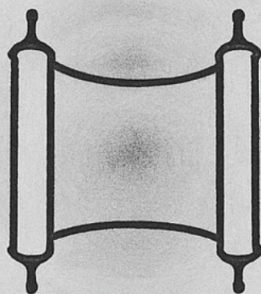


בס"ד

**Reb Meir of Premishlan**

**Divrie Meir**

**Parshas Bereshis**



*Dedicated In Honor Of:*

לע"נ

רבי לוי יצחק בן רבי מאיר

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## Rabbi Meir of Premishlan

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Parshas Bereshis

**בְּרֵאשִׁית 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:

בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא וְגו'. רי"צ שְׁמַע מֶרֶבִי מֵאִיר  
[מִפְּרֵמִישְׁלָן] בְּשַׁבַּת בְּרֵאשִׁית בְּזֶה הַלְשׁוֹן:

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

כְּשֶׁאֶדָם בּוֹנֶה בְּנֵינ עוֹשֶׂה מִתְחִלָּה פִּידִימָנֶט [תְּכָנִית]  
כְּדִי שְׂיֻכַּל הַבְּנֵן לְהִתְקַיֵּם,

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”).

וְזֶה וְשֶׁאֵמַר הַפְּתוּב בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא, כְּשֶׁרוֹצִים לְהִיּוֹת  
יְהוּדִי צָרִיף מִתְחִלָּה לְשַׁבֵּר ג' דְּבָרִים אֵלּוּ: בִּיאָה,  
וְאִיָּה, וְאֹכִילָה, רֵאשִׁי תְּבוּת בָּרָא.

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

עֲקוּלָם סְלוּס לֹור הַגְּנוּז פ' פְּרָחֶסִית ל"ס)  
(בְּרֵסֶתִית)

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:

כְּבוֹד קִדְשׁוֹ שֶׁל אֲדוֹנֵי אָבִי מוֹרִי וְרַבִּי • יִשְׁכַּר בְּעַר  
מִשְׁטָרְאִינִיץ זְצִלָּה"ה אָמַר בְּשֵׁם הָרַב הַקְּדוֹשׁ רַבִּי  
מֵאִיר מִפְּרֵמִישְׁלָן זְצוּק"ל:

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”).

דְּמִלַּת בְּרֵאשִׁית נוֹטְרִיקוֹן בִּישְׁבִּיל יִשְׂרָאֵל שְׁנִקְרָאוּ  
רֵאשִׁית אוֹ בִּישְׁבִּיל תּוֹרָה שְׁנִקְרָאָה רֵאשִׁית

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.

וְהֵינּוּ שֶׁהָעוֹלָם לֹא נִבְרָא אֵלָּא אוֹ בִּישְׁבִּיל הַתּוֹרָה אוֹ  
בִּישְׁבִּיל יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְגַם עַל יְדֵי אֶחָד מֵהֶם שִׁיף שְׁפִיר  
קִיּוּם הָעוֹלָם, עַד כָּאן דְּבָרֵי קִדְשׁוֹ.

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

(.שְׁפִתֵי קִדְשׁ פ' בְּרֵאשִׁית)

## 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 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"). 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]

וַיַּעַשׂ אֱלֹהִים אֶת שְׁנֵי הַמָּאֲרוֹת הַגְּדֹלִים אֶת הַמָּאֹר הַגָּדוֹל לְמַמְשְׁלַת הַיּוֹם וְאֶת הַמָּאֹר הַקָּטָן לְמַמְשְׁלַת הַלַּיְלָה  
וְאֶת הַכּוֹכָבִים 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 זקני הרב הקדוש מורנו מפרעמישלאן  
הרב מאיר זצוק"ל בפסוק אֶת הַמָּאֹר הַגָּדוֹל לְמַמְשְׁלַת  
הַיּוֹם וְאֶת הַמָּאֹר הַקָּטָן לְמַמְשְׁלַת הַלַּיְלָה



## 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.”

שפירש הוא ז"ל על פי המבואר בתפלת אליהו זכור לטוב (תיקוני זוהר יז.) ברבון עלמין ואלין עשר ספירין אלו כסדרן חד אריך וחד קצר

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.

ופרשו הספרים הקדושים פי הספירה דחסד נקראת אריך וגדול והספירה דגבורה נקראת קצר וקטן

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.

ונודע דהספירות נקראות אורות, והנה הספירה דחסד היא לשלם שכר טוב למי שעושה טוב, והספירה דגבורה לשלם למי שעושה רע

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.

וזהו אמרו המאור הגדול הוא ספירה דחסד לממשלת היום לתן שכר טוב ואת המאור הקטן הוא ספירה דגבורה לממשלת הלילה לשלם למי שעושה רע חס ושלום, עד כאן דברי פי חכם חן

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

(שפתי קדש פי בראשית.)

#### [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]**

ותפקחנה עיני שניהם וידעו כי עירמם הם ויתפרו עלה תאנה ויעשו להם תגרות 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”:

מתאמרא בשם הרב רבי מאיר מפרמישלאן לפרש “הפסוק” ויתפרו עלה תאנה

## 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’edah” — every leaf — becomes a means of atonement and protection.

ויתפרו רצה לומר: אם תופרין את עצמם להקדוש ברוך הוא, אז “עלה תאנה” נעשה להם לכפרה ולהגנה.

And as he would say in Yiddish: “א פייג ווייזט מען אלע מראים לכלם” — “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.

ואמר בלשון אשכנז: “א פייג ווייזט מען אלע מראים לכלם” — רצון לומר שלאותם שלועגים ומלעיגים מראים את הפייג, שהדבקות בה' עצמה משתיקה אותם.

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

(שפתי קדש פ' בראשית.)

### [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, “א פייג ווייזט מען אלע מראים לכלם” — “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]**

והכל הביא גם הוא מבכרות צאנו ומחלבהן וישע ה' אל הכל ואל מנחתו 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.

שמעתי בשם הרב הצדיק מורנו הרב מאיר פרימישלאניר על הפסוק “והכל הביא גם הוא מבכרות צאנו”,

הינו שהביא את עצמו ממש לקרבן.

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

(שפתי קדש פ' בראשית.)

## 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]**

**הָלוֹא אִם תִּיטִיב שְׂאֵת וְאִם לֹא תִיטִיב לִפְתַּח חֲטָאֵת רִבִּץ וְאֵלֶיךָ תִּשְׁוֹקְתּוּ וְאַתָּה תִּמָּשָׁל 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”).

הָלֹא אִם תִּיטִיב שְׂאֵת וְאִם לֹא תִיטִיב לִפְתַּח חֲטָאֵת רִבִּץ. בְּגִמְרָא יוֹמָא (נב) זֶה אֶחָד מִחֻמְשֵׁי מִקְרָאוֹת שְׂאִין לָהֶם הִכְרַעַ, וְאֵין יוֹדְעִין אִם “הָלֹא אִם תִּיטִיב שְׂאֵת”, אוֹ “שְׂאֵת וְאִם לֹא תִיטִיב

**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.**

שְׁמַעְתִּי בְּשֵׁם מוֹרֵי וְרַבִּי מֵאִיר מִפְּרִמִּישְׁלָן לִפְרֹשׁ עַל פִּי מַה שְּׂאֵמְרוּ חַז"ל בְּמַסְכֵּת סוֹטָה דף ה. דְּמַתֵּר לְתַלְמִיד חֶכֶם לִהְיוֹת לוֹ שְׂמוּנָה בְּשְׂמִינִית גְּאוּהָ, אֲךָ בְּאֶפֶן שְׂיִהְיָה יָרָא וְשִׁלֵּם לִפְנֵי יְתִבְרָךְ וְשִׁמּוֹ.

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.

וְזֶהוּ פִּירוּשׁ הַפְּסוּק “הָלֹא אִם תִּיטִיב שְׂאֵת”, פִּירוּשׁ: אִם תִּיטִיב מַעֲשֶׂיךָ לִפְנֵי יְתִבְרָךְ שְׁמוֹ, “שְׂאֵת” — מִתֵּר לָךְ לִהְיוֹת לָךְ מַעֲט הִתְנַשְּׂאוֹת, וְהֶאֱנָשִׁים צָרִיכִים לְקַבֹּל וּלְקַבֵּל עֲלֵיהֶם.

## 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.”

אָבֵל “שָׁאָת וְאִם לֹא תִיטִיב,” פֶּרוּשׁ: שִׁיחָה לָךְ הַתְנַשְׁאוֹת גַּם אִם לֹא תִיטִיב מַעֲשֶׂיךָ, וְאַף עַל פִּי כֵן “תִּתְגַּאֵה עַל הָעָם, אִז” לִפְתָּח חַטָּאת רֹבֵץ.

שְׁמַעְתִּי גַם בְּשֵׁם חוֹתְנִי זְקֵנִי הַקְדוֹשׁ מִפְּרִימִישְׁלָן ז”ל עַל הַפָּסוּק “הֲלֹא אִם תִּיטִיב שָׂאת וְאִם לֹא תִיטִיב,”

כִּי מִדְּרוֹךְ הָאָדָם, כְּשֶׁהַקְדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא עוֹזֵר לוֹ, יָכוֹל לְשַׂאוֹת הַדְּבָר הַזֶּה; אָבֵל חֵס וְשָׁלוֹם בְּהַפֵּךְ – הוּא בּוֹעֵט, חֵס וְשָׁלוֹם.

עַל כֵּן אָמַר “הֲלֹא אִם תִּיטִיב” – כְּשֶׁתַּעֲשֶׂה מִסְתָּרִים טוֹבִים וּמַעֲשִׂים מְצֻלָּחִים, אִז” שָׂאת” – יָכוֹל לְשַׂבּוֹל. וְאַף גַּם “אִם לֹא תִיטִיב,” חֵס וְשָׁלוֹם, תֹּאמַר “הֲלֹא הַכֹּל מֵאֵתוֹ וְהַכֹּל לְטוֹבָה,” וְאַל תִּבְעֵט.

(שִׁפְתֵי קֹדֶשׁ פִּי בְּרֵאשִׁית.)

שְׁמַעְתִּי מִפִּי הַצַּדִּיק רַבִּי בִּצְלָאֵל יְהוֹשִׁיעַ נְשִׁיט”א בְּעִיר גָּלִינָא שָׂאמַר בְּשֵׁם אָבִי זְקֵנִי הַרֵב הַצַּדִּיק רַבִּי מֵאִיר מִפְּרִימִישְׁלָן ז”ל כְּקִדְשָׁתוֹ כֵּן הִלּוּלוֹ, עַל ש”ס (יוֹמָא נב.) “בְּאִיִּסִּי כֵּן יִהְיֶה אָמַר ה’ מִקְרָאוֹת הֵן שְׂאִין לָהֶם הַכְרַע, וְאֶחָד מֵהֶם הוּא יִשָּׂאת. וַיֹּאמֶר ה’ אֶל קַיִן הֲלֹא אִם תִּיטִיב שָׂאת וְאִם לֹא תִיטִיב לִפְתָּח חַטָּאת רֹבֵץ וְאַלֶּיךָ תִּשְׁוֹקֶתוּ.” וְאַתָּה תִּמְשַׁל בּוֹ.

שָׁנָה הַפָּסוּק הוּא תִּפְלָה, שְׁהוּרָה בַּעַל הַרְחָמִים אֵת צַדִּיק הַדּוֹר אִיךָ יִתְפַּלֵּל לָהּ בְּעֵד הַצְּרִיכִים רַחֲמִים.

וְאָמַר רַבּוֹנוֹ שֶׁל עוֹלָם: “אִם תִּיטִיב שָׂאת” – אִם הָאָדָם יִיטִיב מַעֲשָׂיו אֶתָּה מְנַשָּׂא אוֹתוֹ; “שָׂאת גַּם אִם לֹא תִיטִיב” – אֶפְלּוּ עִם מִי שְׂאִינוֹ מִיטִיב מַעֲשָׂיו הַטָּבָה עִמּוֹ.

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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.”

פי יש לו התנצלות באמרו: “לפתח חטאת רביץ” — אתה בראת יצר הרע היושב בפתחי לבב אנוש.

“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.”

האמת אתה יודע, ואליה תשוקתו — כל איש ישראלי, אפילו החוטא, משתוקק שיעשה רצונך.

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.

כמו שאמר דוד מלך ישראל עליו השלום (תהלים מד, כא–כב): “אם שכחנו שמ אלהינו ונפרש כפינו לאל זר, הלא אלהים יחקר זאת, כי הוא יודע 'תעלומות לב', וגו'.

“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.”

ואם חושש אתה שפזזה שתושיע לו, בזה יקלקל, ואתה תמשל בו — הלא תמיד ממשילתהו עליו.

(Said in the name of Reb Meir of Premishlan, recorded in manuscript fol. 36.)

(סגלס"ס סלסן סטסול דף לו)

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.

היצר הרע עצמו משתוקק שהאדם יתגבר עליו. ויש לכוון זה בפסוק “ואליה תשוקתו” — כלומר, היצר הרע משתוקק אל האדם, ואתה תמשל בו” — שהאדם ימשל בו.

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.

ועל פי מה שכתבתי, שעם היצר הרע מביא הדבר למדרגה, ואחר כך מצאתי בשם זקני הקדוש רבי מאיר מפרימישלאן ז"ל, שפרש בן הכתוב “ואליה תשוקתו וכו'” כפ"ל.

(*Gur Yisrael*, Parshas Bereishis.)

(גור ישראל [זכריה] פ' בראשית)

### [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.



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### 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]**

וַיִּתְהַלֵּךְ חֲנוּךְ אֶת הָאֱלֹהִים וַאֲיָנָנוּ כִּי לָקַח אֹתוֹ אֱלֹהִים ה, 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:**

וַיִּתְהַלֵּךְ חֲנוּךְ אֶת הָאֱלֹהִים וַאֲיָנָנוּ כִּי לָקַח אֹתוֹ אֱלֹהִים. אָמְרוּ חֲזו"ל שְׁנַעֲשֶׂה שֶׁר הָעוֹלָם, וְהוּא מִט"ט שְׁשֻׁמוֹ כְּשֵׁם רַבּוֹ.

ובזוהר הקדוש פְּרָשַׁת בְּרֵאשִׁית דָּף נ"ו עמוד ב' רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר אָמַר: “חֲנוּךְ נָטִיל לִיָּה קוֹדֶשָׁא בְּרִיָּה הוּא מֵאַרְעָא וְאַסְקִיָּה לְשָׁמַי מְרוּמִים, וְאַמְסָר בִּידֵיהָ כָּל גְּנוּזֵי עֲלָאִין וּמִמָּה מִפְתָּחוֹן סִתְרֵי גְלִיפִין דְּבִהוֹן.” מִשְׁתַּמְשִׁין מִלְּאֲכֵי עֲלָאִין, וְכִלְהוּ אֶתְמָסְרוּ בִּידֵיהָ.

וְלִכְאוּרָה יִפְלֵא, מַה שֶּׁכָּתַב רַשִׁי “צַדִּיק הָיָה וְקָל בְּדַעְתּוֹ לְשׁוּב וּלְהִרְשִׁיעַ” וְכו', וְאִיךָ יִתְכַּן לוֹמַר עַל צַדִּיק זֶה שְׁנַעֲשֶׂה שֶׁר הָעוֹלָם דְּבָרִים פְּאֻלָּה, וְהַתּוֹרָה הַעִידָה עָלָיו שֶׁהוּא צַדִּיק, דְּכָתִיב: “וַיִּתְהַלֵּךְ חֲנוּךְ אֶת הָאֱלֹהִים.”

וְשִׁמְעָתִי בְּשֵׁם מוֹרֵי וְרַבִּי רַבִּי מֵאִיר מִפְּרִמִּישְׁלָאן, לְפָרֵשׁ פְּתוּנֹת רַשִׁי הַנִּיחָל

## 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.

דאיתא בספרים שקדם שעלה חנוך לשמים הפריש עצמו מדרך בני אדם לדעת דרכי ה' להיות דבוק באור פני מלך חיים.

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

וכל בני דורו היו נראים כרשעים נגדו.

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.

ונה שפרש רבי מאיר שכתוב ברש"י “צדיק הנה וקל בדעתו לשוב ולהרשיע” — דעת קדושים להרשיע את בני דורו, שהיו נראים כרשעים נגדו.

This is similar to what is written concerning Noah: “Noah 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.

כמו שנאמר בנوح (בראשית ו, ט): “צדיק תמים היה בדורו” — שאלו בדורו של אברהם לא היה נחשב לכולם.

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.

וכמו שאמרו חז"ל (יומא לה:): “הלל מחייב עניים ורבי אלעזר בן חרסום מחייב עשירים.”

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.

ולכן “לקח אתו אלקים” — שלא להרשיע את בני דורו.

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

(תוספת מים פ' ברחסית ל"ס ויססלה)

#### [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

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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]**