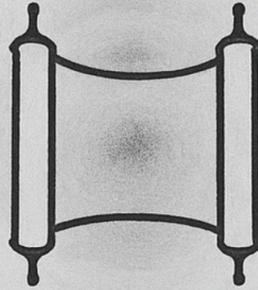


בס"ד

**Rebbe Elimelech
of Lizhensk
Parshas Beshalach**



Dedicated To:

אילנה דבורה בת שרה מרים

May Hashem pour Shefa upon you

To find more Maamarim and to dedicate one visit:

ChassidusNow.com

The Rebbe, Rebbe Elimelech of Lizhensk

Noam Elimelech
Parshas Beshalach

מאמר א

And it was, when Pharaoh sent the people. It appears to explain that behold, “Pharaoh” is called the evil inclination, for he is the letters of “the neck,” because he stiffens the neck of a person. And behold, sometimes a person is aroused to repentance and regrets what he has done, and confesses and abandons his sins.

ויהי בשלח פרעה את העם. נראה לפרש דהנה “פרעה” נקרא היצר הרע שהוא אותיות “הערף”, שמקשה ערפו של אדם. והנה לפעמים יתעורר אדם בתשובה ומתחרט על מה שעשה ומודה ועוזב את חטאיו.

And this is “when Pharaoh sent,” its explanation is that he sent him from his sins. “The people” hints to the simple people. “And God did not lead them” means, nevertheless, there is no rest before Him, may His Name be blessed, and there is no consolation before Him over his abandoning his sins.

וזהו “בשלח פרעה” פרוש ששלחו מחטאיו, “את העם” רמז לפשוטי עם, “ולא נחם אלקים” פרוש אף-על-פי-כן אין הנחה לפניו ותברך שמו ואין נחמה לפניו על עזבו את חטאיו.

Because he grasps the rope at its two ends, for even though he grasps good traits, they are not in perfection. And this is “the way of the land of the Philistines,” a hint that we find that the Philistines were somewhat more proper in conduct than the other nations.

מחמת שאוחז את החבל בשני ראשים, שאף-על-פי שאוחז במדות טובות אינו בשלמות, וזהו “דרך ארץ פלשתים” רמז שמצינו שהפלשתים היו בדרך ארץ קצת יותר משאר אמות.

For they drew Isaac near, as Abimelech said, “Behold, my land is before you” (Genesis 20:15), and nevertheless it is stated, “and the Philistines envied him” (Genesis 26:14), that their goodness was not in perfection. So too, this one who abandons his sins and does not abandon them completely.

שהיו מקרבים את יצחק כמו שאמר אבימלך “הנה ארצי לפניך” (בראשית כ, טו), ואף-על-פי-כן נאמר “ויקנאו אתו פלשתים” (בראשית כו, יד), שלא היתה טובתם בשלמות, פן גם זה העוזב את חטאיו ואינו עוזבם לגמרי.

“For it is near,” its explanation is that this person is near to return to his waywardness. “For God said lest the people reconsider when they see war,” meaning when the war of the evil inclination rises against them.

פי קרוב הוא “פרוש פי האדם הנה הוא קרוב לחזור לסורו, “פי אמר אלקים פן ינחם העם בראותם מלחמה” רצה לומר פאשר תקום עליהם מלחמת היצר הרע.

“And they will return to Egypt,” its explanation is that they will return to the “strait of the sea,” meaning to their original confinement entirely. “And God turned the people [around] by way of the wilderness of the Sea of Reeds.”

ושבו מצרימה “פרוש ישובו אל ה”מיצר ים”, דהינו לסודם הראשון לגמרי. “ויסב אלקים [את העם] דרך המדבר ים-סוף”.

Its explanation is that the Holy One, blessed be He, in His abundant mercy, effects causes to turn the people to His good way. “The way of the wilderness” means through seclusion like

פרוש השם ותברך ברב רחמיו הוא פועל סבות להסב את העם לדרך הטוב, “דרך המדבר” על-ידי התבודדות במדבר, “ים-סוף” פרוש וגם על-ידי “התורה שנקראת ים”.

The Rebbe, Rebbe Elimelech of Lizhensk

Noam Elimelech
Parshas Beshalach

a wilderness. “Sea of Reeds” means also through the Torah, which is called “sea.”

“And armed, the children of Israel went up from the land of Egypt,” its explanation is that the completely righteous, who are called by the name “Israel,” ascend from Egypt with armed weapons, so that the evil inclination does not rule over them.

וְחַמְשִׁים עָלוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם” פְּרוּשׁ”
אָבָל הַצְּדִיקִים הַגְּמוּרִים הַמְּכֻנִּים בְּשֵׁם “יִשְׂרָאֵל”
עוֹלָיִם מִמִּצְרַיִם בְּכָלֵי יוֹן מְזוּיָנִים שְׂלֵא יִשְׁלוּט בָּהֶם
הַיִּצָּר הָרַע.

“And Moses took the bones of Joseph,” a hint to the great righteous one called by the name “Moses,” that he took for himself the trait of “Joseph,” meaning that he strengthens himself with firmness and bones in the service of the Creator, blessed be He. “Bones” is an expression of strength. And this is sufficient for the understanding.

וַיִּקַּח מֹשֶׁה אֶת עַצְמוֹת יוֹסֵף” רִמָּז עַל הַצְּדִיק הַגָּדוֹל”
הַנִּקְרָא בְּשֵׁם “מֹשֶׁה” שֶׁלֵּקַח לְעַצְמוֹ הַמָּדָה שֶׁל
“יוֹסֵף”, דְּהֵינּוּ שְׂמִתְזִיק עַצְמוֹ בְּחִזּוּק וְעַצְמוֹת
בְּעִבּוּדַת הַבוּרָא יִתְבָּרַךְ, “עַצְמוֹת” לְשׁוֹן חִזּוּק. וְקַל
לְהִבִּין.

[NOTE Summary:

In his teaching on the verse “And it was when Pharaoh sent the people,” Rabbi Elimelech explains that Pharaoh is not only a historical figure, but a symbol of the evil inclination. The word “Pharaoh” alludes to the “neck,” representing stubbornness and spiritual rigidity that prevents a person from fully turning toward holiness. At times, a person awakens to repentance, regrets past actions, confesses, and even abandons sin, yet this departure is often incomplete. Such a person is described as “grasping the rope at both ends” — holding on to improvement while still retaining traces of the old patterns.

This is why the verse says, “And God did not lead them” in the straightforward path. There is not yet full divine satisfaction, because repentance that is partial lacks inner wholeness. Rabbi Elimelech compares this to the Philistines, who displayed a degree of civility and even kindness toward Isaac, yet still harbored jealousy. Their goodness was real, but not complete. Similarly, a person who abandons sin without fully uprooting it remains close to returning to his former state when challenged by inner struggle, described as “war.”

Out of compassion, God redirects the person’s path: “God turned the people by way of the wilderness toward the Sea.” The wilderness represents solitude, inner emptiness, and self-nullification — a space where old attachments fall away. The Sea represents Torah, called a “sea” because of its depth and boundlessness. Through solitude and Torah, a person can be guided toward genuine transformation.

Rabbi Elimelech then distinguishes the fully righteous, referred to as “Israel.” They ascend from Egypt — the place of constraint — fully armed, meaning spiritually fortified, so that the evil inclination no longer dominates them. Finally, “Moses took the bones of Joseph” teaches that true leadership and spiritual ascent require adopting Joseph’s trait of inner strength and firmness. “Bones” symbolize durability and resilience in divine service, an unshakable commitment that endures pressure and trial.

The Rebbe, Rebbe Elimelech of Lizhensk

Noam Elimelech
Parshas Beshalach

Practical Takeaway:

True repentance requires more than remorse or partial change. A person must honestly examine whether they have fully let go of destructive patterns or are still holding onto them subtly. Deep change comes through inner solitude, humility, and immersion in Torah, building spiritual strength that does not collapse under challenge. Only then does a person move from temporary improvement to lasting transformation.

Chassidic Story:

It is told of Rabbi Elimelech that a man once came to him seeking guidance after abandoning a sinful lifestyle, yet repeatedly falling back into old habits. Rabbi Elimelech asked him, “When you leave the fire, do you still warm your hands by its glow?” The man replied, “Yes, for a while.” Rabbi Elimelech said, “Then you have not truly left the fire.” Only when the man committed to distancing himself fully — changing his environment, routines, and inner attachments — did he find stability. Rabbi Elimelech taught that spiritual change must reach the bones, not merely the surface, or the old heat will always pull a person back. **END NOTE]**

מאמר ב

Or one may say, “And it was when Pharaoh sent, etc.” For it is stated in the Gemara: “One who walks on the road and has no escort with him should engage in Torah” (Sotah 46a). And seemingly, even without this, he is in any case always obligated to engage in Torah.

As in the statement of the tanna: one who walks on the road and turns his heart away, etc. And it appears to me to give a reason for the commandment of escorting.

When the righteous escorts his fellow, they become bound to one another in their holiness and are made as one. And the holiness of this righteous one, who engages in Torah in his house.

Guards his fellow on the road, as if he himself were engaging in Torah, because of their connection. But one who has no escort with him must himself engage in Torah.

This is when the righteous one is the escort. But if he is a depressed and empty man, there is no benefit in his escorting him.

And on the contrary, he introduces his sadness into him and interrupts him more than the holiness that is in him.

או יאמר “ויהי בשלח כו”, דאיתא בגמרא “ההולך בדרך ואין עמו לוויה יעסק בתורה” (סוטה מו ע”א), ולכאורה הלא בלאו הכי הוא מחוייב תמיד לעסק בתורה.

כמאמר התנא המהלך בדרך ומפנה לבו כו, ונראה לי לתן טעם למצוות לוויה.

כשהצדיק מלווה את חברו הם מתקשרים זה בזה בקדושתם ונעשים כאחד, וקדושתו של זה הצדיק העוסק בתורה בביתו.

היא משמרת את חברו בדרך כאלו הוא עצמו עוסק בתורה מחמת התקשרותם, אבל מי שאין עמו לוויה צריך בעצמו לעסק בתורה.

זהו כשהצדיק הוא המלווה, אבל אם הוא איש נעצב וריקן אין תועלת לזה במה שנה מלווהו.

ואדרבה הוא מכניס בו עצבותו ומפסיקו יותר מקדושתו שיש בו.

The Rebbe, Rebbe Elimelech of Lizhensk

Noam Elimelech
Parshas Beshalach

And this is “And it was when Pharaoh sent,” meaning that because Pharaoh sent Israel because of the troubles that afflicted him.

וְזֶהוּ “וַיְהִי בְשַׁלַּח פְּרַעֲוֹה” רַצְוֵה לֹאמַר מִחֲמַת שְׁפָרַעֲוֹה יִשְׁלַח אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל מִחֲמַת הַצָּרוֹת שֶׁנִּגְעוּ בּוֹ.

For every place where it is stated “And it was” is only distress. And because of this he also introduced Israel into sadness.

דָּקָל מְקוֹם שֶׁנִּצְאָמַר “וַיְהִי” אֵינוֹ אֶלָּא צָרָה, וּמִחֲמַת זֶה הִקְנִיט אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל גַּם בְּנִעְצָבוֹת.

And therefore “And God did not lead them, etc.” For if Pharaoh had not escorted them, the Holy One, blessed be He, would have led them by the way of the land of the Philistines.

וְלָכֵן “וְלֹא נָחֵם אֱלֹהִים כּוּי,” כִּי אִם לֹא הִנִּיחַ פְּרַעֲוֹה מְלִנְיָה אוֹתָם הִנִּיחַ הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרַךְ מוֹלִיכֵם “דֶּרֶךְ אֲרָץ פְּלִשְׁתִּים”.

Because their holiness would have guarded them. But because of Pharaoh, who interrupted them from their holiness with his sadness.

כִּי קִדְשָׁתָם הִתְהַדְּמָה מִשְׁמֵרֵת אוֹתָם, אֲבָל מִחֲמַת פְּרַעֲוֹה שֶׁהִפְסִיקָם מִקִּדְשָׁתָם בְּנִעְצָבוֹתוֹ.

The Holy One, blessed be He, did not want to lead them by way of the land of the Philistines, “for it is near.”

לֹא רָצָה הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרַךְ לְהוֹלִיכֵם דֶּרֶךְ אֲרָץ פְּלִשְׁתִּים “כִּי קָרוֹב הוּא”.

Meaning that this refers to Pharaoh, because Pharaoh had only recently gone away from them.

רַצְוֵה לֹאמַר זֶה קִצְוֵי אִפְרַעֲוֹה, מִחֲמַת שֶׁעָתָה מְקָרוֹב הָלַךְ פְּרַעֲוֹה מֵאֲצֵלָם.

And there was still an impression of his sadness within them. And therefore “And He turned, etc.” And this is sufficient for the understanding.

וְהִנֵּה עֲדִין רוֹשֵׁם עֲצָבוֹתוֹ בָּהֶם, וְלָכֵן “וַיִּסַּב כּוּי” וְקָל לְהִבִּין.

[NOTE Summary:

Rabbi Elimelech offers a second interpretation of “And it was when Pharaoh sent...,” based on the teaching of the Sages: one who walks on the road without an escort should engage in Torah. At first glance this is puzzling, since a person is always obligated to study Torah regardless. He explains that the mitzvah of escorting is not merely physical protection, but a spiritual bond. When a righteous person escorts his fellow, they become spiritually connected, almost as one. The holiness of the righteous escort, who may remain at home studying Torah, continues to guard the traveler on the road as if he himself were learning Torah, due to this inner connection.

However, this only works when the escort is a righteous person. If the escort is sad, empty, or spiritually weak, then his presence does not protect the traveler. On the contrary, he transmits his sadness and inner blockage to the other, weakening him spiritually more than benefiting him.

This idea explains the verse “And it was when Pharaoh sent Israel.” Pharaoh sent Israel not out of goodwill, but because of the suffering and troubles that struck him. Wherever the word “And it was” appears, it indicates distress. Pharaoh’s inner state of anguish and negativity accompanied Israel and infused them with sadness. Because Pharaoh was, in effect, their “escort,” his spiritual state interfered with their holiness.

The Rebbe, Rebbe Elimelech of Lizhensk

**Noam Elimelech
Parshas Beshalach**

Had Pharaoh not escorted them, God could have led Israel by way of the land of the Philistines, because their holiness alone would have protected them. But since Pharaoh had only just departed from them, and the imprint of his sadness was still present, God did not want to lead them on that path. Therefore, “He turned them away,” guiding them instead through a different route, allowing time and distance for that negative influence to dissipate.

Practical Takeaway:

Spiritual influence is contagious. The people we walk with, physically and emotionally, shape our inner state. True support must come from those who are spiritually grounded and positive, not from those who carry unresolved sadness or negativity. Choosing the right companions and environments is itself a form of protection and growth.

END NOTE]