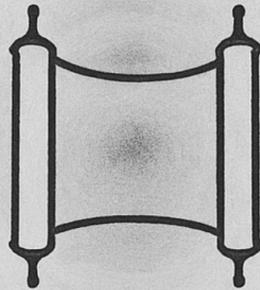


בס"ד

**Rebbe Elimelech
of Lizhensk
Parshas Shemos**



*Dedicated in Honor of the
Yahrzeit of the
Alter Rebbe 24th of Tevet*

לע"נ

רבי שניאור זלמן בן רבי ברוך

To find more Maamarim and to dedicate one visit:

ChassidusNow.com

The Rebbe, Rebbe Elimelech of Lizhensk

Noam Elimelech

Parshas Shemos

מאמר א

And these are the names of the children of Israel who are coming to Egypt, etc.; each man and his household came.

ואלה שמות בני ישראל הבאים מצרימה וגו';
איש וביתו באו. (Exodus 1:1)

To resolve the change of expression, that at first it says “who are coming” in the present tense, and it concludes in the past tense, “came”;

לתרץ השנוי לשון, שמתחלה אומר “הבאים”
 “בלשון הנה, וסיום בלשון עבר” באו

also, at first He called them by the name “Israel,” and in the end He called them by the name “Jacob.”

גם מתחלה קראם על שם “ישראל” ולבסוף קראם
 “על שם יעקב”.

The intent in this is that when the great righteous person is strengthened and has become established in his righteousness many days,

הפונה בזה, היות שהצדיק הגדול נתחזק ונתישן
 בצדקו ימים רבים

then even though he does great deeds and many acts of righteousness, nevertheless he is saved from arrogance;

אזי אף שעושה דברים גדולים וצדקות רבות,
 אף-על-פי-כן הוא נצול מגדלות

for on the contrary, he finds within himself deficiencies, to say that he is still falling short in the service,

כי אדרבה הוא מוצא בעצמו חסרונות לומר שהוא
 מקצר עדין בעבודה

and he afflicts himself over this; and moreover, he afflicts himself over the needs of Israel

והוא מצער עצמו על זה, ומה גם שמצער עצמו על
 צורכי ישראל

and their bitter exile with taxes and levies; and all his fervor and cleaving in the service is not equal for him at all,

וגלותם המרה במסים וארנונית; וכל התלהבותו
 ודבקותו בעבודה אינו שונה לו כלל

because of the abundance of his worry over them, as stated above; and they are the pillars of the world

מרוב דאגתו עליהם כנ"ל; והמה עמודי עולם

who are called by the name “Israel.”

”הנקראים בשם “ישראל”.

And those righteous ones who are beginning the service, newly come recently,

ואותם הצדיקים המתחילים בעבודה, חדשים
 מקרוב באו

when they do some matter of holiness, arrogance becomes inflamed within them,

בהיותם עושים איזה דבר קדשה נתלהב בקרבם
 הגדלות

and they suppose that they have already reached the ultimate of true service;

והמה סוברים ששקבר הגיעו לתכלית העבודה
 האמתית

and even though they are righteous, they stumble in the sin of arrogance;

ואף-על-פי שהם צדיקים, המה נכשלים בעון
 הגדלות

they are those who are called by the name “Jacob.”

המה אשר בשם “יעקב” יכונה.

The Rebbe, Rebbe Elimelech of Lizhensk

Noam Elimelech

Parshas Shemos

And this is the allusion of the verse in saying, “the children of Israel who are coming to Egypt,”

וְזֶהוּ רִמְזוּ הַכְּתוּב בְּאֵמְרוֹ “בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הַבָּאִים
”מִצְרָיִם”

to say that the great righteous ones are always in distress and worry over the service,

לומר שְׁהַצְדִּיקִים הַגְּדוֹלִים הֵמָּה תָּמִיד בְּמִצְרַר וּדְאָגָה
עַל הָעֲבוּדָה

to say that they are still falling short, and by this they go upward always without interruption;

לומר שֶׁהֵם מְקַצְרִים עֲדוּן, וּבְזֶה הוֹלְכִים לְמַעַלָּה
תָּמִיד בְּלִי הַפְּסֵק

and this is “who are coming” in the present tense.

וְזֶהוּ “הַבָּאִים” בְּלִשׁוֹן הַנֶּה

“Jacob, each man and his household, came,” in the past tense,

אֵת יַעֲקֹב אִישׁ וּבֵיתוֹ בָּאוּ” — בְּעֵבֶר

to allude to those who suppose that they have already completed the service

לְרַמֵּז עַל אוֹתָם הַסּוֹבְרִים שֶׁכָּבַר שְׁלֵמוֹ בְּעֲבוּדָה

without any deficiency having reached them;

מְבַלֵּי שׁוּם חֶסְרוֹן אֲלֵיהֶם הִגִּיעַ

not so is the level of truth, but rather to always watch over one’s lowliness,

שְׁלֵא כֵן מְדַרְגֵת הָאֵמֶת, אֲלֵא לְהִשְׁגִּיחַ תָּמִיד עַל
שְׁפָלוּתוֹ

in order that he be saved from arrogance, and then it is good for them.

לְמַעַן יִנָּצַל מִגְּדֻלוֹת וְאֵז טוֹב לָהֶם

And this is sufficient for the discerning.

וְקַל לְמַבִּין

[NOTE Summary:

The verse “These are the names of the children of Israel who are coming to Egypt... Jacob, each man and his household, came” is read with precise attention to its shifts in language. The Torah begins in the present tense, “who are coming,” and ends in the past tense, “came.” It also begins by calling them “Israel” and concludes by calling them “Jacob.” These changes are not stylistic but conceptual.

“Israel” refers to the great, seasoned righteous individuals whose service has endured over many years. Precisely because of their maturity and spiritual longevity, they are protected from arrogance. Even as they perform great deeds and many acts of righteousness, they continuously perceive their own deficiencies. They experience themselves as still lacking, still short in their service of God. Their inner state is one of constriction, concern, and responsibility, both regarding their own spiritual standing and regarding the suffering of the Jewish people in exile, with its burdens of taxation, oppression, and hardship. Their personal fervor and spiritual delight are muted by their deep worry for others. Because they are never spiritually complacent, they are always in motion, always ascending. This ongoing movement is expressed by the present tense “who are coming.” They are always coming, never finished.

By contrast, “Jacob” refers to righteous individuals who are new to spiritual work. When they perform even a single act of holiness, they become inflamed with self-importance. They imagine they have already reached

The Rebbe, Rebbe Elimelech of Litzhensk

Noam Elimelech

Parshas Shemos

the pinnacle of true service. Although they are genuinely righteous, they stumble in the subtle but dangerous sin of spiritual arrogance. They view their service as complete, as something already achieved. This false sense of completion is hinted at by the past tense “came.” Their movement has stopped, not because they have reached truth, but because they believe they have.

The verse thus teaches that true spiritual truth is not completion but ongoing humility. Authentic service requires constant awareness of one’s smallness, vigilance against self-satisfaction, and a continuous sense of responsibility beyond oneself. Only through sustained lowliness does one remain protected from arrogance, and only then is spiritual growth genuine and enduring.

Practical Takeaway:

Spiritual authenticity is measured less by visible accomplishments and more by inner posture. When a person feels spiritually finished, certain of their greatness, growth has already stalled. When a person feels unfinished, concerned, and responsible, growth continues naturally. The practical work is to cultivate humility not by self-denigration, but by honest self-assessment and sustained concern for others. The sign of health is motion, not arrival.

Chassidic Story:

Rabbi Yisrael Salanter, the founder of the Mussar movement, was once praised publicly for his exceptional piety and leadership. After the gathering, a student followed him and asked how he felt about the accolades. Rabbi Yisrael answered quietly that praise frightened him more than criticism. When asked why, he explained that criticism sharpens a person’s self-awareness, but praise dulls it. He added that he feared becoming satisfied with who he already was, because the moment a person believes they are complete, they stop growing.

Years later, one of his students recalled seeing Rabbi Yisrael return from visiting impoverished families during a harsh winter. His clothes were soaked, his hands trembling from the cold. When urged to rest, he replied that as long as there were Jews burdened by suffering, how could he allow himself comfort. That constant sense of incompleteness and responsibility, the student said, was what made him truly great.

Rabbi Yisrael did not see himself as having arrived. He saw himself as always on the way. That ongoing movement, grounded in humility and care for others, was the source of his enduring spiritual stature.

END NOTE]

The Rebbe, Rebbe Elimelech of Lizhensk

Noam Elimelech

Parshas Shemos

מאמר ב

Or one may say: “And these are the names of the children of Israel, etc.”

”או יאמר: “ואלה שמות בני ישראל כו”

And first we will explain the Gemara: “Anyone who delights the Shabbat, they give him an inheritance without boundaries,”

ומתחלה נפרש הגמרא: “כל המענג את השבת, נותנים לו נחלה בלי מצרים”

and it should have said: one who delights himself on Shabbat;

והיה לו לומר: המענג את עצמו בשבת

and also the reward that they give him an inheritance without boundaries, what measure corresponding to measure is this;

וגם השכר שנותנים לו נחלה בלי מצרים, מה מדה; כנגד מדה הוא

also what the Sages, of blessed memory, expounded: “An additional soul is given to a person on Shabbat, and at the conclusion of Shabbat it is taken from him, as it is said: ‘He rested and was refreshed’; once he rested, woe, the soul is lost,”

גם מה שדדדדו חז”ל: “נשמה תתירה נותנין לו לאדם בשבת, ולמוצאי שבת נוטלין ממנו, שנאמר: שבת, וינפש, כיון ששבת ויני אבדה נפש”

and the question is well known: what do they mean by “once he rested, etc.”,

”והקשיא מפרסמת: מה אומרם “כיון ששבת כו”

behold the loss of the additional soul is after Shabbat, as they said, and at the conclusion of Shabbat it is taken from him.

הרי אבוד הנפש היתירה הוא אחר השבת, כאומרם: ולמוצאי שבת נטלת הימנו

But the matter is that it is stated in the holy Zohar that the righteous person is called “Shabbat,”

אך הענין הוא, דאיתא בזהר הקדוש דהצדיק נקרא “שבת”

because during the weekday he has a soul like other people on Shabbat;

מחמת שיש לו בחול נשמה כשאר בני אדם בשבת

but what additional elevation does he have on Shabbat;

אך מה יש בו תוספת מעלה בשבת

it may be said that the soul is added with extra holiness until he gives delight to the Creator, blessed be He;

יש לומר דהנשמה נתוספת בקדושה תתירה עד שהיא מענג להבורא יתברך

and this is “anyone who delights the Shabbat,”

”וזהו “כל המענג את השבת

for the Holy One, blessed be He, is called Shabbat, as it is brought there: what is Shabbat, the Name of the Holy One, blessed be He;

דקדושא בריך הוא נקרא שבת, על דרך דאיתא שם: מהו שבת — שמה דקדושא בריך הוא

“they give him an inheritance without boundaries,”

”נותנים לו נחלה בלי מצרים”

for this righteous person is always bound and cleaving to the supernal worlds which have no end and no boundary and no limit;

דהצדיק הנה הוא תמיד מקשר ודבוק בעולמות העליונים אשר אין להם סוף ומצר וגבול

for this world has a boundary,

דעולם הנה יש לו גבול

and in the hand of this righteous person is to bind all the worlds until the Infinite, blessed be He.

וכיד הצדיק הנה לקשר כל העולמות עד אין-סוף ברוך הוא

The Rebbe, Rebbe Elimelech of Lizhensk

Noam Elimelech

Parshas Shemos

And this is what the Sages, of blessed memory, said: “once he rested,”	”וְזֶהוּ שְׁאָמְרוּ חֲזוּ”ל: “כִּיּוֹן שְׁשֻׁבֵת
meaning the person who does not have an additional soul during the weekday, only on Shabbat they give him an additional soul;	פִּירוּשׁ: הָאָדָם שְׁאֵין לוֹ נֶשְׁמָה יְתִירָה בַּחֹל, רַק בְּשֻׁבֵת נּוֹתְנִים לוֹ נֶשְׁמָה יְתִירָה
“woe, the soul is lost,”	”וַיִּי אָבְדָה נַפְשׁ”
meaning woe that the soul is lost during the weekday,	פִּירוּשׁ: וַיִּי שֶׁהִנֶּפֶשׁ נֹאֲבֶדֶת בַּחֹל
for during the weekday he does not have this soul,	שְׁאֵין לוֹ בַּחֹל הַנֶּפֶשׁ הַזֹּאת
and he did not merit the added holiness on Shabbat like the righteous person who has an additional soul during the weekday.	וְלֹא זָכָה לְקַדְשָׁה הַנוֹסֶפֶת בְּשֻׁבֵת כַּצַּדִּיק שְׁיֵשׁ לוֹ נֶשְׁמָה יְתִירָה בַּחֹל
And behold, there is a righteous person who is not always cleaving to the supernal worlds,	וְהִנֵּה יֵשׁ צַדִּיק שְׁאֵינוֹ דְּבוּק תָּמִיד בְּעוֹלָמוֹת עֲלִיוֹנִים
because he still needs to rectify his traits in fear and humility,	מִחֻמַּת שְׁצַרְיָה עֲדוֹן לְתַקֵּן אֶת מְדוּתָיו בְּיִרְאָה וּבַעֲנָה
and he must descend from his cleaving in order to rectify.	וְצַרְיָה לִירֵד מִדְּבֻקוֹתוֹ כְּגַי לְתַקֵּן
Yet nevertheless, he is always inwardly such that he does not stumble, Heaven forbid, in any sin when he descends below his level.	אֲךָ אֶרְעֶל-פֶּיֶךָ הוּא תָּמִיד בְּפָנִימִיּוֹתוֹ שְׁאֵינוֹ נִכְשָׁל חֶסֶד-וְשָׁלוֹם בְּשׁוּם חֵטָא בְּיַרְדּוֹ לְמַטָּה מִמְדַּרְגָּתוֹ
And this is “And these are the names of the children of Israel who are coming to Egypt,”	”וְזֶהוּ” וְאֵלֶּה שְׁמוֹת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הַבָּאִים מִצְרָיִמָה
meaning the righteous who are called by the name “Israel,” who sometimes descend from their level and come to Egypt;	פִּירוּשׁ הַצַּדִּיקִים הַנִּקְרָאִים בְּשֵׁם “יִשְׂרָאֵל” הַיּוֹרְדִים לְפַעְמִים מִמְדַּרְגָּתָם וּבָאִים אֶל מִצְרָיִמָה
that is, in their descent below they are called “narrow of sea,”	”דְּהֵינּוּ שְׁבִירֵידָתָם לְמַטָּה נִקְרָא “מִצַּר יָם
which is in order to rectify his traits in fear and humility.	שֶׁהוּא כְּגַי לְתַקֵּן אֶת מְדוּתָיו בְּיִרְאָה וּבַעֲנָה
And this is “Jacob,” an allusion to humility and fear of sin, as the verse says, “the heel of humility is fear of sin” (Proverbs 22:4).	וְזֶהוּ “אֵת יַעֲקֹב”, רֶמֶז לְעֲנָוָה וְיִרְאָת חֵטָא, כְּמוֹ (Proverbs) “שְׁאָמַר הַכְּתוּב “עַקֵּב עֲנָוָה יִרְאָת חֵטָא 22:4).
“Each man and his household came,” meaning this righteous person is assured that he will not stumble in any sin,	אִישׁ וּבֵיתוֹ בָּאוּ”, פִּירוּשׁ הַצַּדִּיק הַזֶּה הוּא בְּטוֹחַ”
and he will come together, man and his household;	שְׁלֹא יִפְשַׁל בְּשׁוּם חֵטָא
“man” is called the one who cleaves,	וְיָבוֹא יַחַד אִישׁ וּבֵיתוֹ
and “his household” is his inwardness, namely the fear and humility within him;	דְּ“אִישׁ” נִקְרָא הַדְּבּוּק
both of them together will come, as if they have already come.	”בֵּיתוֹ” הֵינּוּ פָּנִימִיּוֹתוֹ, דְּהֵינּוּ הִירְאָה וְהַעֲנָוָה שְׁבוּ
And this is “And Jacob was a wholesome man, dwelling in tents” (Genesis 25:27),	שְׁנֵיהֶם יַחַד יָבוֹאוּ, וְכֹאֵלוּ כְּבָר בָּאוּ
	(Genesis) “וְזֶהוּ” וַיַּעֲקֹב אִישׁ תָּם יָשָׁב אֹהֲלִים 25:27),

The Rebbe, Rebbe Elimelech of Lizhensk

Noam Elimelech

Parshas Shemos

and Rashi explained: “one who does not know how to deceive is called wholesome,”

”וּפְרִישׁ רִשְׁיִי זֶל:” מִי שְׁאִינוּ יוֹדְעַ לְרַמּוֹת נִקְרָא תָם,

an allusion to our words above,

רָמַז לְדַבְרֵינוּ הַנִּזְל

that the righteous person who is in fear and humility is a wholesome man in two tents;

שֶׁהַצַּדִּיק שֶׁהוּא בִּירְאָה וְעַנּוּהוּ הוּא אִישׁ תָּם בְּשָׁנֵי אֹהֲלִים;

that is, even when he descends from his cleaving below, he is nevertheless wholesome,

דִּהְיָנוּ שָׂאז בִּירִידָתוֹ מִדְּבֻקָּוֹתוֹ לְמַטָּה, אֶף־עַל־פִּי־כֹן הוּא תָם,

not knowing how to deceive, that he does not stumble in any sin.

שְׁאִינוּ יוֹדְעַ לְרַמּוֹת, שְׁאִינוּ נִכְשָׁל בְּשׁוּם חַטָּא

For there is a righteous person who sometimes, when he falls from his level, can stumble in some sin, Heaven forbid;

דִּישׁ צַדִּיק אֲשֶׁר לְפַעֲמִים כְּשׁוֹפֵל מִמִּדְרָגָתוֹ יִכּוֹל לְהִכָּשֵׁל בְּאִיזָה חַטָּא חֲסִי־וְשָׁלוּם

but the righteous person who descends in order to rectify his household in fear and humility will never stumble.

אָבֵל הַצַּדִּיק הַיּוֹרֵד כְּדֵי לְתַקֵּן אֶת בֵּיתוֹ בִּירְאָה וְעַנּוּהוּ לֹא יִכָּשֵׁל לְעוֹלָם.

And this is the explanation of the Mishnah: “Which is wholesome and which is forewarned, etc.” (Mishnah Bava Kamma 2:5).

”וְזֶהוּ פֶּרוּשׁ הַמִּשְׁנָה: “אִיזָה תָם וְאִיזָה מוּעֵד וְכוּ” (Mishnah Bava Kamma 2:5).

One may say that the Tanna alludes to our words above:

גִּישׁ לֹוֹמֵר שֶׁהַתַּנָּא מְרַמֵּז לְדַבְרֵינוּ הַנִּזְל:

“Which is wholesome,” meaning the wholesome one called by the name “wholesome, dwelling in tents”;

אִיזָה תָם, ”רִל הַתָּם הַנִּקְרָא בְּשֵׁם תָּם יֵשֵׁב אֹהֲלִים”

“and which is forewarned,” as we already wrote, “forewarned” is an allusion to the supernal worlds,

וְאִיזָה מוּעֵד, ”כִּכָּר כְּתַבְנוּ שֶׁ”מוּעֵד” הוּא רָמַז”

from the expression “mo’ed” with a cholam;

לְעוֹלָמוֹת הָעֲלִיּוֹנִים;

and he said “which is forewarned,” meaning which righteous person is always bound and cleaving to the supernal worlds;

וְאָמַר “אִיזָה מוּעֵד”, פִּירוּשׁ אִיזָה הוּא הַצַּדִּיק שֶׁהוּא תָּמִיד מְקַשֵּׁר וְדְבוּק בְּעוֹלָמוֹת הָעֲלִיּוֹנִים

“forewarned, anyone about whom it was testified for three days,”

”מוּעֵד כָּל שֶׁהֵעִידוּ בוֹ שְׁלֹשָׁה יָמִים”

for it is stated that Scripture, Mishnah, and Talmud arouse the soul, spirit, and higher soul;

דְּאִיתָא בְּמִקְרָא וּמִשְׁנָה וְתַלְמוּד מְעוֹרְרִים אֶת הַנֶּפֶשׁ וְרוּחַ וּנְשָׁמָה

and this is the allusion of “that they testified about him,”

”וְזֶה רָמַז” שֶׁהֵעִידוּ בוֹ כו’

meaning that the soul, spirit, and higher soul were aroused within him to ascend to the worlds,

פִּירוּשׁ שֶׁנִּתְעוֹרְרוּ בוֹ הַנֶּפֶשׁ וְרוּחַ וּנְשָׁמָה לְעוֹלָמוֹת הָעֲלִיּוֹנִים

to be always cleaving to them;

לְהִיּוֹת תָּמִיד דְּבוּק בָּהֶם

“and wholesome returns after three days,”

”וְתָם מְשִׁיחָזֵר בוֹ שְׁלֹשָׁה יָמִים”

that is, as above, even when he descends from his level, he returns to his wholesomeness,

דִּהְיָנוּ כְּנִזְל, גַּם כְּשִׁיּוֹרֵד מִמִּדְרָגָתוֹ הוּא חוֹזֵר לְתַמּוּתוֹ

The Rebbe, Rebbe Elimelech of Lizhensk

Noam Elimelech

Parshas Shemos

such that he does not stumble, Heaven forbid,

שְׂאִינוּ נִכְשָׁל חֶסֶדְךָ שְׁלוֹם,

and the side of his wholesomeness remains standing in its place.

וְצִדְתְּמוֹתוֹ בְּמִקְוָמָה עוֹמְדָת.

And this is sufficient for the discerning.

וְקָל לְמִבִּין.

[NOTE Summary:

Rabbi Elimelech explains that the opening verse of Shemos, “These are the names of the children of Israel who are coming to Egypt,” describes not only a historical descent but an inner spiritual dynamic within the righteous. There are different types of righteous individuals, and their movements upward and downward are not uniform.

At the highest level stands the righteous person who is constantly bound to the upper worlds. This figure lives beyond limitation, attached to infinite divine flow, and this is the meaning of the teaching that one who delights the Shabbat is given an inheritance without boundaries. Shabbat is not merely a day but a name of the Holy One Himself, and the righteous who delights Shabbat is one who gives delight to God by his constant attachment to holiness. Because he is already living beyond constriction, his reward is a portion without borders, corresponding measure for measure to his limitless spiritual state.

However, Rabbi Elimelech then introduces another category of righteous individual. This person is not always able to remain in continuous attachment to the upper worlds, because he still must refine his character traits, particularly fear of Heaven and humility. In order to do this work, he must sometimes descend from his spiritual height. This descent is not a failure but a deliberate and necessary movement. The Torah alludes to this with the phrase “coming to Egypt.” Egypt is read as “meitzar yam,” a place of constriction and narrowness, symbolizing entry into limitation for the sake of repair.

These righteous individuals are still called “Israel,” even when they descend, because their descent is purposeful and controlled. They do not fall into sin, Heaven forbid, even when they move downward. Their inner core remains intact. This is hinted at in the words “Jacob, each man and his household, came.” “Jacob” alludes to humility and fear of sin, as the verse states that humility leads to fear of sin. “Man” refers to the aspect of attachment and spiritual strength, while “his household” refers to inner traits of humility and awe. Both descend together, meaning the righteous person brings his inner fear and humility with him, ensuring that his descent does not become a spiritual collapse.

Rabbi Elimelech reinforces this idea through the verse “Jacob was a wholesome man, dwelling in tents.” A wholesome person, as Rashi explains, is one who does not know how to deceive. Even when such a righteous individual leaves his state of attachment to work on himself below, he remains spiritually innocent and uncorrupted. This stands in contrast to another type of righteous person who, when falling from his level unintentionally, may stumble into sin. The distinction lies in intention and inner preparation. A descent undertaken for the sake of refinement, accompanied by humility and fear, never leads to spiritual damage.

The Rebbe, Rebbe Elimelech of Litzhensk

Noam Elimelech

Parshas Shemos

Finally, Rabbi Elimelech rereads the Mishnah's categories of "tam" and "mu'ad" as spiritual archetypes. "Mu'ad" alludes to one who is consistently connected to the upper worlds, awakened through Scripture, Mishnah, and Talmud, corresponding to soul, spirit, and higher soul. "Tam" refers to the righteous individual who, even after descending for refinement, returns to his wholesomeness intact. His simplicity and integrity remain standing in their place. The teaching concludes by affirming that true righteousness is not measured by uninterrupted ascent, but by the ability to descend without corruption and return unchanged.

Chassidic Story:

It is told that Rabbi Elimelech once sent one of his closest students to spend time among simple villagers rather than remain in the study hall. The student was confused and even distressed, fearing spiritual loss from leaving the intense holiness of his rebbe's presence. When he returned weeks later, Rabbi Elimelech asked him what he had learned. The student replied that among the villagers he was forced to confront his impatience, pride, and subtle sense of superiority, traits that had gone unnoticed while immersed in Torah alone.

Rabbi Elimelech responded that this was precisely the purpose of the journey. Remaining constantly in spiritual elevation can conceal inner flaws, while descent exposes them for repair. He added that the true test of a righteous person is not whether he can ascend, but whether he can descend into the world and remain whole. If humility and fear accompany him, the descent itself becomes part of his ascent.

END NOTE]