵם יִשְׁלִימוּ וְיִסְכְּימוּ עִמּוֹ לְבָלְתִּי יִגְעוּ בַּהֲשָׁפָעָה, וְזֶהוּ רָמֵז שֶׁ"הָעוֹרְבִים הִבִּיאוּ לוֹ לֶחֶם" ר"ל שֶׁגַּם הַקְּלִיפּוֹת הִסְכִּימוּ עִמּוֹ.

וְזֶהוּ "כָּל הַמַּעֲנֵג כו' נוֹתֵנִים לוֹ נַחֲלָה", כִּנֵּי ל' לְהַמְשִׁיף הַשְּׁפָעוֹת מִנַּחַל ה', "בְּלִי מַצָּרִים" ר"ל בְּלִי שׁוֹם קְטָרוֹג וּמוֹנֵעַ. וְזֶהוּ "כִּי תְּבוֹא" לְשׁוֹן יְחִיד, דְּהֵינּוּ בְּשִׁינֵיהֶו כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּאַחֲדוּת, "אֲשֶׁר ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ", ר"ל שֶׁבְּכָל לִוּוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל יֵשׁ שְׁנֵי הַבְּחִינּוֹת הֵנָּה ל' אֲהָבָה וִירְאָה, ה' הוּא אֲהָבָה, וְאֱלֹקִים הוּא דִּין הוּא יִרְאָה, אִזְּ בְּשִׁתְּהֵו בְּלִכֶּם בְּאַחֲדוּת "נוֹתֵן לָהּ נַחֲלָה וִירְשָׁתָה", ר"ל אִזְּ יִהְיֶה הַנַּחֲלָה ה' בְּיָדָהּ לְהַמְשִׁיף הַשְּׁפָעוֹת קְדוּשָׁה וּבְרָכָה לְכָל יִשְׂרָאֵל.



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### [NOTE Summary

Rabbi Elimelech explains that there are two levels of tzaddikim. One serves Hashem during the weekdays with fear, and on Shabbos is elevated to service out of love, since Shabbos is the aspect of love. Another tzaddik serves Hashem always with love, even during the weekdays, and such a tzaddik is himself called “Shabbos,” as the Zohar says a Torah scholar is called Shabbos. On this basis, he explains the teaching of the Sages:

“Whoever delights in Shabbos is given an inheritance without boundaries.” The tzaddik who is always in love is in a state of delight with Shabbos, and from this position he draws down shefa (divine abundance) from the supernal stream—*Nachal Hashem*—to the Jewish people.

This sheds light on the story of Eliyahu at the brook Keris. The ravens, known for cruelty, represent the forces of impurity that normally snatch away blessing. But when one serves Hashem with love, even the opposing forces must submit and agree not to block the flow, symbolized by the ravens themselves bringing him bread. In this way, delight in Shabbos leads to drawing down blessing “without boundaries,” meaning without obstruction or accusation. Finally, the verse “Ki Savo” is written in singular form to indicate the unity of Israel. When all Jews are bound together as one, the two aspects—love (Hashem) and awe (Elokim)—combine, and then Hashem grants His people the inheritance: the divine stream of blessing, freely flowing to all Israel.

### Practical Takeaway

The teaching reveals that unity, love, and delight in holiness open the channels of blessing. When we serve Hashem with love—not only in Shabbos moments, but carrying that love into the week—we merit to connect with the supernal stream of divine goodness. Furthermore, our unity as a people allows us to inherit and draw down blessing without opposition. The path of avodah is to cultivate both awe and love, but especially to strive to transform our weekday service into a “Shabbos-like” state, full of joy, love, and oneness with Hashem.

### Chassidic Story

It is told of Rabbi Elimelech of Lizhensk that one Friday night he lingered long in his davening, radiating great joy. His talmidim waited, sensing something wondrous. When he finished, he explained: “On Shabbos, the gates of love are open. One who cleaves to Hashem in love even in the weekdays—he is called ‘Shabbos’ himself, and then Shabbos and he delight together.” The students later testified that from that moment, they felt a surge of warmth and joy in their own prayers, as though they, too, had tasted from that delight. (Source: *Noam Elimelech* traditions, collected in *Ohel Elimelech*, stories of Shabbos service)

END NOTE]

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When you finish tithing, etc. It seems possible to explain as follows. It is stated in the Gemara: “A person should always divide his years: one-third in Scripture, etc.” The explanation may be this: “Scripture” (*Mikra*) also connotes *mikriyus* (chance, happenstance). That is, when a person begins in serving the Creator, blessed be He, his service is still only a matter of happenstance. Sometimes he overcomes his inclination, and sometimes his inclination overcomes him, and it is not yet a matter of constancy.

A person must therefore strengthen himself gradually, to purify his thoughts until they are refined, for the essence is the thought. And this is what our Sages expounded: “The curves of your thighs — why are the words of Torah compared to the thigh? Just as the thigh is in secret, so too the words of Torah are in secret.” The meaning: just as the thigh in secret hints at the sin of nocturnal emission, which comes upon a person because of foreign thoughts (G-d forbid), and the thought is in secret — so one must apply a corrective balance.

This rectification is through the words of Torah in secret — that is, that one should occupy himself with Torah in pure thought and for its own sake. And it is not possible that his thoughts will be refined all at once, but only gradually, more and more each time, until Heaven assists him. Therefore, the beginning of serving Hashem is called *Mikra* — from the term *mikriyus* (happenstance), as explained above.

And afterwards, one must ascend to a higher level, that is, “a third in Mishnah.” This means that a person must direct his learning toward the supernal worlds, for the sake of unification, as is known. And this is the expression *Mishnah*—meaning “double”—as in the verse (Shemos 16:5), “and it shall be double what they gather, etc.” And this is the meaning of “the Sages repeated in the language of Mishnah”—that they repeated in such a language which is *Mishnah*, as explained, namely that they learned below but their intention was above, to unify. And this is the meaning of “whoever reviews halachos every day is assured that he is a son of the World to Come”—this is self-understood as above.

פי תכלה לעשר כו'. נראה לפרש דאיתא בגמרא  
"לעולם ישלש אדם שנותיו שליש במקרא כו'",  
לומר הפרוש כן, ד"מקרא" הוא לשון מקריות,  
דהיינו האדם בהתחלתו בעבודת הבורא יתברך אינו  
אלא במקריות, שלפעמים יתגבר על יצרו ולפעמים  
יצרו מתגבר עליו ואינו דבר תמידיות.

וצריך האדם להתגבר בהדרגה לטהר מחשבותיו עד  
שיזדכו, דעיקר הוא המחשבה, וזהו שדרשו חז"ל  
"חמישי ירכיב למה נמשלו דברי תורה לירך מה ירך  
בסתם אף דברי תורה בסתם", פרוש מה ירך בסתם  
רמז על עון קרי הבא לאדם מחמת מחשבות זרות  
ח"ו והמחשבה היא בסתם, לזה צריך תשובת  
המשקל.

למקו על ידי דברי תורה בסתם, דהיינו שיעסוק  
בתורה במחשבה טהורה ולשמה, וזה בלתי אפשר  
שיזדכו מחשבותיו בבת אחת כי אם בהדרגה בכל  
פעם יותר ויותר עד ששון השמים יסיעו לו. ולכן  
תחלת עבודת השם יתברך [נקרא] מקרא מלשון  
מקריות כנ"ל.

ואחר כך צריך לעלות במעלה יתירה דהיינו "שליש  
במשנה", ר"ל שצריך האדם לכוון בלימודו לעולמות  
עליונים לשם יחוד פידוע. וזהו לשון משנה דהיינו  
כפול, לשון (שמות טז, ה) "והיה משנה על אשר  
ילקטו כו'", וזהו "שני חכמים בלשון המשנה" ר"ל  
ששני בלשון כזה שהוא משנה כנ"ל, דהיינו שלמדו  
למטה וכוננתם למעלה ליחד. וזהו "כל השונה הלכות  
בכל יום מבטח לו שהוא בן עולם הבא" — מוכן  
ממילא כנ"ל.

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“A third in Talmud,” which is the trait than which there is none greater, as it is stated in the Gemara—that is, cleaving and love.

And this is hinted at in the teaching of our Sages:

“Bereishis—for the sake of Torah which is called ‘reishis,’ and for the sake of Israel, and for the sake of the first fruits

(*bikkurim*) which are called ‘reishis.’” And all of them are one.

For behold, the *bikkurim* allude to submission and lowliness of a person, who must regard himself with true humility and submission. As the Tanna taught: “When he arrived at the Temple Mount—even King Agrippas would take the basket on his shoulder and enter”—this was for the sake of humility.

And this is hinted to in the Tanna’s language: “How is the mitzvah of *bikkurim*? A person goes down into his field and sees a fig that ripened—he ties a reed-grass around it.” Meaning: a person who wishes to break his desires—for the heart of a person craves the first fruit—must break his desires with this.

“He ties around it a reed” means that he should remember the day of death, how he will be placed in the grave, and rushes and grass will grow upon him. And after a person comes to the quality of submission and humility, then his awe and his love are whole in the service of the Creator, blessed be He. And this is the meaning of *bikkurim* in its plain sense, from the language of “cooking” and completion of the fruit. And this is “a third in Talmud, for there is no trait greater than it.”

And this is what is stated in the Gemara: “One who purchases two trees brings [first fruits] but does not recite, etc.” This hints at the two levels mentioned above. That is, a person who has not yet attained all of the levels, but only two of them. This is the hint of “two trees.” A “tree” is an allusion to the supernal worlds.

“And one who purchases two trees does not acquire land”—meaning he still has no firm foundation. “He brings”—that is, he truly brings the matter before Hashem. “But he does not recite”—meaning, he is not yet on that level, that he calls and is answered immediately by Hashem through his deeds, like the tzaddik who decrees, says, and it is fulfilled.

שליש בתלמוד" שהוא מדה שאין גדולה הימנה" פדאיתא בגמרא, דהיינו הדבקות ואהבה. וזהו רמז שדרשו חז"ל "בראשית, בשביל התורה שנקראת ראשית ובשביל ישראל ובשביל פכורים שנקראו ראשית", והכל אחד, דהנה ה"בכורים" רמז על הכנעה ופילול האדם, שצריך להחזיק עצמו במדת ענוה והכנעה אמיתית, כמאמר התנא "הגיע להר הבית אפילו אגריפס המלך נוטל הסל על כתפו ונכנס", זה היה למען הכנעה

ולזה רמז התנא בלשונו "כיצד מצות פכורים אדם יורד לתוך שדהו וראה תאנה שבכרה כורף עליה גמי", דהיינו האדם הרוצה לשבר תאוותיו כי לב האדם מתאנה לפרי ראשון וצריך לשבר תאוותיו בזה, "כורף עליה גמי" פירוש יזכור יום המיתה אף יהיה מנח בקבר ויצמיח עליו גמי ועשב. ואחר שיבוא האדם למדת הכנעה וענוה אז יראתו ואהבתו שלימה בעבודת הבורא יתברך, וזה הוא לשון פכורים כפשוטו לשון בשול וגמר הפרי. וזהו "שליש בתלמוד שאין לה מדה גדולה הימנה".

וזהו דאיתא בגמרא "הקונה שתי אילנות מביא ואינו קורא כו", רמז על ב' המדרגות הנ"ל. דהיינו האדם אשר עדין אינו בא והגיע לכל המדרגות הנ"ל, כי אם לשנים מהם. והיינו רמז "שני אילנות", ד"אילן" רמז לעלמות עליונים

והקונה שתי אילנות אין לו חרקה, ר"ל שעדין אין לו יסוד גמור. "מביא" פירוש באמת הוא מביא אותו הדבר לפני השם יתברך. "ואינו קורא" ר"ל שאינו במדרגה זו עדין, שיהיה קורא ונענה מיד מהשם יתברך, על ידי מעשיו כדרך הצדיק הגדול אומר ונקם

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But “one who purchases three trees”—meaning he acquires for himself all three of the above levels—this is “he acquires land,” that is, he has a firm foundation. “He brings and recites”—as explained above, “You will decree a matter and it will be established.”

And this is the meaning of the verse: “When you finish tithing... in the third year.” That is, if you merit to complete all your produce—meaning what you bring before Hashem in the supernal worlds, which are called “tithe.” And this is “in the third year,” when you have attained all three of the above levels. “And you shall give to the Levi”—meaning, attribute everything to the fact that you attained all these levels through connection and attachment to tzaddikim. “To the convert, etc.”—this is the quality of true humility.

אָבֿל "הַקּוֹנֶה שְׁלֹשָׁה אֵילָנוֹת" ר"ל שֶׁקֹּנֶה לְעַצְמוֹ כָּל הַשְּׁלוֹשׁ מַדְרִיגוֹת הַנִּלְ, וְזֶה "קֹנֶה קֶרֶקַע", דְּהֵינּוּ שֵׁישׁ לוֹ יְסוֹד גָּמוּר. "מְבִיא וְקוֹרֵא" עַל דֶּרֶךְ הַנִּלְ, "וְתִגְזֹר אוֹמֵר וְיָקָם".

וְזֶה כִּי "תְּכַלֶּה לַעֲשׂוֹר כּו' בַּשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁלִישִׁית", ר"ל אִם תִּזְכֶּה לְכָלוֹת לְגָמוּר "אֵת כָּל תְּבוּאָתְךָ", ר"ל מֵהַ שְׂאֵתָה מְבִיא לִפְנֵי הַשֵּׁם יְתִבְרַךְ בְּעוֹלָמוֹת הָעֲלִיּוֹנִים הַמְּכֻנִּים בְּשֵׁם "עֲשׂוֹר". וְהוּא "בַּשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁלִישִׁית" שֶׁבָּאֵת לְכָל הַשְּׁלוֹשׁ מַדְרִיגוֹת הַנִּלְ. "וְנָתַתָּ לְלוֹי" ר"ל תִּתֵּן וְתַתְּלֶה הַכָּל שֶׁבָּא לָךְ כָּל הַמַּדְרִיגוֹת הַנִּלְ עַל יְדֵי הַתַּחֲבָרוֹת וְהַתְּלוּוֹת עִם צַדִּיקִים. "לְגֵר כּו'" שֶׁהִיא מִדַּת עֲנוּהָ בְּאַמֻּת וְק"ל

## The Rebbe, Rebbe Elimelech of Lizhensk

Noam Elimelech

Parshas Ki Savo

### [NOTE Summary

Rabbi Elimelech of Lizhensk, continuing his commentary on *Ki Savo*, explains the progression of a person's avodah in three stages:

1. **Mikra (Scripture)** – At the beginning, one's service is in a state of *mikriyus* (happenstance). Sometimes he overcomes his inclination, sometimes he falls. The main work is in refining thought, especially in private, to purify stray desires through Torah learned *b'seter* (in secret).
2. **Mishnah** – A higher level is when one learns not only for knowledge, but with kavana to unite the supernal worlds. This is why Mishnah is called *mishneh* (double): it is Torah learned below, yet its intent is directed above. This level brings the assurance that "whoever reviews halachos every day is guaranteed to be a son of the World to Come."
3. **Talmud** – The highest level is *deveikus* and love, alluded to in "Bereishis— for the sake of Torah, Israel, and bikkurim." The bikkurim symbolize humility, as even King Agrippas carried his basket in submission. The Tanna hints further: just as one ties a reed-grass around the first fruit, one should break his desire for the "first taste" of physical pleasure by remembering mortality. Through such humility, his awe and love of Hashem become whole.

Finally, Rabbi Elimelech explains the Gemara about "one who purchases two trees" and "three trees." With only two levels, a person may bring his service before Hashem but not yet be answered immediately, for he lacks a firm foundation. But when he acquires all three, he possesses "land"—a solid base—and his words stand like a tzaddik who decrees and Hashem fulfills. This is the meaning of "When you finish tithing in the third year": when a person completes the three levels, he merits to draw down blessing, attributing all to the connection with tzaddikim and to true humility.

### Practical Takeaway

Growth in avodah is gradual. At first, service may feel inconsistent, but persistence in refining thought, adding intention in learning, and cultivating humility bring one to a complete service filled with love and awe. The tzaddik shows us that the key is to recognize each stage, not despair at the struggle, and remember that connection to tzaddikim and true humility anchor all progress. Through this foundation, one draws blessing for oneself and for all of Israel.

### Chassidic Story

It is related that Rabbi Elimelech once told a follower who complained of constant ups and downs in his avodah: "At first, it is like the first fruit in the field—the heart yearns for it, but you must bind it with a reed, remembering that the fruit ripens only when it humbles itself to the earth. So too in avodas Hashem, humility ripens the fruit." The chossid later testified that these words gave him strength not to despair of inconsistency, but to see his struggle as part of a process toward wholeness. (Source: *Ohel Elimelech*, teachings and stories of R. Elimelech of Lizhensk)



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**END NOTE]**