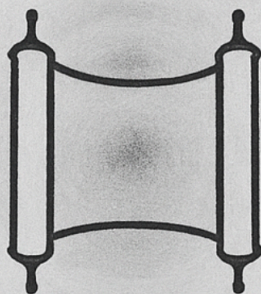


בס"ד

**Rebbe Elimelech
of Lizhensk
Parshas Va'eira**



*Dedicated in Honor of the
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The Rebbe, Rebbe Elimelech of Lizhensk

Noam Elimelech

Parshas Va'eira

מאמר א

And God spoke to Moses, etc. It appears to explain, for it is stated in the Gemara: "The wicked, their beginning is tranquility and their end is sufferings, and the righteous, their beginning is sufferings and their end is tranquility."

It is possible to say the explanation, that the righteous must serve the Creator, blessed be He, initially with awe, and to guard himself from the evil inclination, and to break all physical desires.

And this is "their beginning is sufferings." And after he merits to break all the desires, and his enemy, which is the evil inclination, made peace with him, then "their end is tranquility."

And this is "And God spoke," for speaking is an expression of harshness, and "God" is the level of awe. And its explanation is: "He spoke," an expression of harshness, "God," meaning when he was at the level of awe.

"And He said to him: I am the Lord," its explanation is when he came to the level of love, that is the Lord, then there was saying in a gentle expression.

And it is possible to say this is the intent of Rashi, of blessed memory: "And God spoke, He spoke with him judgment for having spoken harshly and saying: 'Why have You done evil to this people,' and as stated in the Midrash that he cast words upward."

And in truth, Heaven forbid that Moses our teacher, peace be upon him, would cast words against the Blessed One. Rather, this was due to the greatness of love of Israel, and this indicates the greatness of love of the Creator, blessed be His Name.

And the explanation is thus: "And God spoke, etc." Meaning, even though it was fitting to speak with him judgment for having spoken harshly, etc., nevertheless, because it was from the greatness of love of Israel, which is love of the Creator, blessed be His Name, therefore "And He said to him: I am the Lord," which is gentle speech in love.

וַיְדַבֵּר אֱלֹהִים אֶל־מֹשֶׁה כּוּ'. נִרְאֶה לְפָרֵשׁ דְּאִיתָא בְּגִמְרָא "רְשָׁעִים תְּחִלָּתוֹ שְׁלוֹה וְסוֹפֵן יְסוּרִין וְצַדִּיקִים תְּחִלָּתוֹ יְסוּרִין וְסוֹפֵן שְׁלוֹה"

יֵשׁ לוֹמַר הַפְּרוּשׁ דְּהַצַּדִּיק צָרִיד לַעֲבֹד אֶת הַבּוֹרָא בְּרוּךְ הוּא מִתְחִלָּה בִּירְאָה וְלִשְׁמוֹר עַצְמוֹ מִיִּצְרַת הָרָע, וְלִשְׁבֹּר כָּל תַּאֲוֹת הַגִּשְׁמִיּוֹת

וְזֶהוּ "תְּחִלָּתוֹ יְסוּרִין", וְאַחֵר שְׂזָכָה לִשְׁבֹּר כָּל הַתַּאֲוֹת וְאוֹיְבוֹ – הוּא הַיִּצְרַת הָרָע – הַשְׂלִים עִמּוֹ, אַז "סוֹפֵן שְׁלוֹה".

וְזֶהוּ "וַיְדַבֵּר אֱלֹהִים", שְׂדַבּוּר הוּא לְשׁוֹן קָשׁוּת וְאֱלֹהִים הוּא מִדְּרַגַּת יִרְאָה, וּפְרוּשׁוֹ "וַיְדַבֵּר" לְשׁוֹן קָשׁוּת "אֱלֹהִים" ר"ל אַז כְּשֶׁהִיגָה בְּמִדְּרַגַּת יִרְאָה

"וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו אֲנִי ה'" פְּרוּשׁ כְּשֶׁבָא בְּמִדְּרַגַּת אֲהֻבָּה דְּהִינּוּ ה', אַז הִתְהַוָּה אֲמִירָה בְּלִשׁוֹן רַכָּה

וַיֵּשׁ לוֹמַר זֶהוּ כּוֹנֵן רִשׁ"י וְ"ל" וַיְדַבֵּר אֱלֹהִים דְּבַר אֲתוֹ מִשְׁפָּט עַל שֶׁהִקְשָׁה לְדַבֵּר וְלוֹמַר לְמַה הִרְעוּתָה לְעַם הַזֶּה וְכִדְאִיתָא בְּמִדְּרַשׁ שֶׁהִטִּיחַ דְּבָרִים כְּלָפִי מַעֲלָה

וּבִקְאָמַת חֵס וְשְׁלוֹם שְׁמִי שֶׁרַבִּינוּ עָלָיו הַשְׁלוֹם יִטִּיחַ דְּבָרִים נֶגֶד הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרַךְ, רַק זֶה הָיָה מִחֲמַת גְּדֹל אֲהֻבַת יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְזֶה מוֹרָה עַל גְּדֹל אֲהֻבַת הַבּוֹרָא יִתְבָּרַךְ שְׁמוֹ

וְהַפְּרוּשׁ כֹּה, "וַיְדַבֵּר אֱלֹהִים כּוּ" כְּלוֹמַר אֵף עַל פִּי שֶׁהָיָה רָאוּי לְדַבֵּר אֲתוֹ מִשְׁפָּט עַל שֶׁהִקְשָׁה לְדַבֵּר כּוּ, אֵף מִחֲמַת שֶׁהָיָה מְגֹדֵל אֲהֻבַת יִשְׂרָאֵל שֶׁהָיָה אֲהֻבַת הַבּוֹרָא יִתְבָּרַךְ שְׁמוֹ, לְכֵן "וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו אֲנִי ה'." שֶׁהָיָה אֲמִירָה רַכָּה בְּאֲהֻבָּה

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And this is what King David, peace be upon him, prayed
(Psalms 119:38): “Establish for Your servant Your saying, etc.”

וְזֶהוּ שֶׁהַתַּפִּלָּל דָּוִד הַמֶּלֶךְ עָלָיו הַשְּׁלוֹם (תְּהִלִּים
ק"ט, ל"ח) "הָקֵם לְעַבְדְּךָ אֱמֻנָתְךָ כּו"ו"

Its explanation is that the Blessed One should assist him to
come to the level of love hinted in the expression of saying,
“which is for Your awe,” meaning such love that from love he
will come to awe, which is awe of exaltedness. And this is clear.

פְּרוּשׁ שֶׁהַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרַךְ יִסְיַע לוֹ לְבוֹא לְמַדְרַגַּת אֱהָבָה
הַמְרֻמָּזוֹת בְּלִשׁוֹן אֱמִירָה, "אֲשֶׁר לִירְאָתְךָ" ר"ל
אֱהָבָה כְּזוֹ שֶׁמִּתּוֹךְ אֱהָבָה אָבוֹא לִירְאָה שֶׁהִיא יְרֵאָת
הַרֻמָּמוֹת. וְקֵל לְהַבִּין

[NOTE Summary:

This segment explains the opening phrase “And God spoke to Moses” as a spiritual principle that applies broadly to divine service. Drawing on the teaching of the Sages that the wicked experience tranquility at the beginning and suffering at the end, while the righteous experience suffering at the beginning and tranquility at the end, the text explains that true service of the Creator must begin with awe. A person must initially guard himself from the evil inclination and actively break physical desires. This inner struggle is called “their beginning is suffering.” When a person succeeds in breaking these desires and subduing the evil inclination, the inclination itself ultimately makes peace with him, and this state is called “their end is tranquility.”

This idea is then applied to the distinction between “speaking” and “saying” in the verse. “Speaking” denotes harshness and corresponds to the Divine Name Elokim, which represents awe and judgment. “Saying” denotes gentleness and corresponds to the Divine Name Havayah, which represents love. Thus, when a person or a generation is in a state of awe, the divine communication is one of firmness, while when one reaches the level of love, the divine communication becomes gentle.

The explanation further addresses Rashi’s comment that God spoke to Moses with judgment for questioning the suffering of Israel. The text clarifies that Moses did not, Heaven forbid, speak disrespectfully. Rather, his words stemmed from his profound love for Israel, which itself reflects deep love for the Creator. Because Moses’ protest emerged from this elevated love, it ultimately elicited a response of gentleness and love, expressed by “And He said to him: I am the Lord.”

The segment concludes with King David’s prayer, “Establish for Your servant Your saying” (Psalms 119:38), interpreted as a request for divine assistance to reach the level of love hinted at by “saying.” This love is not an end in itself, but a love that leads to awe of exaltedness, a higher and more refined form of reverence that flows naturally from genuine love.

Practical Takeaway:

A person should not be discouraged by inner struggle, tension, or difficulty at the beginning of spiritual growth. Initial resistance, effort, and discomfort are signs of authentic service rooted in awe. The goal is not to remain in struggle, but to work through it until love emerges naturally. When love of God and love of fellow Jews motivate a person’s actions, even sharp questions or emotional protests are transformed into a higher

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form of service. Ultimately, the path is to cultivate love that matures into awe of Divine greatness, allowing firmness and gentleness to each appear in their proper place.

Chassidic Story:

It is told about Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev that on one occasion he stood in prayer and cried out forcefully on behalf of the Jewish people. His words sounded sharp, almost like a complaint, and some of those present felt uncomfortable hearing such bold speech directed Heavenward. After the prayers, a student respectfully asked him how such language could be appropriate.

Rabbi Levi Yitzchak responded that when a child sees his father's house on fire, he does not speak politely. He shouts, cries, and demands action, not out of disrespect, but out of love and urgency. He explained that his own words in prayer were no different. They were born from deep love for the Jewish people and absolute faith in God's compassion.

Later, the rabbi remarked that he sensed great closeness and warmth after such prayers, more than after quiet supplication alone. He explained that when words come from love, even when they sound harsh, they draw forth a response of closeness and mercy. This story embodies the teaching of the segment: that struggle and firmness at the beginning, when rooted in love, ultimately lead to tranquility, closeness, and a deeper awe of Divine greatness. **END NOTE]**

מאמר ב

And I appeared, etc. Rashi of blessed memory wrote: "And I appeared to the patriarchs." And seemingly, what does Rashi need this for, for in the verse it is explicit Abraham and Isaac and we know that they are called patriarchs.

And it appears the intent of Rashi in this is that Abraham was the attribute of kindness, and Isaac the aspect of might, and Jacob beauty, and they differed from one another in their aspects.

And if so, how is it applicable that to all of them He appeared to them as God Almighty, for the way is that according to his level the holiness comes upon him from above.

But the root of the matter is thus, that from the side of the Creator, blessed be He, there is no change at all.

Rather, the person, in his service, according to his level, thus draws upon himself.

It follows that Abraham drew upon himself the attribute of kindness, and likewise Isaac his attribute, and likewise Jacob.

וְאֵלֶּיךָ כֹּהֵן. כְּתִיב רַשִׁי וְ"ל" וְאֵלֶּיךָ אֶל הָאֲבוֹת.
וְלִכְאוּרָה מֵהַ בְּעֵי רַשִׁי בְּזֶה, הֲלֹא בְּפָסוּק מְפָרֵשׁ
אֲבֹתָם: יִצְחָק וְיַדְעָנוּ שֶׁהֵם נִקְרָאִים אֲבוֹת.

וְנִרְאָה כְּנִת רַשִׁי בְּזֶה כִּי אֲבֹתָם הָיָה מִדַּת חֶסֶד
וְיִצְחָק בְּחִינַת גְּבוּרָה וְיַעֲקֹב תַּפְאֲרָתוֹ, וְהָיוּ מִשְׁתַּנִּים זֶה
מִזֶּה בְּבִחִינָתָם.

וְאִם כֵּן אֵיךְ שִׁיף שֶׁלְּכֻלָּם יִתְרָאָה אֵלֵיהֶם בְּאֵל שְׂדֵי,
הֲלֹא הִדְרָה הוּא שֶׁכָּפִי מִדְּרָגָתוֹ בָּאָה עָלָיו הַקִּדְשָׁה
מִלְמַעְלָה.

אֵף שֶׁהַשֵּׁרֶשׁ הוּא בְּדִבְרֵי הַזֶּה כֹּה, שֶׁמִּצַּד הַבּוֹרָא בְּרוּךְ
הוּא אֵין שׁוּם הַשְׁתַּנּוּת.

אֲלֹא שֶׁהָאָדָם בְּעִבּוּדָתוֹ לִפִּי מִדְּרָגָתוֹ כֹּה מִמְשִׁיף עָלָיו

נִמְצָא אֲבֹתָם הִמְשִׁיף עַל עֲצָמוֹ הַמִּדָּה שֶׁל חֶסֶד, וְכֵן
יִצְחָק מִדָּתוֹ, וְכֵן יַעֲקֹב.

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But from the side of the Creator, blessed be He, everything is one simple unity.

אבל מצד הבורא ברוך הוא הכל אחד הפשוט

And therefore Rashi of blessed memory explained "And I appeared to the patriarchs," to say that with the Creator, blessed be He, there is no difference or distinction between them at all, and everything is one.

ולזה פרש רש"י ו"ל" ונארא אל האבות" לומר שאצל הבורא ברוך הוא אין הפרש וחלוק ביניהם כלל, והכל אחד

Therefore He appeared to them in one aspect as God Almighty. And this is clear.

לכן נראה אליהם בבחינה אחת באל שדי. וקל להבין.

[NOTE Summary:

This segment addresses Rashi's comment "And I appeared to the patriarchs," and asks why this clarification is necessary, since the verse already names Abraham and Isaac and it is known that they are called the patriarchs. The explanation given is that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob each embodied a different spiritual attribute: kindness, might, and harmony. Since their spiritual paths differed, it would seem that divine revelation should also differ according to each one's level, because holiness is usually drawn down in accordance with a person's spiritual standing.

The resolution offered is that any difference lies only on the human side, not on the divine side. From the perspective of the Creator, there is no change or division at all. The human being, through his service, draws down a particular attribute according to his level and mode of service. Thus Abraham drew down kindness, Isaac drew down might, and Jacob drew down harmony. However, from the side of the Creator, all is one simple unity, without differentiation.

Rashi's phrase "And I appeared to the patriarchs" therefore teaches that, from God's perspective, there is no distinction between them. Because the divine essence is completely unified and unchanged, God appeared to all of them in the same manifestation, as "God Almighty," despite their differing spiritual attributes.

Practical Takeaway:

Differences in spiritual style, temperament, or strengths do not reflect differences in closeness to God from His perspective. While each person must serve according to their own level and inner makeup, one should not view those differences as divisions in the divine relationship itself. The diversity lies in human service; unity lies in God. This teaches humility in one's own path and respect for the differing paths of others, recognizing that all sincere service connects to the same undivided divine source. **END NOTE]**

מאמר ג

And I appeared, etc., as God Almighty, and My Name the Lord, etc. And it appears to explain, for it is stated in the Gemara: "Shaddai, that He said to His world, 'Enough.'"

ונארא כו' באל שדי ושמי ה' כו'. ונראה לפרש דאיתא בגמרא "שדי – שאמר לעולמו די"

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And seemingly one must understand what benefit comes to us from this, that He said to His world "Enough," that it should not spread further.

וּלְכַאוֹרָה יֵשׁ לְהִבִּין מֵהַ יוֹצֵא לָבוּ מִזֶּה שֶׁאָמַר לְעוֹלָמוֹ
דִּי שְׂלֵא יִתְפַּשֵּׁט יוֹתֵר.

But the matter is that our Sages inform us of the great goodness that the Creator, may He be blessed, did with us.

אֲדָהּ הֶעֱנֵנִי הוּא שְׁחַז"ל מִשְׁמִיעֵינוּ הַטּוֹבָה הַגְּדוֹלָה
,שְׁעִשָּׂה עִמָּנוּ הַבוֹרָא יְתִי

For it is known that that which is emanated, the farther it is from the Emanator, it becomes more materialized.

דִּידוּעַ שֶׁהִנָּאֵצַל מֵהַ שְׁהוּא רַחוּק יוֹתֵר מִהַמְּאֲצִיל הוּא
בְּתִגְשָׁם יוֹתֵר

And it follows that if He had not said to His world "Enough," the world would have spread endlessly.

וְנִמְצָא אֱלוֹלֵי שֶׁאָמַר לְעוֹלָמוֹ דִּי הִיָּה הָעוֹלָם מִתְפַּשֵּׁט
לְאִין חַז,

And the shells would have come into being in the world from the feminine of the great abyss.

,וְהָיוּ הַקְּלִיפּוֹת מִתְהַיִּין בְּעוֹלָם מְנוֹקְבָא דְתַהוֹמָא רַבָּא

And now that He said to His world "Enough," it is a beneficence, that the shells did not come into being so much.

וְעַכְשָׁיו שֶׁאָמַר לְעוֹלָמוֹ דִּי הוּא הִטָּבָה שְׂלֵא נִתְהַיֵּי
הַקְּלִיפּוֹת כָּל כָּךְ

And further it is stated: "Shaddai, by reason that He overturns systems," meaning that this Name overturns nature for the benefit of Israel.

וְעוֹד אֵיתָא "שְׂדִי – עַל שֵׁם שֶׁהוּא מְשַׁדֵּד מַעֲרָכוֹת",
דְּהֵינּוּ שֶׁהִשֵּׁם הַזֶּה מְשַׁדֵּד הִטָּבַע לְטוֹבַת יִשְׂרָאֵל

And this is "And I appeared, etc., as God Almighty." The explanation is that when I appeared to the patriarchs to promise them regarding the Land of Israel,

וְזֶהוּ "וַאֲרָא כֹי" בְּאֵל שְׂדִי", פְּרוּשׁ כְּשֶׁנִּרְאִיתִי לְאֲבוֹת
לְהַבְטִיחַ לָהֶם עַל אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל

I promised them with the Name God Almighty, which overturns systems,

הַבְּטַחְתִּי לָהֶם בְּשֵׁם אֵל שְׂדִי שֶׁהוּא מְשַׁדֵּד מַעֲרָכוֹת

so that there should be no hold for the shells and for the nations in the Land of Israel, even if, Heaven forbid, Israel would not be worthy.

בְּכַדִּי שְׂלֵא יִהְיֶה אַחֲזִיזָה לְקְלִיפּוֹת וְלְאוֹמוֹת בְּאֶרֶץ
יִשְׂרָאֵל גַּם אִם חֵס וְשְׁלוֹם לֹא יִהְיוּ רְאוּיִים יִשְׂרָאֵל

"And My Name the Lord I did not make known to them," meaning that I did not promise them with the Name Havayah, blessed be He and blessed be His Name,

"וַשְּׁמִי ה' לֹא נִודַעְתִּי לָהֶם", ר"ל שְׂלֵא הַבְּטַחְתִּים
בְּשֵׁם הַוְיָה בְּרוּךְ הוּא וּבְרוּךְ שְׁמוֹ

lest, Heaven forbid, sin would cause, and power would be given to the shells to draw from the backside,

פֶּן חֵס וְשְׁלוֹם יִגְרוּם הַחֲטָא וְיִהְיֶה כַח לְקְלִיפּוֹת לִינֹק
מֵאַחֲזִרִים

and there would be a hold for the nations, Heaven forbid, in the Land of Israel.

,וְיִהְיֶה לְאוֹמוֹת אַחֲזִיזָה חֵס וְשְׁלוֹם בְּאֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל

Therefore He appeared to them as God Almighty. Understand this.

לְכֹן נִרְאָה לָהֶם בְּאֵל שְׂדִי. וְהִבֵּן זֹאת

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[NOTE Summary:

This segment explains the verse “And I appeared... as God Almighty, and My Name the Lord...” by focusing on the meaning of the Divine Name *Shaddai*. The Sages interpret *Shaddai* as “He who said to His world, ‘Enough,’” and the segment asks what benefit this brings. The explanation given is that this represents a great act of kindness toward creation. That which is farther removed from its source becomes increasingly material and coarse. Had the world been allowed to expand endlessly, it would have resulted in an unchecked emergence of negative forces, described as the development of destructive spiritual elements from the depths.

By saying “Enough,” God limited expansion, thereby restraining the formation and strength of those negative forces. This limitation itself is an act of benevolence. In addition, the Name *Shaddai* is associated with overturning natural systems, meaning it has the power to override the fixed order of nature for the benefit of Israel.

The segment then applies this idea to the divine promise to the patriarchs regarding the Land of Israel. God appeared to them specifically with the Name *Shaddai* in order to guarantee that the Land would not fall under the grip of negative forces or other nations, even in a situation where Israel might not be fully worthy. By contrast, the Name Havayah, which represents a higher and more absolute revelation, was not used in this promise, lest sin create an opening for negative forces to draw sustenance and gain a hold in the Land. Therefore, the appearance as *Shaddai* ensured protection and limitation rather than unrestricted revelation.

Practical Takeaway:

Boundaries and limits are not signs of spiritual deficiency, but expressions of divine kindness. Just as unchecked expansion can lead to distortion, restraint creates stability and protection. In personal service, not every spiritual aspiration must be pursued without limit. Sometimes what preserves holiness is measured growth, discipline, and structure. Trusting that restraint itself can be a form of divine care allows a person to value limitation as a safeguard rather than a loss. **END NOTE]**

מאמר ד

Or one may say that *Shaddai* is an expression of breasts, from which Israel draws sustenance, and a father is also one who bestows upon a son.

And this is “And I appeared, etc., as God Almighty,” and Rashi of blessed memory explained “And I appeared to the patriarchs,” to hint that because of this He appeared to them as God Almighty, who bestows.

And one may say that this is what the Sages hinted at: “The third watch, a woman converses with her husband and a child nurses from his mother’s breast,” meaning as above,

או יאמר שדי הוא לשון שדים, שמשם זה יונקים ישראל השפעות, ואב הוא גם כן משפיע לבן

וזהו “וארא כו’ באל שדי” ופרש רש”י ו”ל “וארא אל האבות” לרמז שמשום זה נראה להם באל שדי שהוא המשפיע.

וגש לומר שזה רמז חז”ל “משמר שלישי אשה מספרת עם בעלה ותינוק יונק משדי אמו” ר”ל כנ”ל

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to hint that at that time Israel draws sustenance from his mother's breast, meaning from the Name *Shaddai* who bestows.

לְרִמּוֹ שְׂבִיעַת הַזֹּאת יוֹנְקִים יִשְׂרָאֵל מִשְׁדֵּי אִמּוֹ הֵינּוּ
מִשֵּׁם שְׂדֵי הַמְּשַׁפֵּיעַ

And how could awe, fear, and dread not rise upon people to converse then with his wife, a hint to the evil inclination,

וְאִיךָ לֹא יָעֹלָה מוֹרָא וּפְחַד וְאִימָה עַל בְּנֵי אָדָם לְסַפֵּר
אֶז עִם אִשְׁתּוֹ רִמּוֹ לִיַּצֵּר הָרָע

meaning to engage then in idle matters and vanities of the world.

דְּהֵינּוּ לַעֲסוֹק אֶז בְּדַבָּרִים בְּטָלִים וְהַבְּלִי עוֹלָם

And it is an expression of wonder: a woman converses, etc., and he does not pay attention that a child nurses from his mother's breast?

וְהוּא לִשְׁוֹן תַּמִּיחָה אִשָּׁה מְסַפֶּרֶת כּו' וְאִינוּ מְשַׁנְיִחַ
שְׁתִּינוּק יוֹנֵק מִשְׁדֵּי אִמּוֹ

And the Gemara asks: "What is it counting, is it the end of a watch, etc., it is daytime,"

וּפְרִיךְ הַגְּמָרָא "מֵאִי קֹחֵשִׁיב אִי סוֹף אֲשֶׁמוּרָה כּו'
וְיִמָּא הוּא"

meaning, is there such a person who would speak then in idle matters and not place upon his heart that it is a time for supplication and the appointed time has come to pray the morning prayer?

ר"ל וְכִי נִמְצָא אִישׁ כְּזֶה שֶׁיְדַבֵּר אֶז בְּדַבָּרִים בְּטָלִים
וְלֹא יִשִּׁים אֶל לְבֹו כִּי עֵת לְחֻנָּנָה וּבָא מוֹעֵד לְהַתְפַּלֵּל
תְּפִלַּת הַשַּׁחַר

And it answers: "It is only needed for one who sleeps in a dark house."

וּמַתְרִץ "לֹא צָרִיכָא אֱלָא לְמֵאן דְּגָנִי בְּבֵית אֲפֵל"

It is understood on its own: he is the fool who walks in darkness and sleeps in gloom, without placing upon his heart the awe of the Creator, blessed be He. And this is clear.

מוֹכֵן מִמִּילָא הוּא הַפְסִיל אֲשֶׁר בַּחֲשֹׁךְ הוֹלֵךְ וְגָנִי
בְּאִפְלוּת בְּאִין מִשִּׁים אֶל לְבֹו יִרְאֵת הַבוֹרָא בְּרוּךְ הוּא.
וְקַל לְהַבִּין

[NOTE Summary:

This segment offers an additional explanation of the Divine Name *Shaddai*, interpreting it as related to *shadayim* (breasts), a source from which nourishment flows. From this Name, Israel draws spiritual sustenance and influence, just as a child nurses from its mother, and just as a father provides for a son. Accordingly, the verse "And I appeared... as God Almighty" is understood to mean that God appeared to the patriarchs specifically through the aspect of *Shaddai* as a source of ongoing spiritual nourishment and bestowal. Rashi's phrase "And I appeared to the patriarchs" is thus read as a hint that they were shown this aspect of divine influence as givers and sustainers.

The segment then connects this idea to the teaching of the Sages about the third watch of the night, when a woman converses with her husband and a child nurses from its mother. This is interpreted symbolically to mean that at that time Israel draws nourishment from the divine source represented by *Shaddai*. The text expresses astonishment that a person could be occupied with idle conversation and empty worldly matters at such a moment, failing to recognize that it is a time of spiritual nourishment and readiness for prayer.

The discussion continues with the Talmudic clarification that this description applies only to one who sleeps in darkness, meaning a person who walks in spiritual obscurity. Such a person fails to recognize the awe of the

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Creator and remains unaware of the significance of the moment, missing the opportunity for connection and preparation for prayer.

Practical Takeaway:

Moments of spiritual potential can be easily missed when a person is absorbed in distraction and habit. Times that are especially suited for drawing spiritual nourishment require awareness and sensitivity. One should cultivate attentiveness to moments of awakening and preparation, particularly before prayer, and avoid filling them with emptiness or routine chatter. Recognizing when influence and sustenance are available allows a person to approach those times with awe and readiness rather than spiritual sleep. **END NOTE]**

מאמר ה

Or one may say: "And I appeared, etc." According to that which is stated in the Shulchan Aruch: "If one did not have intention in the Patriarchs, he returns to the beginning,"

and one must understand the reason, why specifically regarding the Patriarchs does one return to the beginning.

But the matter is that Abraham rectified the attribute of kindness, etc., as above,

and this is "the great, mighty, and awesome God,"

for Jacob is the attribute of truth, "You give truth to Jacob,"

and one who wishes to go in truth must be with great awe.

And this is what Jacob said: "How awesome is this place, this is none other than the house of God,"

And according to our approach, one may say the explanation thus:

because one who goes in the attribute of truth requires great service and awe and fear and guarding in all ways,

and Jacob said: "How awesome is this place," meaning in what manner is it possible to come to the level of truth?

"This is not," meaning that it is impossible to come to the level of truth, which is the level of awesome,

except in this manner, that is "none other than the house of God,"

the explanation is that one must hold two levels:

one, that it should appear in his eyes as if he stands above in the supernal worlds,

או יאמר וארא כו'. על פי דאיתא בשלחן ערוך "אם לא כגון באבות חוזר לראש"

ויוש להבין הטעם מה טעם דוקא באבות חוזר לראש

אף הענין הוא אברהם תמן מדת חסד כו' כנ"ל

וזהו האל הגדול הגבור והנורא

דיעקב הוא מדת אמת – תתן אמת לייעקב

והרצוה ללכת באמת צריך להיות במורא גדול

וזהו שאמר יעקב "מה נורא המקום הזה אין זה כי אם בית אלקים"

ולפי דרכינו יש לומר הפרוש כך

מחמת שההולך במדת אמת צריך לזה עבודת גדול ומורא ופחד ושמיחה בכל אופנים

ואמר יעקב "מה נורא המקום הזה" ר"ל באיזה אופן אפשר לבוא למדרגת אמת

"אין זה" ר"ל שבלתי אפשרי לבוא למדרגת אמת, שהיא מדרגת נורא

כי אם באופן זה דהיינו "כי אם בית אלקים"

פרוש שצריך לאחז בי מדרגות

אחת שידקמה בעיניו כאלו עומד למעלה בעולמות העליונים

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| | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| in the house of God literally, before the Blessed One, | בבית אלקים ממש לפני השם יתברך |
| and the second level, that he should hold very, very strongly to the attribute of submission, | ומדרגה השנייה שיאחז במדת הכנעה מאד מאד |
| that is "and this is the gate of heaven," | דהיינו "וזה שער השמים" |
| the explanation is that he should always think as if he is beginning the service of the Creator now, | פרוש יחשוב תמיד כאלו הוא מתחיל בעבודת הבורא עתה |
| and stands at the gate and entrance of the beginning of the service of heaven. | ועומד על השער ופתח התחלת עבודת השמים |
| And we must, in our prayer, the prayer of the Eighteen Blessings, go from below to above, | וצריכין אנו בתפלתנו תפלת שמונה עשרה ללכת מתתא לעילא |
| meaning that initially we say "God of Abraham, etc.," which is a lower level, | דהיינו שמתחלה אנו אומרים אלקי אברהם כו' שהיא מדרגה תחתונה |
| and afterward we say "the great God, etc.," which is a higher level. | ואחר כך אנו אומרים האל הגדול כו' שהיא מדרגה עליונה |
| And behold, the explanation of "Shaddai" is that He said to His world, "Enough," for from the beginning of creation the worlds were expanding until He said to them "Enough," and the worlds were drawn down below. | והנה פרוש "שדי" הוא שאמר לעולמו די, שמתחלת הבריאה היו העולמות מתפשטים עד שאמר להם די ונשטלשלו העולמות למטה |
| And another explanation of "Shaddai" is that He says to our troubles, "Enough." | ועוד פרוש "שדי" שאומר לצרותינו די |
| And it says, "And I appeared to Abraham," and Rashi of blessed memory explained "to the patriarchs," which is a lower level, | ואמר "וארא אל אברהם" ופרש רש"י ו"ל אל האבות, שהיא מדרגה תחתונה |
| meaning that they rectified below and effected mercy in the world. | דהיינו שהם תקנו למטה ופעלו רחמים בעולם |
| And this is "as God Almighty," according to the second explanation of Shaddai, that He says to our troubles, "Enough," | וזהו "באל שדי" כפרוש השני של שדי שאומר לצרותינו די |
| and automatically there was mercy and kindness in the world. | וממילא היה רחמים וחסד אל בעולם |
| And this is "and My Name the Lord I did not make known to them," meaning the Name Havayah, which is the attribute of mercy, | וזהו "ושמי ה' לא נודעתי להם" ר"ל שם הויה שהוא מדת הרחמים |
| I did not need to make known to them through the attribute of this holy Name, | לא הצטרכתי להכיר להם במדת השם הקדוש הזה |
| for they effected mercy automatically. | כי אם פעלו רחמים ממילא |
| And this is "if one did not have intention in the Patriarchs," | וזהו "אם לא כוון באבות" פרוש אם לא כוון לתקן |
| meaning if one did not intend to rectify the lower level, | המדרגה התחתונה |

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“he must return to the beginning,” to rectify from below to above, as explained above.

“צריך להזכור לראש” לתקן מתתא לעילא כנ”ל.

And this is that when Moses our teacher, peace be upon him, said, “Why have You done evil to this people,”

וזהו כשאמר משה רבינו עליו השלום “למה הרעותה לעם הזה”

then “And God spoke to Moses and said to him, I am the Lord,” meaning that this is placed upon the righteous to transform the attribute of judgment into mercy,

אז “וידבר אלהים אל משה ויאמר אליו אני ה'” פרוש שנה מוטל על הצדיק להפוך מדת הדין לרחמים

so that also “I,” the attribute of God, will be Havayah, that is, the attribute of mercy, through the righteous.

שגם “אני” – מדת אלהים, יהיה ה' – דהיינו מדת הרחמים – על פי הצדיק

And this is “to him” specifically.

וזהו “אליו” דיקא.

And this is “The Lord, God of my salvation,” meaning also the attribute of God is transformed into Havayah, which is the attribute of mercy.

וזהו “ה' אלקי תשועתי”, פרוש גם מדת אלקים, נהפך להויה שהוא מדת הרחמים

“My tongue will sing of Your righteousness,” meaning through my tongue singing Your righteousness,

“תרגן לשוני צדקתך”, ר”ל על ידי ש לשוני תרגן צדקתך

that is, that I cause righteousness in the world below, as explained above, from below to above. And this is clear.

דהיינו שאני גורם צדקות בעולם למטה כנ”ל מתתא לעילא. וזל להבין.

[NOTE Summary:

This segment develops a deep explanation of prayer, truth, and spiritual ascent through the framework of the Patriarchs and the structure of the Amidah. It begins with the halachic ruling that if one did not have proper intention during the blessing of the Patriarchs, one must return to the beginning of the prayer. The reason given is not technical but spiritual. The Patriarchs represent foundational spiritual attributes that must be properly aligned before any higher ascent can take place.

Abraham represents the attribute of kindness, Isaac the attribute of might, and Jacob the attribute of truth. Truth, as embodied by Jacob, is not simple or easy. One who seeks to walk in truth must do so with great awe, fear, and vigilance. This explains Jacob’s declaration, “How awesome is this place; this is none other than the house of God.” According to this teaching, Jacob was expressing the difficulty of attaining the level of truth and asking how it is possible to reach such a demanding spiritual state.

The answer lies in holding two opposing inner postures simultaneously. On the one hand, a person must envision himself as standing in the highest realms, directly before God, as though present in the very house of God. On the other hand, he must maintain extreme humility, viewing himself as standing at the gate, just beginning his service. These two states together form the proper entrance to truth. This dual posture is described as “the house of God” and “the gate of heaven.”

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Prayer follows this same pattern of ascent from below to above. One begins with the God of Abraham, representing a lower, foundational level of service, and only afterward moves to “the great, mighty, and awesome God,” representing a higher spiritual level. If one fails to properly align the lower level, symbolized by the Patriarchs, one must return to the beginning and rebuild the ascent correctly.

The segment then explains the Divine Name *Shaddai* as the force that limits and channels expansion, saying “Enough” both to the world and to suffering. The Patriarchs operated primarily at this lower level, repairing reality from below and generating mercy within the world itself, without requiring a revealed influx of the Divine Name Havayah. For this reason, God says that His Name Havayah was not made known to them.

This framework also explains Moses’ protest, “Why have You done evil to this people.” The task of the righteous is to transform judgment into mercy, to cause even the attribute of judgment to become compassion. This transformation occurs through the righteous themselves, acting from below upward. When this happens, even the Divine Name associated with judgment is elevated and becomes mercy through the righteous person’s action.

Practical Takeaway:

True spiritual work demands both confidence and humility at the same time. A person must approach prayer and service with the awareness that he stands before God, while also feeling that he is only beginning and has much to correct. Skipping foundational inner work leads to instability in higher spiritual pursuits. If intention is lacking at the base, one must return and rebuild rather than continue upward superficially. Real transformation in the world comes from repairing reality from below, patiently and consistently, until mercy is drawn forth naturally.

Chassidic Story:

It is told that Rabbi Elimelech of Lizhensk once observed a learned student who prayed with great intensity but appeared restless and dissatisfied afterward. Rabbi Elimelech asked him how he approached prayer. The student explained that he tried to elevate himself immediately to lofty intentions and deep mystical awareness.

Rabbi Elimelech gently replied that a ladder cannot be climbed by stepping onto the top rung first. He explained that if a person does not firmly place his feet on the ground, the ascent is imagined rather than real. True prayer begins with grounding oneself in humility and responsibility, repairing what is below before reaching upward. Only when the lower rungs are secure can one safely climb higher.

Those who heard this teaching understood that Rabbi Elimelech was not discouraging spiritual ambition, but redirecting it. Real elevation comes from steady, honest work that transforms judgment into mercy, starting from the lowest point and rising upward step by step. **END NOTE]**