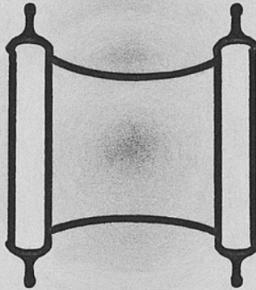


ב"ס"ג

Reb Meir of Premishlan

Divrie Meir

Parshas Lech Lecha



Dedicated To:

טניה מלכה בת רינה דבורה
רפואה שלמה

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Parshas Lech Lecha

וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל אַבְרָם לְךָ לֹךְ מִאָרֶץ וּמִמּוּלְכָתֶךָ וּמִבֵּית אָבִיךָ אֶל הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אָרַאָךְ יְהֹוָה, אֶת

And Hashem said to Avram, “Go for yourself from your land, from your birthplace, and from your father’s house, to the land that I will show you” (Bereishis 12:1)

Once, a Jew came to the Rebbe, Rabbi Meir’l [of Premishlan], with his request that he be saved with seed that is lasting. The Rebbe, of blessed memory, asked him, “Have you ever learned in cheder the first verses of Parshas Lech Lecha with Rashi?”

The Jew answered, “Yes.” The Rebbe, Rabbi Meir’l, said to him, “If you have learned and you remember, recall now what Rashi says on the first verse here — ‘You are not worthy to have children...’ — and translate each word, word for word.”

The Jew said, “I know it as my teacher taught me — here, ‘you will not have children.’” The Rebbe, Rabbi Meir’l, said to him, “We are from Ashkenaz; therefore, we must speak in the Ashkenazic tongue and translate slowly: ‘Here’ — ‘not,’ ‘הָעֵד’ — ‘not,’ ‘אַתָּה זוֹהָה’ — ‘you will merit to be’ — ‘צַו קִינְעָר’ — ‘children’ — ‘זָוָעָסְטוּ זוֹהָה זַיִן.’”

“And now,” the Rebbe continued, “say the translation joined together: ‘Here — not — you will merit to be — to children,’ and the meaning is — do not be an adulterer, and you will merit to have children.”

[NOTE Summary:

This teaching recounts how Rabbi Meir of Premishlan guided a Jew who longed for children. The Rebbe asked if he had learned the opening verses of Parshas Lech Lecha with Rashi. When the man confirmed, the Rebbe urged him to recall Rashi’s words, but to translate them slowly in Ashkenazic Yiddish. The adjusted translation revealed a positive message — “Here... not... you will merit... to children” — reframing the phrase to mean: avoid immorality and you will merit offspring. The Rebbe thus turned what seemed like a negative statement into a constructive spiritual directive.

Practical Takeaway:

The way we interpret words can shape our destiny. Even when something appears negative, reframing it through a lens of faith and upright conduct can reveal blessing. Clean living, moral integrity, and guarding oneself from sin are channels for Divine blessing and fulfillment.

END NOTE]

פעם אחת בא יהודוי לחרבי רבבי מאירול [מפרמיישלאן] בברשותו שיזיע בזורע של קימא.

שאל אותו קרבוי זיל, האם למדת פעם בחדר פסוקים קראשונים של פרשנת לך עם רשוי.

ענה קיהודי, כן. אמר לו קרבוי רבבי מאירול, אם למדת ואפתה זוכר, הזכיר נא מה שרשוי אומר בפסוק קראשון פאן — אי אפתה זוכה לבנים כי ומתרגם כל פה מלה במלחה.

אמר קיהודי, אני יודע איך שמאלאפ שלי למפדיותי, פאן לא נהי לך בנים. אמר לו קרבוי רבבי מאירול, קרי אנחנו יוצאי אשכנז, על כן אricsים אנחנו לדבר בלשון אשכנז, ולתרגם לאט: פאן — הישר, אי נישט, אפתה זוכה — וועסטו זוכה זיין, לבנים — צו קינעראר.

ועכשיו תאמיר התרגומים בחרבור יסוד: יהירר נישט, וועסטו זוכה זיין צו קינעראר. והכוונה היא, אל תהיה נזוף ותזכה לבנים.

Rabbi Meir of Premishlan

Divrie Meir

Parshas Lech Lecha

וַיֵּלֶךְ לְמִסְעֵיו מִגְּבָב וְעַד בֵּית אֵל עַד הַמִּקְומָם אֲשֶׁר קִיה שָׁם אֶחָלָה בַּתְּחִילָה בֵּין בֵּית אֵל וּבֵין חָצֵי יַגְדִּיל

And he went on his journeys from the south and until Beis El, until the place where his tent had been at first, between Beis El and between the Ai (Bereishis 13:3)

The words of the holy Rebbe, Rabbi Meir of Premishlan, may his merit protect us, in explanation of Rashi on the verse, “And he went on his journeys” — that on his return he paid his debts. When our forefather Avraham, peace be upon him, went into exile, he remained like one in debt to many people, for he had inclined to instill in their hearts faith and trust.

And they had known of the promise, “And I will bless you, and I will make your name great...” (Bereishis 12:2), yet here all their faith was concealed from them, for they saw that Avraham had to go into exile. But he reassured them that they would yet see that good would sprout from this, and that all the blessings that Hashem, may He be blessed, had promised him would yet be fulfilled.

And on his return, when he came back with wealth and great honor, he paid all his debts, for they all saw that he had been blessed with all the blessings. Consequently, all their questions were repaid, and it was clarified to them that he had spoken truth in his words.

[NOTE Summary:

Rabbi Meir of Premishlan, interpreting Rashi on the verse “And he went on his journeys” (Bereishis 13:3), explains that Avraham’s return from exile was more than a physical journey — it was a repayment of spiritual debts. When Avraham first went into exile, many people who had been inspired by his words of faith and trust in Hashem began to doubt, for they saw him forced into hardship despite the Divine promise, “And I will bless you and make your name great” (Bereishis 12:2). Avraham reassured them that this too would lead to good, and the blessings would be fulfilled. When he returned in wealth and honor, all saw the promise realized. Their earlier doubts were resolved, and his truth was confirmed in their eyes.

Practical Takeaway:

Challenges in life may cause others — and even ourselves — to question our path and Hashem’s promises. The way to “repay our debts” is to stay steadfast in faith and continue walking the journey, confident that the end will reveal the goodness hidden in the process. Our steadfastness can restore faith not only within ourselves but also in those we influence.

דברי קרבי הקדוש קרבני ר' מאיר מפרק מישלאן זכותו
או עליינו בפרקוש ר' ר' על הפסוק "וַיֵּלֶךְ לְמִסְעֵיו"
— שבחורתו פרע החקפותיו. וכתהלה אברהם אבינו
עליו השלום בಗלויה קיה נשאך בעל חוב להרבה
אנשים שנטה להזכיר בלבם אמונה ובטחון

והמה ידעו בהבטחת "ואברך ואנקלת שמה וגו"
וכאו נסתירה להם כל האמונה כי ראו שצורך אברך
לייה לגולות. והוא הריע אותם שעוד יראו שיצמה
מהזה טוביה ועוד יקם בו כל הברכות שהבטיחו השם
יתברך

יבחרתו, בשחרור בעשירות וכבוד גדול, פרע כל
החקפותיו, כי ראו כלם שנתקברך בכל הברכות,
וממילא נפרע להם כל הקשיות ונתקברך להם שצורך
בקבורי

Rabbi Meir of Premishlan

Divrie Meir

Parshas Lech Lecha

Chassidic Story:

Once, Rabbi Meir of Premishlan was approached by a man burdened with doubt. He had followed the Rebbe's advice in business but had suffered losses. Rabbi Meir told him a mashal: "A man once lent a farmer seeds, promising that they would yield abundance. The farmer planted them, but the field looked bare for weeks. Passersby mocked him for trusting the lender. But come harvest time, the field overflowed with grain — and the farmer repaid his debts with joy. Faith, too, is a seed. Give it time, and the blessings will sprout." The man regained his resolve, and later, his situation turned for the better — confirming the Rebbe's words.

END NOTE]

וְאַנְשֵׁי סָדֹם רָעִים וְחַטָּאִים לְה' מְאֹד יָגִיד

And the men of Sodom were wicked and sinful toward Hashem exceedingly (13:13)

There are four types of people: one who says, "What is mine is yours and what is yours is mine"—this is an unlearned person. "What is mine is mine and what is yours is yours"—this is a median trait, though some say it is the trait of Sodom (Avos 5:10).

I heard from my teacher and master, Rabbi Meir of Premishlan, to ask: why do they call it the trait of Sodom if one might say it is a neutral trait? And just as the commentators asked in Parshas Noach about those who interpret unfavorably where it could be interpreted favorably.

Also, why indeed is it the trait of Sodom if he says "what is mine is mine and what is yours is yours," and he has no desire for what belongs to others, only his own?

See Rashi there, and this is his wording: for we find with Shmuel the Ramite, as it says (I Samuel 7:17), "and his dwelling was in Ramah, for there was his house"—he desired nothing of others, only his own. If so, why do they call it the trait of Sodom?

It can be explained that all is one statement, and there is no dispute: there are people whose inside is not like their outside. With their mouths they say, "what is yours is yours," as if they desire nothing from others, but in their hearts they plot evil thoughts—to rob their fellow or cut off his livelihood. This is the trait of Sodom.

ארבע מדרות באדם ה אומר שלך ושלך וזה מידה בינה, ויש הארץ, שלך ושלך וזה מידה בינה, ויש אומרים זו מידה סדם וכוי אבות פ"ה מ"י

ושמעתי בשם מורי ורבי מאיר מפרמישלאן לסתת, לפה אומרים שהיא מידה סדם מאחר שיש ממקום לומר שהיא מידה בינה, וкоו שהקשי מפרש ה兜רה בפרשנה נון על הינש דורשין לגנאי במקומן שיש לדרש לשבח

גם לפה הוא באחת מידה סדם כשהוא אומר ישלי. שלך ושלך וזה אין חפץ בשל אחרים רק בשלו,

ועין שם ברכ"י כי וזה לשונו שלך מצינו בשמיאל הרמתי שגовар בז (שמואל א ז יז) ותשבטו הרמתה כי שם ביתו שלא היה חפץ בשל אחרים רק בשלו כי, ואם אין יש לסתת לא מה אמר הינש אומרים שהוא מידה סדם

ונאפשר לומר שהכל מאמר אחד הוא ואין חולק בז, דינה יש אנשים שאין תוכם קבוע,

ובפיהם הם אומרים שלך ושלך שאין חפצים בשל אחרים, ובכלם חושבים מחשכות רעות לגזל את חברו ולקפה פרנסתו, זה הוא מידה סדם

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As I heard in the name of the holy righteous master: “And the men of Sodom were wicked and sinful toward Hashem exceedingly.” It should have said “exceedingly toward Hashem”—why is “toward Hashem” before “exceedingly”?

Rather, “they were wicked” refers to their bodies, “and sinful” refers to their wealth, “toward Hashem exceedingly”—meaning, in their mouths they claimed their hearts were for Heaven.

And this is what our sages said: “One who says what is mine is mine and what is yours is yours—this is a median trait, but there are those who say it is the trait of Sodom.”

Meaning, those who *say* such things with their mouths—“what is yours is yours”—but in their hearts are men of blood and deceit, seeking ways to rob their fellow, this is truly the trait of Sodom.

But one whose heart is true and says sincerely, “what is mine is mine and what is yours is yours,” not desiring what belongs to others—this is a median trait, and there is no dispute about it.

[NOTE Summary]

Reb Meir of Premishlan examines the Mishnah in *Pirkei Avos* (5:10), which describes four personality types in relation to possessions. One who says “What’s mine is mine and what’s yours is yours” is usually considered average, yet some call this the *trait of Sodom*. He questions: how can this attitude be evil if it expresses simple fairness and contentment with one’s own? Reb Meir explains that the distinction lies in **inner truth**. There are people whose words say “what’s yours is yours,” implying generosity or respect, but whose hearts secretly plot to exploit, deceive, or undermine others. Outwardly they appear honest; inwardly they seek to gain at another’s expense. This duplicity is the essence of Sodom, whose people claimed righteousness while being inwardly corrupt.

When the Torah says, “And the men of Sodom were wicked and sinful toward Hashem exceedingly” (Bereishis 13:13), the verse should grammatically read “exceedingly toward Hashem.” The reversal hints, says Reb Meir, that their sins were not only against God but *in the name of God*—they justified selfish cruelty with pious claims. They were “wicked in body and sinful with wealth”—greedy and self-serving—but spoke as though “their hearts were for Heaven.” Thus, when the sages say “some call it the trait of Sodom,” they mean those whose mouths speak fairness yet whose hearts conceal envy and deceit. However, one who sincerely says “what’s mine is mine and what’s yours is yours,” with no jealousy or greed, truly possesses a balanced, upright trait.

כאמ' שטעתי בשם קרב האדין הקדוש ואנשי סל'

, רעים וחתאים לד' מאד דינה ליה למיר מאד לד'

אלא שקי רעים בגופם וחתאים במעולם לד' מאד

רצח לזר שאמרו בפיהם שלכם לשם

זה שאמרו ח' ל' האומר שלוי שלק שלק זו מקה

, בינהית, אבל יש אומרים

רצח לזר שכאומרים כה בפיהם שלק שלק ובלק

הם אנשי קמים ומרמה מבקשים זרים לגול את

, קברוז' זו וקיים מחת סל'

אבל הזכיר אמת בלבבו ואומר באמת שלוי שלק

שלק שאין חפץ בשל אחרים זו מקה בינהית ואין

חוליק בזה:

Rabbi Meir of Premishlan

Divrie Meir

Parshas Lech Lecha

Practical Takeaway

The holiness of character is measured not by words but by motives. Saying “what’s mine is mine” can be an act of selfishness or an act of integrity, depending on whether the heart aligns with the mouth. Chassidus teaches that divine service begins with *tocho kebaro*—inner and outer harmony. The path of Sodom is hypocrisy masked by piety; the path of holiness is honesty without pretense. Every Jew must therefore examine not only their actions but also their intentions: do I truly wish others well, or do I secretly hope for their loss? True righteousness is transparent kindness.

Chassidic Story

Once, a wealthy man from a nearby town came to Reb Meir of Premishlan asking for advice about a business rival who had cheated him. The man said bitterly, “Rebbe, I will not rest until I take back what is mine.” Reb Meir smiled and said, “Then you have already lost it twice—once when he took it, and again when you let it live inside your heart.” The man protested, “But it’s only justice!” Reb Meir answered, “Justice without mercy is Sodom. Ask yourself: do you seek what is yours, or do you crave that he should have less?” The man stood silent. “If you can bless him to have what is his,” Reb Meir concluded, “then Hashem will surely return to you what is truly yours.” **END NOTE]**

וּמֶלֶכִי אֶזֶק מֶלֶךְ שָׁלֵם הָזֵיא לְהֵם וְיַיִן וְהֵוָה כָּהֵן לֹאֵל עַלְיוֹן יְדִי, יְה

And Melchizedek king of Shalem brought out bread and wine, and he was a priest to G-d Most High. (14:18)

“And Melchizedek king of Shalem brought out bread and wine.” One might wonder why it does not say, “And Melchizedek king of Shalem, priest of G-d Most High, brought out bread and wine.”

I heard from my teacher and master, Rabbi Meir of Premishlan: when two tzaddikim meet, each learns from the other the good traits that are within him.

When Avraham our father met with Shem, who is Melchizedek, each absorbed the virtues of the other.

This is the meaning of “Melchizedek king of Shalem brought out”—from the word *motzi* (to bring forth), meaning he drew out and elevated sparks.

He learned from Avraham the qualities of kindness and hospitality—giving bread and wine.

וּמֶלֶכִי אֶזֶק מֶלֶךְ שָׁלֵם הָזֵיא לְהֵם וְיַיִן וְהֵוָה כָּהֵן לֹאֵל עַלְיוֹן. וְלֹא כֹּרֶה קָשָׁה וְלֹא בְּתִיב וּמֶלֶכִי אֶזֶק מֶלֶךְ שָׁלֵם כָּהֵן לֹאֵל עַלְיוֹן הָזֵיא לְהֵם וְיַיִן.

וְשָׁעַתִּי בְּשָׁם מֹרֵי וּרְבֵּי מָאֵר מִפְרַמִּישְׁלָאן, דְּהַבְּהָה יָדוּעָ כִּאֵשֶׁר שְׁנִי צְדִיקִים יִתְוֹעֵדוּ יִסְדֵּד לְוָמֵד כָּל אֶתְכָּבְרוֹ מִדּוֹת הַטוֹּבָות שִׁינֵּשׁ בָּו.

וְכָאֵשֶׁר אָבָרָהָם אָבִינוּ נִתְוֹעֵד עִם שֵׁם הוּא מֶלֶכִי אֶזֶק, לְמַד בָּל אֶתְכָּבְרוֹ מִדּוֹת הַטוֹּבָות שֶׁל חָבְרוֹ.

וְזֹה הוּא הַפְּרוֹשׁ וּמֶלֶכִי אֶזֶק מֶלֶךְ שָׁלֵם הָזֵיא מִלְשָׁוֹן, מְזִיאָה נְצֹצָה, קִינוּ שָׁלֵם מְאָבָרָהָם אָבִינוּ מִדּוֹת גִּמְילוֹת חֲסִידִים וְהַכְּנִסְתָּא אָרְחִים, שְׁנִתְנוּ לְהֵם לְהֵם וְיַיִן.

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And “he”—the word refers to Avraham—learned from Melchizedek, from whom he studied Torah in his beis midrash.

Thus both tzaddikim contained within themselves all good traits—Torah and deeds of kindness.

Rabbi Meir of Premishlan said another explanation, humorously: Shem the son of Noach was old and sat in yeshiva in the days of Avraham.

For there were ten generations from Noach to Avraham, so Shem was already very old, sitting and teaching people the ways of Hashem.

When Avraham began to recognize his Creator and teach others the path of Hashem, Shem heard that a young man was gathering students and teaching divine service.

He asked about him—“Who is this and what is his nature?” They told him: “He brings in guests, gives bread to the hungry, and always engages in acts of charity and kindness.”

Shem said, “If so, he is a host, but not a teacher of Torah.” He wondered why so many students were drawn to him.

When they finally met face to face, Shem wanted to test Avraham—to see if he had any inner service of Hashem beyond kindness and hospitality.

Therefore it says, “And Melchizedek king of Shalem brought out bread and wine”—he displayed this good trait of feeding the hungry, to test whether Avraham possessed anything beyond it.

והוא, פרוש תבות זה הוא, קאי על אברם אבינו, שלם מילוי הצדיקים כל המזרות הטובות תורה וגהה בשני הצדיקים כל המזרות הטובות תורה וגמilot חסדים:

אמר רבינו מאיר מפרמישלאן באנו אחר בדור הלאה, והנה נודע כי שם בנו נס הינה זקן ויושב בישיבת בימי אברם אבינו עליו השלום.

כי הרי עשרה דורות היו מנה עד אברם, ונמצא כי בימי אברם אבינו עליו השלום כבר הינה שם זקן מאי, והנה יושב בישיבת מלמד לבני אדם דרך לשם. יתברך.

וכיוון שה咍יל אברם אבינו עליו השלום למכיר את בוראו וההתהיל למלמד לבני אדם דרך לשם, והנה שומע שם בנו נס שעמד אחד רך בשנים ומלאד לבני אדם דרך עבודה.

והנה שואל עליו מי הוא זה ומה טיבו, והשיבו לו שהוא מכנים אזהרים ונוטנו להם לערבים, ומכך ומשקה לכל עוברי דרך ועוסק תמיד בצדקה וגמilot חסדים.

ואמר שם בנו נס אם כן הוא מכנים אורח, אבל לא רב ונבי למלמד לבני אדם תורה השם, והנה לפלא בעיניו על שפתהכאים אליו התרמימים.

וכיוון שנתנועו עעה ונתראו פנים אל פנים יכח, רצאה שם בנו נס לחקור על הזכר ולתහות על קגנו של אברם לראות מה טיבו, אם יש בו עבודה חזין. ממשה שהוא מכנים אורח.

ונמצא זה שפתחוב ומילוי צדק מלך שלם הוציא להם ייון, רצאה לומר זו המזקה הטובה שההוא נתן לנו לערבים וצמאים ומתקה בגמilot חסדים זה הוציאנו, מן הכל.

Rabbi Meir of Premishlan

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“And he was a priest to G-d Most High” means that Shem saw Avraham had, besides kindness, also true service of Hashem—with Torah, prayer, and perfection.

Thus concludes his holy words—words of the wise are gracious and lips shall kiss them.

“And Melchizedek king of Shalem brought out bread and wine, and he was priest to G-d Most High.” In the name of the holy Rabbi Meir of Premishlan, he interpreted:

“Melchizedek”—who can justify (*matzlik*) the King of the world, the Holy One Blessed be He, whether in affliction or in goodness?

“King of Shalem”—the one who is master of peace, who is a tzaddik complete in all mitzvos.

“He brought out bread and wine”—this tzaddik is able to bring forth and bestow upon the world blessing, life, and sustenance.

“And he was a priest to G-d Most High”—meaning, a priest is one who has power over the Supreme, as our sages said: the Holy One decrees, and the tzaddik nullifies it.

[NOTE Summary

Avraham’s encounter with Melchizedek (Shem) reveals two dimensions of holiness meeting in harmony: Torah and Chesed. Rabbi Meir of Premishlan teaches that when two tzaddikim meet, each one draws out the sparks of holiness and learns the other’s virtues. Thus, Melchizedek, king of Shalem, “brought out bread and wine”—he drew forth the sparks of Avraham’s kindness, learning from him the trait of generosity and hospitality. At the same time, Avraham absorbed from Melchizedek the inner quality of Torah wisdom, learning in his beis midrash. Both tzaddikim thereby became complete—each embodying both Torah and good deeds, intellect and action.

Rabbi Meir humorously adds that Shem, though aged and revered, wondered about this young Avraham who gathered followers through kindness rather than scholarship. To test him, Shem “brought out bread and wine,” imitating Avraham’s way of giving, to see if Avraham had deeper avodah beyond chesed. Upon meeting, he recognized in Avraham not just a host but a true “priest to G-d Most High”—a man who united Torah, prayer, and love of Hashem. The test revealed Avraham’s full spiritual stature, integrating outward kindness with inward devotion.

לראות אם יש בו באברם חיזע ליה גם כן איזה זרבי עבדות השם יתברך. והוא כהן לאל עליון, רצחה לומר ראה שגם חיזע מפוקה זו היא כהן לאל עליון, ועוזב השם יתברך בתרה ועבודה גם כן בתקלית השלמות. והוא כהן לאל עליון.

עד כאן פרף דברי קדשו, ודברי פי חכם חן ושותפים: יישקו מלכי צדקה מלך שלם הוציא להם נזון והוא כהן לאל עליון. בשם קדוש רבינו רבי מאיר מפרמישלאן, צ"ל שפריש,

מלך צדקה. מי יכול להצדיק מלכו של עולם הוא, קדוש ברוך הוא בין בעקאה בין בטוּבָא,

מלך שלם. פרוש מי שהוא אדון השלום, שהוא צדיק השלם בכל המצוות.

הוציא להם נזון, צדיק זה יכול להשפיע לכל עולם. שפע ברכה חיים ופרנסה.

והוא כהן לאל עליון, פרוש כהן הוא שר על עליון, כי יכול, כמו שאמרו רבינו ז"ל, קדוש ברוך הוא: אוצר וצדיק מבטולו, ודברי פי חכם חן

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In another layer of interpretation, “Melchizedek king of Shalem” is read allegorically: *Melchizedek*—one who justifies the King, accepting all decrees of Heaven with love; *King of Shalem*—one who is whole in peace and mitzvos; *brought out bread and wine*—one who channels divine blessing and sustenance into the world; *and he was priest to G-d Most High*—a tzaddik whose holiness can even annul harsh decrees, as our sages taught: “The Holy One decrees, and the tzaddik nullifies it.”

Practical Takeaway

The meeting of Avraham and Shem embodies the ideal balance between Torah study and kindness. True service of Hashem requires both inward devotion and outward generosity—wisdom without warmth becomes sterile, and kindness without spiritual grounding lacks endurance. Every person must strive to unite these two paths: to learn from others’ strengths, to draw out sparks of holiness wherever they appear, and to bring both compassion and Torah into every act of life.

Chassidic Story

Once, Rabbi Meir of Premishlan was asked why he constantly praised others, even those considered simple or unlearned. He replied, “When two souls meet, each one has a spark the other lacks. If I honor every Jew, I draw from his spark, and he draws from mine. That is how we complete each other.” One day, he encountered a poor villager who gave away his last loaf of bread to a traveler. Rabbi Meir turned to his students and said, “This man has just taught me anew what it means to bring out bread and wine—to draw kindness from the heart and make a dwelling for the Divine.”

END NOTE]

אחר הדברים האלה היה דבר ה' אל אברהם במעשה לא נרא אברהם אברם אגדי מגן לך שכחה קרבת מאד טו, וא
**After these words, the word of Hashem came to Avram in a vision, saying: “Fear not,
Avram, I am your shield; your reward is exceedingly great.” (15:1)**

“In the verse, ‘We seal with him and not with them’ (Pesachim 117b).” I heard that Rabbi Meir of Premishlan said: Avraham instituted the morning prayer (*Shacharis*) so that he could pray early and thus devote the rest of the day to welcoming guests—feeding and giving them drink himself—through which G-d’s Name would be proclaimed in the world.

He desired to fulfill this mitzvah personally, not through a messenger, because “a mitzvah performed by oneself is greater than through one’s agent.”

בפסוק כה חותמיין ולא ביהם (פסחים קייז). שמעתי
שאמור רבינו מ פרמישלאן כי אברהם פתקן
שחרית כדי להתפלל בהשכלה ויכול להכניס אורחים
כל היום ולהאכילן ולהשיקותם בעצמו ועל ידי זה
יתפרנס אלקותו יתברך שם

ורצה זוקא לקים בעצמו לא על ידי שליח כי מצוה
בו יותר מבלתיו

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But Yitzchak instituted *Minchah* because he would pray throughout the day until that time, and the hospitality that was his father's practice he arranged through others—through a messenger.

Likewise, Yaakov instituted *Arvis*, for he prayed all day until evening and relied on others to carry out the hospitality of his father and grandfather.

Therefore, the Holy One, blessed be He, said to Avraham: “Since My honor is so great in your eyes that you would not entrust this mitzvah of hospitality to any messenger, wishing that My G-dliness be publicized through you personally—”

“Therefore, I am your shield”—meaning, in return for your personal devotion, I Myself will be your protector, and so we conclude the Amidah “Shield of Avraham” and not of them—measure for measure.

The holy Rabbi Meir of Premishlan said, regarding the verse (Mishlei 13:25) “The righteous one eats to the satisfaction of his soul, but the belly of the wicked shall lack,” that the tzaddik eats—though his soul is already satisfied—so that his guest too may eat his fill.

But “the belly of the wicked shall lack”—he denies himself food so that his guest will also go hungry, and this seems good in his eyes.

But Avraham our father was the true tzaddik and the greatest master of hospitality. He would eat together with each guest so that they might eat to full satisfaction and be strengthened.

Therefore he required a good “maagen” (stomach). Thus, the Holy One blessed be He promised him: “I am your shield”—I will give you a good stomach. These are the words of the holy Rebbe, spoken with humor and grace.

אבל יצחק תקו מנהה כי התפלל כל היום עד זמן
מנחה, ומלאכתו בהקנשת אורחים מלאת אביו
נעשותה על ידי שליח על ידי אחרים

ובכן יעקב תקו ערבית כי התפלל כל היום עד הערב,
ובtruth גם הוא לא הנית מלאכת אביו וקנו וקיים
הקנשת אורחים על ידי שליח

על כן אמר הקדוש ברוך הוא לאברם אם כל כה
גדול כבודו בעיניך שלא האמנת לשות שליח במצוות
הקנשת אורחים כדי שיתפרנס בעצמו אלקווי
בעלם,

על כן אני מגן לך, ובכך חותמי מגן אברם ולא:
בכם, מקה בנגד מקה

הרב הקדוש רבי מאיר מפרימיישלאן ז"ל אמר על
פירוש הפסוק (משלי יג, כה) יצדיק אכל לשבע נפשו
ובطن רשעים תחסר, שהצדיק אוכל אף על פי
ששבעה נפשו, כדי שהאורח גם כן יוכל כדי ארכו

אבל בطن רשעים תחסר, הינו הוא אין אוכל ובطن
חסר מחתמת הרעב, וכל זה שווה לו כדי שגם הוארה
לא יוכל כל ארכו

אבל אברם אבינו ז"ל הנה הצדיק האמת ובעל
המקניש אורחים הכי גדול, והנה אוכל עם כל אחד
ואחד כדי שיאכלו כל צרכם ויסעדו להם

ולזה היה ארייך מאגנו [מעי] טוב, על כן הבטיח לו
קדוש ברוך הוא ואני מגן לך אטו לך מאגנו טוב,
עד כאן דברי הרב הקדוש הנ"ל על דרך צחות

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[NOTE Summary]

Reb Meir of Premishlan reveals the inner reason why the Amidah concludes with the words “*Shield of Avraham*” and not “*Shield of Yitzchak*” or “*Shield of Yaakov*.” Each of the three Patriarchs established a daily prayer that reflected his personal form of divine service. Avraham Avinu instituted Shacharis, the morning prayer, because he longed to begin his day with communion with Hashem, and then spend every remaining hour engaged in acts of hospitality—feeding and giving drink to strangers with his own hands. He did not send servants to do this for him, for as the Sages teach, “*Greater is the mitzvah performed by oneself than through a messenger.*” His goal was that G-dliness would be revealed through his personal actions, that the Name of Hashem should be known through kindness and love.

Yitzchak, by contrast, established Minchah, praying until the afternoon while his hospitality was handled through others. Yaakov instituted Maariv, continuing in the same path—trusting that others carried out his family’s legacy of welcoming guests. Thus Hashem said to Avraham, “*Since you wished to honor Me yourself, refusing to rely on others so that My Divinity would be publicized through you personally—therefore I Myself will be your shield, and in you the blessing will be sealed: ‘Shield of Avraham.’*”

Reb Meir continues with a tender parable: The verse says, “*The righteous eats to the satisfaction of his soul, but the belly of the wicked shall lack*” (Mishlei 13:25). The tzaddik, even when full, eats a little more—so that his guest may feel comfortable eating his fill. The wicked man, however, withholds even from himself, so that his guest will remain hungry as well. Avraham was the true tzaddik, eating together with each traveler so they could eat freely and feel at peace. For this, says Reb Meir with gentle humor, Avraham needed a “*maagen tov*”—a good stomach. Hashem therefore promised him, “*I am your maagen, your shield.*”

Practical Takeaway

Hospitality in Avraham’s way is not just about giving—it is about sharing. The act of sitting and eating with another person transforms generosity into unity. When we give from ourselves directly—not through delegation—we reveal the living G-dliness that dwells within kindness itself. To be a “shield of Avraham” means to live with open hands and a warm heart, guarding others through love and personal presence.

Chassidic Story

Once, a poor traveler came to Premishlan late at night. Reb Meir was already seated at his modest meal when the man knocked at the door. Instead of sending his attendant, Reb Meir himself ran to open, welcomed the stranger, and seated him beside him. As they ate together, the guest began to cry, confessing that he had not eaten in two days. Reb Meir smiled and said, “Then tonight you will taste double—once for your body and once for your soul.” When the man finished, Reb Meir whispered, “Now that you are full, I too feel satisfied. This is what it means that Hashem told Avraham, ‘I am your shield’—for one who protects the dignity of another is himself protected by Heaven.”

END NOTE]

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ויאמר אליו קח לך עגלה משלה ועוז משלה ותיר וגוזל טו, ט

And He said to him: “Take for Me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon.” (15:9)

Regarding the grandchildren who are not the glory of their ancestors—who possess nothing of their own and live only through the merit of their forefathers—Rabbi Meir of Premishlan said:

“And the bush (Sneh) was burning with fire” (Shemos 3:2)—the *sneh* is a barren tree, yet it is not consumed, meaning: the children may lack fruits of their own, but are sustained by the light of their forefathers.

When such a person once sat at his table, and fish were brought before him, our holy Rebbe said: “Among fish (*de-bit*—in the foreign tongue) there are large ones and small ones. The large fish are very good, but the small ones—chew and spit them out.”

To one such man he said, “Take for yourself a *heifer threefold*”—meaning, a wagon drawn by three horses; “a goat threefold”—three brazen-faced collectors; “and a turtledove”—that is, speak words of Torah; “and a young pigeon”—meaning, redeem people with kindness.”

[NOTE Summary]

Reb Meir of Premishlan interprets the verse “*Take for Me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon*” (Bereishis 15:9) in a deeply allegorical way. He explains that it alludes to later generations who live on the spiritual credit of their ancestors—grandchildren who are not the glory of their forefathers and who possess no merit of their own. Like the burning bush that was not consumed, these descendants, though spiritually barren, continue to exist through the residual holiness of their parents and grandparents.

In his characteristically witty manner, Reb Meir adds that when such self-contented individuals came to his table, he would remark humorously that among fish there are big ones and small ones—the big ones are nourishing, but the small ones one should “chew and spit out.” Spiritually, the “big fish” symbolize tzaddikim who have depth and substance, while the “small fish” represent those who appear devout but lack inner vitality. To such a man he once said playfully: “Take for yourself a *threefold heifer*” (meaning a wagon with three horses); “a *threefold goat*” (three brazen-faced collectors); “a *turtledove*” (speak words of Torah); and “a *young*

על הנכדים שאינם תפארת אבותם, קלית להו מגרמייהו כלום ואוכלים איה בזכות אבותיהם, אמר: **רבי מאיר מפרמיישלאן**

ונפסנה (שמות ג, ב) מאי אילן סrank, אף על פי כן איןנו נאכל, הינו הבנים שאינם עושים פרות מעצםם, אף על פי כן נזונים מזכות אבותם.

וקששבת אצלו איש כזה, קששנתנו דגים על השלוחן, אמר רבנו הakkوش: יש בפניהם דבית (בלע"ז דגים) גדולים ורבייה קטנים, קרבית הגדולים הם טובים מכך, אבל הקטנים—תלעוס ותruk.

לאחד מכם אמר: קח לך עגלה משלה ותיר לזרם עגלה עם שלושה סוסים; ועוז משלה ותיר—ושלש עזים פניהם לגביבים; ותיר—ונאמור תורה; וגוזל ותיר: גוזל את הבריות

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pigeon" (redeem people with kindness). Through this wordplay, Reb Meir conveyed that a person must use every gift—strength, courage, speech, and compassion—for holiness rather than self-importance.

Practical Takeaway

Even if one feels spiritually "small" or unworthy, they can still attach themselves to holiness through acts of giving and kindness. The lesson of Reb Meir's humor is profound: external piety without compassion or learning is like a small fish with no nourishment. But when a person uses even the little they have to bring light and goodness to others, they become truly alive, sustained not only by ancestral merit but by their own awakened heart.

END NOTE]