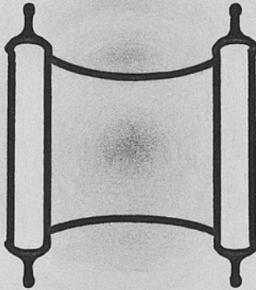


ב"ס"ג

Reb Meir of Premishlan

Divrie Meir

Parshas Bereshis



Dedicated In Honor Of:

לע"ג

רבי לוי יצחק בן רבי מאיר
מברדייטשובה

To find more Maamarim and to dedicate one visit:

ChassidusNow.com

Rabbi Meir of Premishlan

Divrie Meir

Parshas Bereshis

בְּרָאָשָׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ א, א

“In the beginning, G-d created the heavens and the earth” (Bereishis 1:1)

“In the beginning G-d created,” etc. Reb Yitzchak (the author) heard from his Rebbe, Reb Meir of Premishlan, on Shabbos Bereishis, in the following words:

When a person builds a structure, he first makes a foundation plan so that the building can stand.

And this is what the verse says, “Bereishis Bara”—when one desires to become a Jew, he must at the outset break three things: Bi’ah, I’yah, and Okhilah, the initials of which form the word Bara (“created”).

(These words are found in the hidden manuscript of his holy teacher’s teachings.)

My honored and holy master, my father and teacher, my Rebbe, Rabbi Yissachar Ber of Strelisk, of blessed memory, said in the name of the holy Rabbi Meir of Premishlan, may the memory of the righteous and holy be a blessing:

That the word “Bereishis” (In the beginning) is an acronym for Bishvil Yisrael shenikreu Reishis (“for the sake of Israel who are called the beginning”) or Bishvil Torah shenikreis Reishis (“for the sake of the Torah which is called the beginning”).

Thus, the world was created only either for the sake of the Torah or for the sake of Israel, and also through either of them the world’s existence is sustained. So concludes his holy words.

(This teaching is found in Sifsei Kedoshim, Parshas Bereishis.)

בְּרָאָשָׁית בָּרָא וּגְוֹן. ר' י'צ' שָׁמַע מֶרְבִּי מְאֵיר
[מִפְּרָמִישְׁלָן] בְּשֶׁבֶת בְּרָאָשָׁית בָּזָה הַלְשׁוֹן:

כַּשְׂאָדָם בּוֹנֵן בָּנָנוּ עֲוֹשָׂה מִתְחָלָה פִּידִימֶנֶט [תְּכִנִּית]
כִּדְיַי שִׁוְיכֵל קְבָנֵנוּ לְהַתְקִים
וְזֹהוּ שֶׁאָמַר כְּפָתָחּוּ בְּרָאָשָׁית בָּרָא, כְּשֶׁרוֹצִים לְהִזְמִין
יְהָוִה אֱלֹהִים מִתְחָלָה לְשֶׁבֶר גַּי דְּבָרִים אֶלָּו: בִּיאָה,
וְאִיאָה, וְאֶאָכְלָה, רְאֵשִׁי תְּבֹות בָּרָא

עֲקוֹלָס סְלוּיס לֹוֶר הַגְּנוּז פִּי בְּרָאָשָׁית ל'ס)
(כְּרָסְתִּית

כְּבָוד קְדָשׁוֹ שֶׁל אֲדוֹנֵי אָבִי מוֹרִי וּרְבִי • יִשְׁכָר בְּעָר
מִשְׁטָרָא זִינְגִּיז זֶלְהָה"ה אָמַר בְּשֵׁם קָרְבָּה הַקָּדוֹשׁ רְבִי
מְאֵיר מִפְּרָמִישְׁלָן זְצֹוק"ל

צְמַלְתָּה בְּרָאָשָׁית נוֹטְרִיקָוּן בִּישְׁבִּיל יִשְׁרָאֵל שְׁנָקְרָא
רְאָשִׁית אוֹ בִּישְׁבִּיל תּוֹרָה שְׁנָקְרָא רְאָשִׁית

וְהִינֵּנוּ שְׁהָעֹלָם לֹא נִבְרָא אֵלָא אוֹ בִּישְׁבִּיל הַתּוֹרָה אוֹ
בִּישְׁבִּיל יִשְׁרָאֵל, וְגַם עַל יְקִי אַחֲד מִהָּם שִׁיחַ שְׁפִיר
קְיֻום הָעוֹלָם, עַד כְּאֹן דְּבָרִי קְדָשׁוֹ

(שְׁפִתִּי קְדָשׁ פִּי בְּרָאָשָׁית)

Rabbi Meir of Premishlan

Divrie Meir

Parshas Bereshis

[NOTE Summary:

Reb Meir of Premishlan opens Bereishis with a simple but piercing insight: just as a builder first lays a foundation before constructing a home, so too a Jew must begin life's spiritual building by breaking three base impulses — *bi'ah* (immorality), *i'yah* (arrogance or self-inflation), and *akhilah* (gluttony or physical indulgence). The initials of these three form *bara* ("created"), hinting that the true act of creation begins with breaking — the refining of the self that allows holiness to take root. The very word *Bereishis* ("In the beginning") thus points to the purpose of creation: the world exists either *bishvil Yisrael shenikreuv reishis* ("for the sake of Israel, who are called the beginning") or *bishvil Torah shenikreis reishis* ("for the sake of the Torah, which is called the beginning"). Creation is sustained through these two intertwined purposes — the people of Israel who live Torah, and the Torah which shapes Israel.

Practical Takeaway:

Before a person can build anything lasting in holiness — Torah study, prayer, family, or character — they must first establish a strong foundation by purifying their inner drives. The act of breaking one's negative habits and desires is not destruction but creation; it is laying the groundwork for divine presence to dwell within. One who disciplines body and ego creates space for the true "building" of Torah and light to stand firm.

Chassidic Story:

Once, a wealthy man came to Reb Meir of Premishlan complaining that despite his fortune, he felt empty and disconnected. Reb Meir told him to go outside and look into the window of a nearby house. "What do you see?" he asked. "People sitting together, talking," the man said. Reb Meir then handed him a silver coin and said, "Now look again." The man looked and replied, "Now I see only myself." Reb Meir smiled gently and said, "That's what happens when silver comes between you and the world. Break the glass of your ego, and you'll see others — and G-d — again." (Source: *Sippurei Tzaddikim*, vol. 3, story of Reb Meir of Premishlan)

END NOTE]

ויעש אלhim את שני המאורות הגדלים את המאור הגדול למשנת היללה
ואת הפוכבים א, טז

"And G-d made the two great luminaries: the great luminary to rule the day, and the small luminary to rule the night, and the stars" (Bereishis 1:16).

These are the words of my revered grandfather, the holy Rabbi, our teacher from Premishlan, Rabbi Meir zatzal, on the verse "the great luminary to rule the day, and the small luminary to rule the night."

דברי דודי זקנינו קרבן הקדוש מורהנו מפרק עמיישלאן
קרבן מאיר זצוק"ל בפסוק את המאור הגדול למשנת היללה
היום ואת המאור הקטן למשנת היללה

Rabbi Meir of Premishlan

Divrie Meir

Parshas Bereshis

He explained it according to what is stated in the prayer of Eliyahu (Tikkunei Zohar 17a) “Master of the worlds, these ten Sefiros proceed in order—one long and one short.”

The holy books explain that the Sefirah of Chesed is called “Arich”—long or great—whereas the Sefirah of Gevurah is called “Katzar”—short or small.

And it is known that the Sefiros are referred to as “lights.” The Sefirah of Chesed serves to give a good reward to one who does good, while the Sefirah of Gevurah serves to repay one who does evil.

Thus, “the great luminary” alludes to the Sefirah of Chesed, “to rule the day”—to bestow goodness and reward; while “the small luminary” alludes to Gevurah, “to rule the night”—to render judgment and retribution upon evildoers, Heaven forbid. So end the words of the wise, full of grace.

(This teaching appears in *Sifsei Kedoshim*, Parshas Bereishis.)

[NOTE Summary:

Reb Meir of Premishlan teaches that the two great luminaries—the sun and the moon—reflect two fundamental divine attributes: *Chesed* (kindness) and *Gevurah* (severity). Drawing from the *Tikkunei Zohar* (“one long and one short”), he explains that the “great luminary” corresponds to *Chesed*, the expansive flow of light that rewards and sustains those who do good, while the “small luminary” corresponds to *Gevurah*, which constricts and measures, repaying wrongdoing when necessary. Just as the sun and moon alternate to maintain balance in creation, so too these two divine qualities alternate to preserve the harmony of reward and justice in the world.

Practical Takeaway:

In life, we experience both “sunlight” and “moonlight” moments—the warmth of divine kindness and the restraint of divine judgment. Reb Meir teaches that both emanate from the same Creator and serve a single purpose: to guide us back toward goodness. When we recognize even our challenges as part of Hashem’s loving order, we transform *Gevurah* into *Chesed*, bringing light into the night. **END NOTE]**

וְתִפְקַחֵנָה עֵינֵי שְׁנֵיהם וַיַּדְעֻוּ כִּי עַירְמִים הֵם וַיַּתְפְּרוּ עַלָּה תְּאֵנָה וַיַּעֲשׂוּ לְהֵם חֲגֹרֹת ג, ז

“Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked, and they sewed fig leaves and made for themselves coverings” (Bereishis 3:7).

It is said in the name of Rabbi Meir of Premishlan, may his memory be a blessing, regarding the verse “and they sewed fig leaves”:

שְׁפָרֶשׂ הוּא זֶל עַל פִּי גַּמְבּוֹאָר בַּתְּפִלָּת אֶלְيָהוּ זָכוֹר לְטוֹב (תִּיקְוֹנִי זֹהֶר י.ז). בְּרַבּוֹן עַלְמִין וְאַלְמִין עַשֶּׂר, סְפִירָן אַזְלִין בְּסִדְרוֹן מַד אַרְיךָ וְמַד קָצָר

וְפְרִשּׁוֹ הַסְּפָרִים הַקָּדוֹשִׁים כִּי הַסְּפִירָה דְּחַסְדָּן וְקָרְאָת, אַרְיךָ וְגָדוֹל וְהַסְּפִירָה דְּגָבוּרָה וְקָרְאָת קָצָר וְקָטָן

וּנוֹעַ דְּהַסְּפִירָות נְקָרָאות אָוֹרֹת, וְהַנָּה הַסְּפִירָה דְּחַסְדָּן הָיָה לְשִׁלְם שְׁכָר טֻוב לְמַי שְׁעוֹשָׂה טֻוב, וְהַסְּפִירָה דְּגָבוּרָה לְשִׁלְם לְמַי שְׁעוֹשָׂה רָע

וְזֶה אָמָרָו הַמְּאוֹר הַגָּדוֹל הָוּא סְפִירָה דְּחַסְדָּן לְמַמְשִׁיל הַיּוֹם לְתַנְתֵּן שְׁכָר טֻוב וְאֶת הַמְּאוֹר הַקָּטָן הָוּא סְפִירָה הַגָּבוּרָה לְמַמְשִׁיל הַלְּילָה לְשִׁלְם לְמַי שְׁעוֹשָׂה רָע הַסְּלָומָן, עַד כָּאן דְּבָרִי פִּי חַכְמָה

(שְׁפִיטִי קָדְשָׁ פ' בְּרָאָשָׁית)

מַהְאָמָרָא בְּשֵׁם הַרְבָּ רַבִּי מַאיָּר מִפְּרִימִישָׁלָן לְפִרְשָׁן, הַפְּסִוק “וַיַּתְפְּרוּ עַלָּה תְּאֵנָה”

Rabbi Meir of Premishlan

Divrie Meir

Parshas Bereshis

The word *vayitperu* (“they sewed”) means that if one sews and binds oneself to the Holy One, blessed be He, then “alei te’enah” — every leaf — becomes a means of atonement and protection.

And as he would say in Yiddish: “אַ פִּיגּ וּוַיִּזְתְּ מַעַן אַלְעַ מְרָאִים לְכָלָם” — “To all who mock and scorn, one shows them a fig,” meaning that those who attach themselves to G-d need not answer their scoffers; their very faithfulness itself silences them.

(This teaching is cited in *Sifsei Kedoshim*, Parshas Bereishis.)

ויתפְרֹוי רָצָה לוֹמֶר: אִם תַּוְפְּרִין אֶת עַצְמָם לְהַקְדּוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא, אֹז “עַלְהַתְאָנָה” נִצְשָׁה לָהֶם לְכִפְרָה וּלְהָנָה.

וְאָמַר בְּלִשּׁוֹן אַשְׁכְּנָזֶן: “אַ פִּיגּ וּוַיִּזְתְּ מַעַן אַלְעַ מְרָאִים לְכָלָם” — רְצֹן לוֹמֶר שְׁלֹא אָתָם שְׁלֹוּצָגִים וּמְלֻעִיגִים מְרָאִים אֶת הַפִּיגּ, שְׁהַדְבּוּקָה בָּהּ עַצְמָה מִשְׁתִּיקָה אָוּתָם.

(שְׁפִתִּי קָדֵשׁ פִּ בְּרָאָשִׁית)

[NOTE Summary:

Reb Meir of Premishlan reads the verse “they sewed fig leaves” as an allegory for spiritual attachment. The act of sewing symbolizes binding oneself to Hashem. When a person “stitches” their being to G-d — connecting even their simplest actions and struggles to holiness — then their weaknesses, symbolized by the “leaves,” become garments of protection and dignity. Reb Meir adds in Yiddish, “אַ פִּיגּ וּוַיִּזְתְּ קַעַן אַלְעַ מְרָאִים לְכָלָם” — “One shows a fig to all who mock,” meaning that one who cleaves to G-d doesn’t need to answer cynics; the sweetness of his faith is his reply.

Practical Takeaway:

True modesty and spiritual strength come not from defending oneself to others, but from remaining bound to Hashem. By “sewing” one’s thoughts, words, and deeds to holiness, even moments of shame or failure can be transformed into coverings of grace. The believer’s quiet connection to G-d itself silences scorn and radiates dignity. **END NOTE]**

וְהַבְלֵל הַבְיאָ גַם הָוָא מִבְכָרוֹת צָאָנוּ וּמְחַלְבָהּ וַיִּשְׁעַ הִיא אַל הַבְלֵל וְאֶל מְנַחָתָה ד, ד

“And Hevel also brought from the firstborn of his flock and from their choicest fat, and Hashem turned toward Hevel and toward his offering” (Bereishis 4:4).

I heard in the name of the righteous Rebbe, our teacher, Rabbi Meir of Premishlan, regarding the verse “And Hevel also brought from the firstborn of his flock,” that the meaning is this:

Hevel “brought himself” — he offered his very being as the sacrifice.

(This teaching is preserved in *Sifsei Kedoshim*, Parshas Bereishis.)

שְׁמַעְתִּי בְּשֵׁם הַרְבֵּב הַצָּדִיק מִזְרָנוּ הַרְבֵּב מִאָרֶב פְּרִימִימְשְׁלָאָנִיר עַל הַפְּסָוק “וְהַבְלֵל הַבְיאָ גַם הָוָא”, “מִבְכָרוֹת צָאָנוּ”.

הַנְּנוּ שְׁהַבְיאָ אֶת עַצְמוֹ מִפְשֵׁש לְקָרְבָּנוּ

(שְׁפִתִּי קָדֵשׁ פִּ בְּרָאָשִׁית)

Rabbi Meir of Premishlan

Divrie Meir

Parshas Bereshis

[NOTE Summary:

Reb Meir of Premishlan teaches that when the Torah says “Hevel also brought from the firstborn of his flock,” it means more than a material offering — Hevel offered *himself*. His act of sacrifice was not external; he gave his inner life, his sincerity, and his very being to Hashem. This is why “Hashem turned toward Hevel and toward his offering” — because the true korban (sacrifice) is the person’s own heart. Hashem desires not the gift but the giver, the soul behind the act.

Practical Takeaway:

Every mitzvah and act of service becomes meaningful only when the person themselves is inside it. The essence of serving G-d is to bring your own “self” — your will, your passion, your humility — as the offering. When one prays, learns, or gives, and does so with their full inner being, that act rises directly to Heaven.

Chassidic Story:

Once, a villager came to Reb Meir of Premishlan lamenting that he had no fine gift to bring for the festival. Reb Meir told him, “Hashem doesn’t need your ox or your coin. Bring your heart — bring *yourself*.” The man returned home and spent the day helping the poor and the lonely of his village. Later, Reb Meir smiled and said, “You have offered more than gold; you have offered Hevel’s korban — you.” (Source: *Sippurei Tzaddikim*, vol. 3, stories of Reb Meir of Premishlan) **END NOTE]**

הלוֹא אָמַת תִּיטַּב שָׁאת וְאָמַת לֹא תִּיטַּב לְפָתָח חַטָּאת רַבֵּץ וְאָלִיךְ תְּשׁוֹקָתוֹ וְאַתָּה תִּמְשַׁל בּוֹ ד, ז

“Surely, if you do good, you will be uplifted; but if you do not do good, sin crouches at the door. Its desire is toward you, but you may rule over it” (Bereishis 4:7).

The verse “Halo im teitiv se’eis” is listed in Gemara Yoma (52b) as one of five verses in the Torah whose division is uncertain — it is unclear whether to read “Halo im teitiv, se’eis” (“Surely, if you do good — you will be uplifted”) or “Se’eis, ve’im lo teitiv” (“Uplift — but if you do not do good”).

I heard in the name of my teacher and Rebbe, Rabbi Meir of Premishlan, that this may be explained according to the Gemara (Sotah 5a): “It is permitted for a Torah scholar to possess one-eighth of one-eighth of pride,” but only if it remains in awe and humility before Hashem.

This, he said, is the meaning of the verse: “Halo im teitiv se’eis” — if your deeds are good before Hashem, then “se’eis,” a small measure of elevation, is permissible. Others must accept and tolerate it.

הלוֹא אָמַת תִּיטַּב שָׁאת וְאָמַת לֹא תִּיטַּב לְפָתָח חַטָּאת רַבֵּץ. בְּגָמְרָא יוֹמָא (בב) זו אַחַד מִקְמָשָׁה מִקְרָאֹות שָׁאוֹן לְהַמְּה הַכְּרָע, וְאַיִן יוֹקְעִין אֶם “הַלֹּא אָמַת תִּיטַּב שָׁאת”, או “שָׁאת וְאָמַת לֹא תִּיטַּב

שְׁמַעְתִּי בְּשָׁם מוֹרִי וּרְבִי רַבִּי מַאֲיר מִפְּרָמִישְׁלָן לְפָרָשׁ עַל פִּי מָה שְׁאָמְרוּ חֹזֶ"ל בְּמִפְּכָת סֹטָה דָּרָה. ذָמָתָר לְתַלְמִיד חַכְםָלְהַיּוֹת לוֹ שְׁמוֹנָה בְּשָׁמִינִית גָּאוֹה, אֲךְ בָּאָפָן שִׁיחָה יְרָא וְשָׁלֵם לְפָנָיו יִתְבָּרֵךְ שְׁמוֹ.

זֶה פָּרֹשֶׁת הַפָּסֹוק “הַלֹּא אָמַת תִּיטַּב שָׁאת”, פָּרֹוּשׁ אָמַת תִּיטַּב מִעֲשֵׂיךְ לְבָנָיו יִתְבָּרֵךְ שְׁמוֹ, “שָׁאת” – מִפְּרָר לְהַיּוֹת לְכָה מַעֲטָה הַתְּנִשָּׁאָות, וְהַאֲנָשִׁים אֲרִיכִים לְסִבּוֹל וּלְקַבֵּל עַלְיָהָם.

Rabbi Meir of Premishlan

Divrie Meir

Parshas Bereshis

But if “se’eis,” that is, pride, comes even when “lo teitiv” — your deeds are not good — and you exalt yourself over others unjustly, then “lapesach chatat rovetz,” sin crouches at the door.

I also heard in the name of my holy grandfather and father-in-law, Rabbi Meir of Premishlan, on the same verse:

It is human nature that when Hashem helps a person succeed, he can bear it and remain humble. But when the opposite happens, G-d forbid, he tends to kick and reject.

Therefore the verse means: “Halo im teitiv” — when things go well and you profit or succeed, you can bear it humbly. “Se’eis” — you are lifted. But also, “ve’im lo teitiv” — if things do not go well, Heaven forbid, still say, “Halo hakol me’ito, vehakol letovah,” “Surely everything is from Him, and all is for good,” and do not kick.

(This teaching is preserved in *Sifsei Kedoshim*, Parshas Bereishis.)

I heard from the righteous tzaddik Rabbi Betzalel Yehoshia, may he live and be well, of the city of Galina, who said in the name of his grandfather, the righteous Rabbi Meir of Premishlan, of blessed memory — may his sanctity be as his praise — concerning the Talmud (Yoma 52b), where Isi ben Yehudah said: “There are five verses in the Torah whose reading is undecided,” and one of them is “Se’eis,” as it is written, “And Hashem said to Kayin: Surely, if you do good, you will be uplifted, and if you do not do good, sin crouches at the door, and to you is its desire, but you may rule over it.”

He explained that this verse is not merely a statement but a prayer — a model given by the Merciful One to the tzaddik of the generation, teaching him how to pray for those in need of mercy.

The tzaddik prays and says: “Master of the Universe, *im teitiv se’eis* — if a person does good, You exalt him; *se’eis gam im lo teitiv* — even if he does not do good, please still deal kindly with him.”

אבל “שָׁאת זָם לֹא תִּטְבֵּב”, פרוש: שִׁיחָה לְכָה
התנשאות גָּם אָם לֹא תִּטְבֵּב מִשְׁשִׁיךְ, וְאֵף עַל פִּי כֵּן
תִּתְגַּאהָ עַל הָעֵם, אָז “לְפָתָח חִשָּׁתָּרְבָּץ”

שְׁמַעְתִּי גָּם בְּשֵׁם חֹתְנִי זָקְנִי הַקָּדוֹשׁ מִפְּרִימִישְׁלָאוֹן
זֶל עַל הַפְּסִיק “הַלֹּא אָם תִּטְבֵּב שָׁאת זָם לֹא
תִּטְבֵּב”,

כִּי מִזְרָךְ הָאָדָם, כִּשְׁהַקְדּוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא עֹזֵר לוֹ, יִכּוֹל
לְשֹׁאָתָה הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה; אֲבָל חַס וּשְׁלֹום בְּהַפְּקָה – הִיא
בּוּאָת, חַס וּשְׁלֹום

עַל כֵּן אָמַר “הַלֹּא אָם תִּטְבֵּב” – כִּשְׁתַּעֲשֶׂה מִסְתְּרִים
טוֹבִים וּמִעֻשִׂים מְאַלְיכִים, אָז “שָׁאת” – יִכּוֹל
לְשֹׁבּוֹל. וְאֵךְ גָּם “אָם לֹא תִּטְבֵּב”, חַס וּשְׁלֹום, תָּאָמֶר
“הַלֹּא הַכָּל מְאַתָּה וְהַכָּל לְטוֹבָה”, וְאֵל תְּבֻעַת

(שְׁפָתִי קָדְשׁ פ' בְּרָאָשִׁית)

שְׁמַעְתִּי מִפִּי הַצָּדִיק רַבִּי בָּצָלָא לִיהְוֹשִׁיעַ שְׁלִיטַת”א
בְּעִיר גָּלִינָא שָׁאָמֵר בְּשֵׁם אָבִי זָקְנָנוּ הַרְבֵּב הַצָּדִיק
רַבִּי מַאִיר מִפְּרִימִישְׁלָאוֹן וּ”ל כְּהַדְשָׁתָה בָּן הַלְוִיָּה,
עַל ש'ס (יָוָמָא נְבָ). “בָּאִיסִּי בָּן יְהוּדָה אָמֵר ה'
מִקְרָאֹות הָן שָׁאוֹן לְקַם הַכְּרָעָה, וְאַחֲד מִקְּם הָוָא
יִשְׁאָת. וַיֹּאמֶר ה' יְאִל קְיֻנוּ הַלֹּא אָם תִּטְבֵּב שָׁאת
וְאָם לֹא תִּטְבֵּב לְפָתָח חִשָּׁתָּרְבָּץ וְאַלְיכָ תְּשַׁוְּקָתָה
וְאַתָּה תִּמְשַׁל בָּז

שָׁזָה הַפְּסִיק הוּא פְּלָלוֹ, שְׁהַרְהָה בַּעַל הַרְחָמִים אֶת
צָדִיק הַדָּוָר אֲיךָ יִתְפַּלֵּל לְהָיָה בְּعֵד הַאֲרִיכִים רַחֲמִים

וְאָוֹםֶר רְבָוָנוּ שֶׁל עַזְלָם: “אָם תִּטְבֵּב שָׁאת” – אָם
הָאָדָם יִטְבֵּב מִעֻשָׂיו אַתָּה מְנֻשָּׂא אֶתְּנוֹ; “שָׁאת גָּם אָם
לֹא תִּטְבֵּב” – אַפְלָוּ עַמּוּדָיו שְׁאַיְנוּ מִטְבֵּב מִעֻשָׂיו הַטְבָּה
עַמּוּד.

Rabbi Meir of Premishlan

Divrie Meir

Parshas Bereshis

For such a person has an excuse: “Lapesach chatat rovetz” — “You, Hashem, created the evil inclination that sits at the doorways of the human heart.”

“The truth You know,” continues the prayer, “and *eilach teshukaso* — toward You is its longing; that is, every Jew, even the sinner, truly longs to fulfill Your will.”

As King David said (Tehillim 44:21–22): “If we have forgotten the Name of our G-d or stretched out our hands to a strange god, would not G-d search this out? For He knows the secrets of the heart,” etc.

“And if You fear,” the tzaddik prays, “that in helping him he might misuse Your kindness, nevertheless, *ve'atah timshol bo* — You always rule over him. Your dominion over him is constant.” (Said in the name of Reb Meir of Premishlan, recorded in manuscript fol. 36.)

The evil inclination itself, said Reb Meir, also longs that the person overcome it. This is the meaning of “*ve'eilecha teshukaso*” — the yetzer hara yearns toward man, desiring that he master it.

And according to what I have written — that even through the struggle with the yetzer hara one is elevated — I later found written in the name of my holy ancestor, Rabbi Meir of Premishlan, that he interpreted the verse “*ve'eilecha teshukaso, ve'atah timshol bo*” in exactly this way.

(*Gur Yisrael*, Parshas Bereishis.)

[NOTE Summary:

Reb Meir of Premishlan reveals a profoundly tender reading of Hashem’s words to Kayin: they are not a rebuke, but a *prayer*. Hashem Himself teaches the tzaddik how to pray for those who have stumbled — “If a person does good, You lift him up; but even if he does not do good, please still do kindness with him.” For even the sinner, says Reb Meir, has an inner longing for the Divine: “To You is his desire.” Hashem knows the secrets of the heart, that every Jew, however far, yearns to fulfill His will. Even the *yetzer hara* (evil inclination), Reb Meir adds, secretly desires to be overcome — for it was created to elevate the person who struggles against it. Thus, “and you shall rule over it” is not a warning but a promise: man can, and will, master his darker impulses with Hashem’s compassion and strength.

כִּי יִשְׁלַׁח לְךָ הַתְּנִצְּלֹת בְּאֶמְרָךְ: “לְפָתָח חַטָּאת רַבֵּךְ” — אַתָּה בְּרָאָת יֵאָר הַרְעָה הַיּוֹשֵׁב בְּפַתְחִי לְבֵב אָנוֹשׁ

הַלְּאַמְתָּה אַתָּה יוֹדֵעַ, וְאַלְיכָ תְּשֻׁקְתָּהוּ” — כָּל אִישׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל, אֲפִלוֹ הַחוּטָא, מְשֻׁתָּוֹק שְׁיעִשָּׂה רְצׁוֹנָךְ.

כְּמוֹ שָׁאָמַר דָּוִד מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל עַלְיוֹ הַשְׁלוּם (תְּהִלִּים כָּא-כָבֵד): “אִם שְׁכַחְנוּ שֵׁם אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְגַפְרִישׁ כְּפִינֵינוּ לְאָלָה זֶה, קָלָא אַלְמָנִים יִחְקֹר זֶה, כִּי הוּא יוֹדֵעַ. תְּעִלּוּמֹת לְבָבֶךָ, וְגֹזֵעַ

וְאַם חֹשֵׁשׁ אַתָּה שְׁבָזָה שְׁתֹׁוֹשֵׁעָ לְךָ, בְּזָה יַקְלַקְלָל, וְאַתָּה תִּמְשַׁל בָּךְ — הַלְּאָתָה פָּמִיד מִמְּשֻׁלָּתָךְ עַלְיוֹן.

(סְגָלָס"ס סְלִיכָן סְטָסָול דַּף לו)

הַכָּרְעָה עַצְמָו מְשֻׁתָּוֹק שְׁהָאָדָם יִתְגַּבֵּר עַלְיוֹן. וַיְשַׁלֵּחַ כְּרָעָה בְּפֶסֶוק “וְאַלְיכָ תְּשֻׁקְתָּהוּ” — כָּלּוֹמֶר, הַיֵּאָר הַרְעָה מְשֻׁתָּוֹק אֶל הָאָדָם, וְ“אַתָּה תִּמְשַׁל בָּךְ” — שְׁהָאָדָם יִמְשַׁל בָּךְ.

וְעַל פִּי מָה שְׁכַתְּבָתִי, שְׁעַם הַיֵּאָר הַרְעָה מִבֵּיא הַדָּבָר לְמִזְרָגָה, וְאַחֲרֵךְ מִצְאָתִי בְּשָׁם זָקְנֵי הַקְּדוֹשָׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא מְאִיר מִפְּרִימִישָׁלָאוֹ זֶלֶל, שְׁפִירָשׁ בָּנו הַקְּתֻובָה וְאַלְיכָ תְּשֻׁקְתָּהוּ וְכֹוּי” כְּפָנָל.

(גּוֹר יִשְׂרָאֵל [זְכָרִיגָּן] פִּי בְּרִאָשִׁית)

Rabbi Meir of Premishlan

Divrie Meir

Parshas Bereshis

Practical Takeaway:

Never despair of yourself or another Jew. Beneath every failure lies a yearning for holiness, and even struggle itself can be the tool for ascent. Hashem's mercy extends not only to the righteous but to those still wrestling with their imperfection. To pray for them — and for oneself — as Reb Meir teaches, is to see every soul through the lens of Divine compassion: to believe that within each heart still burns a desire for good.

Chassidic Story:

Once, a man came to Reb Meir of Premishlan weeping, "Rebbe, my sins are too many. I no longer dare to pray." Reb Meir placed his hand on the man's shoulder and said, "Do you think the yetzer hara wants you to give up? He rejoices only when you stop fighting. But if you speak to Hashem even from the mud, you have already won." Then he added softly, "Even your yetzer cries for you to conquer him." The man left uplifted, feeling that even his struggle was a form of service. **END NOTE]**

ויתהלך חנוך את האללים ויאיננו כי לפקח אותו אללים, כד

"And Chanoch walked with G-d, and he was no more, for G-d took him" (Bereishis 5:24).

"And Chanoch walked with G-d, and he was no more, for G-d took him." Our Sages said that he became "the minister of the world," that is, the angel Metatron, "whose name is like the name of his Master."

And in the *Zohar haKadosh* (Bereishis 56b), Rabbi Elazar said: "The Holy One, blessed be He, took Chanoch from the earth and raised him to the upper heavens. He placed in his hands all the supernal treasures and forty keys to the hidden chambers, through which the angels above operate — all of these were entrusted to his hand."

Yet this raises a difficulty — how could Rashi write that "he was a righteous man, but light-minded in his thought to revert and become wicked," etc.? How can such words be said about a tzaddik who was made the minister of all worlds, when the Torah itself testifies that he was righteous, as it is written, "And Chanoch walked with G-d"?

And I heard in the name of my teacher and Rebbe, Rabbi Meir of Premishlan, that he explained the above words of Rashi as follows:

ויתהלך חנוך את האללים ויאיננו כי לפקח אותו אללים. אמרו ח"ל שנעשרה שר העולם, והוא מט"ט. שמו קשם רבו.

ובזוהר הקדוש פרישת בראשית דף נ"ו עמוד ב' רבי אלעזר אמר: "חנוך נטיל ליה קוזשא בריך הווא מארעא ואסיה לשמי מרים, ואמסר בידיה כל גני עלאין ומ"ה מפקחן סתרי גליון דביהון." משתקשין מלאכי עלאין, וכלו אתחמstro בידיה

ולכאורה יפלא, מה שכתב ר"ש, "אזכיר קיה וכל בדעתו לשוב ולקושיע" וכו', ואיך יתכו לו מר על צדיק זה שנעשרה שר העולם דברים כאלה, והתורה העיצה עליו שהוא צדיק, דכתיב: "ויתהלך חנוך את האללים

ושמעתי בשם מורי ורבי רבי מאיר מפרמיישלאן, לפרש כתנות ר"ש, חנוך,

Rabbi Meir of Premishlan

Divrie Meir

Parshas Bereshis

It is written in the holy books that before Chanoch ascended to Heaven, he separated himself from the ways of mankind in order to know the ways of Hashem — to cleave to the light of the living King's countenance.

As a result, all the people of his generation appeared as wicked in comparison to him.

This, explained Reb Meir, is what Rashi meant by saying, “He was a tzaddik and light in his mind to turn and become wicked” — meaning not that Chanoch himself would become wicked, but that in the *daas kedoshim* (holy perspective) of a true tzaddik, the people of his generation appeared wicked next to his great holiness.

This is similar to what is written concerning Noach: “Noach was a righteous man, perfect in his generations” (Bereishis 6:9) — that had he lived in the generation of Avraham, he would not have been considered anything special.

Likewise, our Sages said (Yoma 35b): “Hillel obligates the poor, and Rabbi Elazar ben Charsom obligates the rich,” meaning that the existence of such tzaddikim serves as a measure and example against which others are judged.

Therefore, “G-d took him” — not as punishment, but in mercy, so that he should not, by his incomparable righteousness, bring guilt upon his generation.

(This teaching is cited in *Sifsei Kedoshim*, Parshas Bereishis.)

דָּאיַתָּא בְּסָפָרִים שְׁקָדָם שְׁעַלָּה חָנוֹן לְשָׁמִים הַפְּרִישׁ
עָצָמוּ מַדְרָכֵי בְּנֵי אָדָם לְדַעַת דָּרְכֵי הָיָה לְהִיּוֹת זְבוֹק
בְּאוֹר פְּנֵי מֶלֶךְ חַיִּים

וְכֹל בְּנֵי דָוּרֹן הַיּוֹ גְּנָאִים כְּרִישָׁעִים גְּנָדוֹ

וְזֹה שְׁפָרֵשׁ רַבִּי מָאִיר שָׁכַתּוּ בְּרִשְׁתִּי “צְדִיקָה קַיָּה וְכָל
בְּדַעַתּוּ לְשִׁׁבּוֹ וְלְהַרְשִׁיעָה” – דַעַת קָדוֹשִׁים לְהַרְשִׁיעָה
את בְּנֵי דָוּרֹן, שְׁהִי גְּנָאִים כְּרִישָׁעִים גְּנָדוֹ

כְּמוֹ שָׁנָאָמַר בְּנֹוח (בראשית ג, ט): “צְדִיקָה פְּמִים קַיָּה
בְּדַרְתָּיו” – שָׁאַלְוּ בְּדָוּרֹן שֶׁל אֲבָרָהָם לֹא הָיָה גְּנָשֶׁב
לְכָלּוֹם.

וְכֹmo שָׁאָמַרְוּ חִזְקִיָּה (יְוָמָא לָה): “הַלְלָה מַחְיִיב עֲנֵנִים
וּרְבִי אַלְעָזָר בָּן חַרְסָוּם מַחְיִיב עֲשֵׂירִים

וְלֹכְנוּ “לְקַח אָתוֹ אַלְקִים” – שֶׁלֹּא לְהַרְשִׁיעָה אֶת בְּנֵי
דָוּרֹן.

(תּוֹסְפַת מִיס פ' בְּרִחְבָּית ל'ס וַיְסַלְלָה)

[NOTE Summary:

Reb Meir of Premishlan explains that the verse “And Chanoch walked with G-d, and he was no more, for G-d took him” reveals not a fall from righteousness but its opposite — a soul so refined that it could no longer dwell in the coarseness of earth. When Rashi says Chanoch was “light in his mind to turn and become wicked,” Reb Meir clarifies that this does not mean Chanoch himself was unstable. Rather, because he separated himself from worldly ways to know the path of Hashem and cleave to Divine light, all others appeared wicked by contrast. His purity was so great that his very presence would have condemned his generation; therefore Hashem “took him,” sparing the world from such harsh comparison.

Practical Takeaway:

Holiness that isolates must ultimately be transformed into holiness that uplifts. True righteousness is not meant

Rabbi Meir of Premishlan
Divrie Meir
Parshas Bereshis

to shame others but to inspire them. Like Chanoch, one must seek closeness with Hashem — yet also remember that one's spiritual ascent should be a light that warms others, not a fire that exposes their darkness.

Chassidic Story:

Once, a villager visited Reb Meir of Premishlan and asked, "Rebbe, I wish to serve Hashem in solitude, away from people." Reb Meir smiled gently and said, "If you make fire alone in the mountains, who will warm from your light? Go among Jews — and be their warmth." The man understood that holiness is perfected not in withdrawal, but in illuminating others. **END NOTE]**