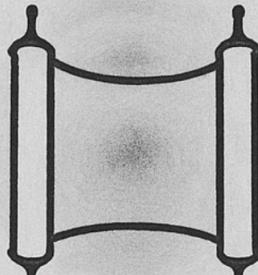


בס"ד

Rebbe Elimelech of Lizhensk

Parshas Matos Massei



לע"נ

שמעון בן ישראל
Dedicated By:

ר' נחום אהרון & חייה
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The Rebbe, Rebbe Elimelech of Lzhensk

Noam Elimelech

Parshas Matos Massei

Parshas Matos	
<p>And Moshe spoke to the heads of the tribes of the children of Israel. Behold, the tzaddik who wishes to draw down influence upon Israel must join with other tzaddikim, for through the speech he speaks with them, he channels influence to all of Israel, and they assist him toward that goodness—to silence the mouth of the accuser against him through the merit of the many.</p>	<p>וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל־רְאשֵׁי הַמַּטּוֹת לְבָנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל. דַּבֵּר פְּצָדִיק קָרוֹצָה לְהַמְשִׁיךְ הַשְׁפָעָה עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶרְיךְ לְחַפֵּר עָמוֹ שֶׁאָרֶץ־צְדִיקִים, שְׁעָלִי־קָדוֹשׁ הַמְּדֻבָּר עֲלֵהֶם הוּא מְשִׁפֵּעַ לְכָל יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְהַם הַמְּסִיעִים אָתוּ אֶל־ הַטּוֹב הַהוּא לְהַקְרִיטִים פִּי הַמְּקֹרְבָּג מַעַלְיוֹ בְּכָוֹת הַרְבִּים,</p>
<p>Whereas when he is alone, he needs great strength and a mighty hand to silence the accuser so that he does not overpower him. And this is what Moshe Rabbeinu, peace be upon him, said: “How can I bear alone...”—meaning, when I am alone without connection to other tzaddikim, it is a burden upon me to draw down for you your needs, etc.</p>	<p>מְשָׁאֵין כֵּן כִּשְׁהָוָא לְבָדוֹ אֶרְיךְ כֵּן גָּדוֹל וַיֵּד חִזְקָה לְהַשְׁקִיט הַמְּקֹרְבָּג לְכָל יִשְׂרָאֵל בּוֹ. וְזֹה שֶׁאָמַר מֹשֶׁה רְבִינּוּ עַלְיוֹ הַשְׁלָוֹם “אָכָה אָשָׁא לְבָדֵי כֹּוֹ”, פִּירֶשׁ כְּשֶׁאָנָּי לְבָדֵי בְּלֹא הַתְּחִכָּרוֹת שֶׁאָרֶץ־צְדִיקִים הוּא לְמִשְׁאָ עַלְיוֹ לְהַמְשִׁיךְ לְכָם צָרְכֵיכֶם כֹּוֹ.</p>
<p>And this is [the meaning of] “And Moshe spoke to the heads of the tribes”—meaning that he joined himself with the tzaddikim—“for the children of Israel,” i.e., on behalf of Israel, to draw down for them shefa (divine influence). And this is well understood.</p>	<p>וְזֹהוּ “וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל־רְאשֵׁי הַמַּטּוֹת”, פִּירֶשׁ שְׁחִיבָּר עָצָמוּ עַמּוֹן הַצְּדִיקִים, “לְבָנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל” כָּל־מָר בְּשָׁבֵיל יִשְׂרָאֵל, לְהַמְשִׁיךְ לָהֶם שְׁפָעָה. וְכֹל לְהַבְּנָן.</p>
<p>And this is [the meaning of the verse] “Awaken, O north wind, and come, O south wind.” That is, the cause through which the north is awakened is the influence of sustenance, as it says: “From the north comes gold.” And “come, O south wind”—you must ascend to the levels of “south,” as in “one who wishes to become wise should go south.” And this is the joining of the tzaddikim and sages, as above.</p>	<p>וְזֹהוּ “עֲרוּי אָפָּוֹן וּבוֹאִי תִּימְנוֹ”, רְצֹן לְזֹמֶר הַסְּבָה שְׁעַל יְהָה פְּטוּרָר אֶת הַאֲפָּוֹן הִיא הַשְׁפָעָה פָּרָנָסָה עַל־שָׁמֶן “אָפָּוֹן זָהָב יָאָתָה”, “וּבוֹאִי תִּימְנוֹ” אֶרְיךְ אַתָּה שְׁתִּבְוָא לְמִדְרָגָות “תִּימְנוֹ”, עַל ذָרָךְ קָרוֹצָה לְהַחֲקִים יָזְרָרִים, וְהַנּוּ הַתְּחִכָּרוֹת הַצְּדִיקִים וְהַחֲקִים כֹּנְלָא.</p>
<p><u>NOTE Summary</u></p> <p>This discourse by Rabbi Elimelech of Lzhensk explores how the collective merit of the righteous amplifies spiritual influence and silences judgment in Heaven. Drawing on the verse וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל־רְאשֵׁי הַמַּטּוֹת לְבָנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, the tzaddik's role is portrayed not as an isolated figure, but as one who must unify with other tzaddikim to successfully draw down divine sustenance and goodness for the people. Moshe Rabbeinu's complaint—“<i>How can I bear alone?</i>”—is understood here not simply as human exhaustion, but as a cosmic truth: no tzaddik can bear the full burden of spiritual influence alone. The collective voice of tzaddikim suppresses prosecuting forces and enables the flow of blessings.</p>	

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This idea is extended through the verse “Awaken, O north wind, and come, O south wind”, associating “north” with material blessing (as in “from the north comes gold”) and “south” with wisdom and spiritual ascension (as in “one who wishes to become wise should go south”). The fusion of these poles—material and spiritual—is only possible when tzaddikim unite, integrating practical blessing with elevated awareness.

Practical Takeaway

True spiritual leadership is not a solo endeavor. Whether one is a leader, teacher, or seeker, aligning oneself with others—especially with those whose intentions are pure and whose wisdom is deep—creates a collective merit that amplifies both effectiveness and protection. In your personal growth or community work, seek righteous companionship; don't try to carry the burden alone.

Chassidic Story

Reb Elimelech of Lzhensk once told his students that he never davened for someone without first mentally including his brother, **Reb Zusha of Anipoli**, in the prayer. “Even the smallest request,” he said, “must pass through the gates of compassion, and no gate opens unless love and humility stand beside you.”

One day, a poor man came begging for a blessing of sustenance. Instead of responding immediately, Reb Elimelech sent a messenger to find Reb Zusha and ask him to say a few words of merit for the petitioner. Only after hearing that Zusha had sighed deeply and whispered a heartfelt “Ribono shel Olam, have pity,” did Reb Elimelech begin to daven. Within a week, the man’s situation reversed: he received an unexpected inheritance. When asked why he didn’t simply bless the man himself, Reb Elimelech answered, “When I speak with the heads of the tribes, I speak *for* the children of Israel.”

Source: *Toldot Elimelech*, vol. 2, p. 47 **END NOTE]**

<p>In another manner: “And Moshe spoke to the heads of the tribes... this is the thing that Hashem has commanded,” based on what is stated in the Gemara: “All the prophets prophesied with [the term] ‘Thus’ (Ko), but Moshe was added to them, for he prophesied with the expression ‘This is the thing’ (Zeh haDavar).”</p>	<p>בדרך אחרת. “ויזכר מושה אל ראשי הפתוחות כי זה הזכר אשר צוה ה”, על פי דאיתא בגמרא “כל הנבאים נתנו באו בכה’, נוסף עליהם משה שנתנו בא”. בלאשון זה הזכר</p>
<p>And to understand the difference between them, and what practical consequence there is in the expression through which they prophesied. And it appears [the explanation is] as follows: the way of a great tzaddik, through whom the spirit of God has spoken due to the greatness of his holiness—then, when one hears his words, it seems to him that just as the holy words were spoken, so too they are written in the holy Torah.</p>	<p>ולהבין הפרש שבעיניהם ומה נפקא מינה באיזה לשון שנבאו. ונראה כי דרך הצדיק הגדול אשר רוח אלקים דבר בו בוגד קדושתו, אז השומע דבריו, נדמה לו שכך בראיו הקדושים כן כתוב בתורה הקדושה</p>

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<p>And he finds verses that support the words of the tzaddik, and he says about the words of the tzaddik: "This is the thing that Hashem has commanded"—meaning, these words that the tzaddik spoke are the very words spoken from the mouth of Hashem.</p>	<p>ומצא פסוקים מהס"עים לזכרי הצדיק, והוא אומר על דברי הצדיק "זהذكر אשר צוה ה'", פירוש אלו. דברים שהצדיק דבר הם דברם הנאמרים מפי ה'</p>
<p>And there are other tzaddikim who are not on such a level that all their listeners perceive their words as if they were written in the Torah. Rather, they testify concerning their words that they are words of uprightness and truth and words of the living God, but they do not find them explicitly written in the Torah.</p>	<p>ויש שאר צדיקים אשר אינם במקודמתם כ"כ שיחיו כל השומעים נקיים בעיניהם כלו כתובים בתורה, אלא שמעידים על דבריהם שהם דברי יושר ואמת ודברי אלקים חיים, אבל אינם מוצאים אותם כתובים בתורה</p>
<p>And this is the meaning of "All the prophets prophesied with <i>Ko</i>"—meaning, they would testify about their words saying: "Thus is it fitting and correct." But Moshe was added to them, for he prophesied with the expression "This is the thing"—meaning that they would say about his words, "This is the thing that Hashem has commanded," meaning that the spirit of God so spoke through him that all would testify that his words were words of Torah and are indeed written [therein].</p>	<p>ונזהו "כל הנביאים מתנבאים בכה", פירוש שהיו מעידין על דבריהם לומר מה ראוי ונכון, "נוסף עליהם משה שהתנבע בלשונו זה הדבר", פירוש שהיו אומרם על הדבר זה הדבר אשר צוה ה', פירוש שרות אלקים כ"כ דבר בז עד שהיו מעידים הכל שהבריו דברי תורה והפה בכתביהם</p>
<p>And this is [the meaning of the verse] "And Moshe spoke to the heads of the tribes of the children of Israel, saying: This is the thing..."—meaning, as above, that the children of Israel would say about his words, "This is the thing that Hashem has commanded." And understand this well.</p>	<p>ונזהו "וירבר משה אל ראשי הפטות לבני ישראל לאמר זה הדבר", פירוש כ"ל שיאמרו בני ישראל על דבריהם זה הדבר אשר צוה ה'. ופה</p>
<p>[NOTE Summary] This discourse contrasts two modes of divine communication—"Ko amar Hashem" ("Thus says God") and "Zeh haDavar" ("This is the thing")—to highlight the unique stature of Moshe Rabbeinu and, by extension, the power of a true tzaddik. The sages teach that all prophets spoke with "Ko," implying approximation, while Moshe alone spoke with "Zeh," direct clarity and absolute transmission. The teaching reframes this distinction as not just about Moshe's prophecy but about the impact of a tzaddik's words. When a truly elevated tzaddik speaks, the listeners intuitively sense that his words are not mere insight or inspiration—they <i>feel</i> like Torah itself. The speech is so pure and divinely aligned that people say, "This is the word of Hashem." In contrast, other righteous individuals may speak with truth and righteousness, but their words don't resonate with that same Torah-level clarity. This explains the verse, "Moshe spoke to the heads of the tribes, saying: Zeh haDavar—this is the thing that Hashem has commanded." The power of the tzaddik lies not only in receiving truth but in transmitting it in a way that awakens recognition in others—to the point where <u>they themselves testify that this must be from Hashem</u>:</p>	

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Practical Takeaway

There are moments when a teaching, a phrase, or a heartfelt word cuts through all doubt—it's not just *inspiring*, it feels like *truth itself*. Seek out those voices, those teachings, and those people whose words don't just advise you but awaken something deeper—where your soul whispers, “Zeh haDavar.” And when you speak or lead, strive not just to be right, but to speak with enough purity, humility, and alignment that others feel: this is the thing that God wants from me now.

Chassidic Story

It is told that when **Reb Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev** once spoke at a public gathering, his voice trembling with holy fire, he quietly expounded a simple verse. One of the listeners, a young scholar, was so overwhelmed that he ran out into the street in tears.

When others asked what had shaken him so deeply—after all, the teaching itself seemed straightforward—he replied, “I have studied that verse a hundred times. I have read the commentaries. But when the Rebbe said it, I heard the *voice* behind the words. I heard Hashem.” **END NOTE]**

<p>“If a man shall vow a vow...” It seems to me as follows: behold, within a person there is a portion of the Divine from above, and a person must prepare and make a fitting dwelling for that portion—which means, in the supernal worlds.</p>	<p>איש כי יידר נזר כו'. נ"ל דהנה האדם יש בו חלק אלוהים ממעל, ואיריך הקאם לךין ולעשות דירה נאה, להקל הוה דהינו בעולמות עליונים</p>
<p>And this is the meaning of “ki yidor” (when he vows)—related to the word <i>dirah</i> (dwelling)—“to Hashem,” meaning, for the portion of the Divine. And this is what our Sages said: “A standard rental of a dwelling is for thirty days.”</p>	<p>ז"הו “כִּי יִדְרֶר” לְשׁוֹן דִּירָה, “לָהּ” רְצֹן לוּמֵר להקל אלוהים, ז"הו שאמרו ח"ל סתם השוכן דירה הוא , “לְתַלְפֵן יוֹמָן</p>
<p>This hints to the person who wants to acquire a dwelling for his portion from above: he must repair his deeds every thirty days—that is, to reflect in teshuvah and review all of his actions from the past thirty days.</p>	<p>זה רמז על האדם הרוצה לקנות דירה להקלו ממעל, איריך למקו מעשיו בכל תלפינו יומין, דקיננו להרבה בתשובה ולקדר על כל מעשיו שעשה כל שלושים יום</p>
<p>For this reason the Sages instituted fasting on every Erev Rosh Chodesh, in order to examine one's deeds. And this is also the hint in what is said about Rebbe Yehudah ben Beteira (RIBL) that he reviewed his learning every thirty days.</p>	<p>ש"לזה תקנו ח"ל להתענו בכל ערב ראש חודש כ"ד לפשלש במעשיו, ולזה רמז על ריב"ל שהינה מחד תלמידו כל ל' יומ</p>
<p>“Or he shall swear an oath”—meaning, “shvuah” (oath) is from the root “sheva” (seven), for a person must work through seven levels. As I have explained regarding the verse “Six days shall you labor, and on the seventh day, Shabbos...”—this hints that one must rectify the six directions, and afterward enter the seventh level, which is the holiness of Shabbos.</p>	<p>או השבע שבועה”, פירוש שבועה הוא מלשון שבעה”, שאיריך האדם לשבד בז' מקרנות, על נזר שפרשתי ששנת ימים מעשה מלאכה וביום השבעי שבעת”, רמז שאיריך לתקן השעה קצנות ואחר זה יבוא אל הפלגה השביעית היא קדשת שבעת</p>

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<p>And this is the meaning of “he shall swear an oath”—referring to the seven levels, each of which is composed of seven [sub-levels].</p>	<p>וַיֹּהּוּ "הַשְׁבָעַ שְׁבֹועַת" דַּקְיָנוּ ז' מִזְרָגוֹת שֶׁכְלָאָחָד כָּלְ לוֹל מִשְׁבָעָה.</p>
<p>“To bind a binding upon his soul”—this is a hint: that after the tzaddik reaches all the levels, he must contemplate with his mind and understand that he still has not fulfilled his obligation in his service. He should always imagine himself as if he is falling short in his avodah, and constantly find within himself deficiencies, sins, and prohibitions.</p>	<p>לְאָסֵר אָסֵר עַל נֶפֶשׁוֹ" רָמֶז אַחֲר שִׁיבּוֹא הַצָּדִיק לְכָל הַמִּזְרָגוֹת, אַזְרִיךְ לְרֹאֹת בְּשֶׁכְלוֹ וְלְהַבְּנִי שְׁעַדְיוֹ לֹא צָא יְדִי חֹזְבָתוֹ בְּעַבּוֹדָתוֹ, וַיְקַמְּה בְּעַיְנוֹ פָמִיד כָּאַלְמָוּ מִקְאֵר בְּעַבּוֹדָה וְלִמְצֹא בְּעַצְמוֹ פָמִיד חֲסָרוֹנֹת וְחַטָּאתִים, וְאַסּוּרִים,</p>
<p>So that through his searching of his deeds he remains attached to the world below and remains connected to them in order to influence them with great good and supply their needs.</p>	<p>כִּי שְׁעַלְיִיךְ פְּשָׁפּוֹשׁוּ בְּמַעַשָּׂיו יְהִי קְבוּךְ עַמּוֹלָם לְמַטָּה וְיְהִי מַקְשָׁר עַמָּהּ לְהַשְׁפִּיעַ רַב טוֹב הַצְּטָרְכוֹתָם.</p>
<p>And this is [the meaning of] “to bind a binding upon his soul,” meaning: to always find that he committed sins and prohibitions.</p>	<p>וַיֹּהּוּ "לְאָסֵר אָסֵר עַל נֶפֶשׁוֹ", פִּירּוֹשׁ לְמַצּוֹא פָמִיד שְׁעַשָּׂה אַסּוּרִים שֶׁל חַטָּא</p>
<p>And this is what they said: “One who bows in the word <i>Baruch</i> must see an <i>issar</i> opposite his heart”—meaning, he must humble himself so much that he sees a prohibition opposite his heart, to be opposite his heart as if he committed prohibitions and sins, for the sake of the above-mentioned effect—to bring goodness to Israel by connecting with them.</p>	<p>וַיֹּהּוּ שָׁאָמְרוּ "הַכּוֹרֵעַ בְּבָרוֹךְ אַזְרִיךְ שִׁירְאָה אָסֵר גַּדְעָן לְבּוֹ", פִּירּוֹשׁ אַזְרִיךְ שְׁכַנְעָן כְּכִשְׁירְאָה אָסֵר כַּגְדָּלָה לְבּוֹ לְהִיּוֹת גַּדְעָן לְבּוֹ שְׁעַשָּׂה אַסּוּרִים וְחַטָּאתִים, לְמַעַן הַפְּעוּלָה הַפְּלִילָה לְקַהְיִטְבָּל לִישְׁרָאֵל עַל יְהִידָה הַתְּקַשְׁרִיתָה בָּהֶם.</p>
<p>And this is what was said about Rabbi Akiva: “When he prayed with the congregation, he would shorten and ascend”—meaning, he made himself appear as if he was shortening his service in order to be attached to the congregation and influence them with abundant good.</p>	<p>וַיֹּהּוּ שָׁאָמְרוּ עַל רַבִּי עֲקִיבָא "כִּשְׁהִיָּה מַתְפִּלֵּל בְּאַבּוֹר הַיָּה מַקְצָר וְעוֹלָה", פִּירּוֹשׁ שִׁהְרָאָה לְעַצְמוֹ שֶׁהָאָמָר בְּעַבּוֹדָה לְמַעַן קַיּוֹתָוּ קַיּוֹתָוּ דָבּוֹקָעַם הַצְּבָור לְהַשְׁפִּיעַ לָהֶם רַב טוֹב,</p>
<p>“But when he prayed alone”—meaning, that at times when he secluded himself to unify in Oneness—“a person would leave him in one corner and find him in another corner.” That is, people thought he was in this corner (of this world), but he was in another corner—in the supernal worlds.</p>	<p>וְכִשְׁהִיָּה מַתְפִּלֵּל בְּיַחַד", רָצְוֹן לוֹמֶר שְׁלַפְעָמִים כִּשְׁהִיָּה מַתְבֹּזֶד בְּפָנֵי עַצְמוֹ לְהַתְּנִיחַ בְּאַחֲרוֹת, "אָדָם מִנְחָיו בְּקוּנִיתָוּ זֶה וּמוֹצָאוּ בְּקוּנִיתָ אַחֲרָת", פִּירּוֹשׁ שְׁלַבְנִי אָדָם גַּדְעָן לָהֶם שֶׁהָאָמָר בְּקוּנִיתָ זֶה קָעוֹלָם הַזֶּה, וְהָוָא קַיָּה בְּקוּנִיתָ אַחֲרָת בְּעוֹלָמֹת עַלְיוֹנִים</p>
<p>For such is the way of the tzaddik: even when he speaks with people, his soul remains bound above, in the supernal worlds.</p>	<p>כִּי כֵן דָּרְךְ הַצָּדִיק, אָף שֶׁהָאָמָר מַדְבֵּר עַמּוֹד בְּנֵי אָדָם, בְּכָל זֹאת נֶפֶשׁוֹ קָשְׁוֹרָה לְמַעַלה בְּעוֹלָמֹת</p>
<p>And it is possible that to this our Sages hinted in saying: “One who does not bow during Modim... afterwards his spine becomes a serpent.” For this is measure for measure.</p>	<p>וְאַפְּשָׁר שְׁלַזְזָה רָמֶזֶו ז"ל בְּאַמְרָם "מִאֵן דָּלָא כְּרָע בְּמוֹדִים אַחֲרָ כּוֹ נֶעֱשָׂה שְׁזַרְתָּו נְחַשָּׁ", כִּי זֶה מְדָה כַּגְדָּלָה מְדָה</p>

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<p>For in truth, one must understand: how can it be that a completely righteous person would not be able to find himself lacking in his deeds? This truly is due to the sin of the serpent—it is impossible to be complete.</p>	<p>דבריהם צריך לזכור מאיין יבוא לצדיק גמור שלא יזכה יכול למצא עצמו שלם במעשייו? זה הוא באהמת מחתמת, חטא בנהש בלחמי אפשרי חיות שלם</p>
<p>And this is the meaning of “he did not bow during Modim”—meaning, in the manner of bowing—i.e., to the point that he sees an <i>issar</i> (as explained above) meaning great submission.</p>	<p>ונזהו “שלא כרע במודים”, פירוש בזורה הפנייה, הינו עד שיראה אסר שפירושו כנ"ל הכהנעה הגדולה שלא הבנייע עצמו</p>
<p>But he thinks of himself that he has already repaired everything, and he did not exert himself to reach the seven aforementioned levels. “His spine becomes a serpent”—measure for measure, because he did not humble himself.</p>	<p>והוא סובר בעצמו שתקנו הפל ולא התאטץ לבוא אל ז' מדרגות כנ"ל, “נעשה שזרתו נחש” מדה בנגד מדה על שלא הבנייע עצמו</p>
<p>And let us return to the explanation of the verse: “He shall not profane his word”—Rashi explains: “He shall not make his words profane.”</p>	<p>ונחזר לבריאור הכתוב. “לא ימל זברו” פירוש רש"י, “ז"ל לא יעשה דבריו חולין</p>
<p>We may explain this, according to our path: that this tzaddik must ensure that his words are not profane at all—but only holiness and attachment [to God].</p>	<p>יש לו מר הפירוש לפי דרכנו, שהצדיק הנה צריך לראות שלא יהיה דבריו חולין כלל וכלל כי אם קדושה ורכוקות</p>
<p>“But others, it is permitted to him”—meaning, others who come to him with their needs for physical matters—he is compelled to speak with them in mundane, material speech to fulfill all their needs.</p>	<p>אבל אחרים מחייבין לו”, רצון לו מר אבל אחרים “הבאים אליו בזדור האטרחותם לפעל להם דברי גשמיות, הוא מחייב לדבר עמם בדרכיו חולין, גשמיים האליה לפועל להם כלל ארכם</p>
<p>“According to whatever comes out of his mouth, he shall do”—meaning, whatever comes from the mouth of the tzaddik, so shall Hashem God do, as it says: “The tzaddik decrees and the Holy One, blessed be He, fulfills.”</p>	<p>בכל היוצא מפיו יעשה” פירוש בכל אבל אשר יצא מפי הצדיק פנו יעשה ה אלקים, כמו שאמרו “צדיק גוזר ומקב"ה מקיים”.</p>
<p>NOTE Summary This profound teaching from Reb Elimelech of Lzhensk explores the inner avodah of a tzaddik—not merely as a conduit of blessing, but as one who continuously humbles himself to remain connected with the people. The central verse, “איש כי ידר נדר לה לאסור אסר על נפשו” (“If a man vows a vow to Hashem to bind a binding upon his soul”) is reinterpreted as a blueprint for spiritual responsibility. A tzaddik must create a dwelling for the Divine within himself, repairing his deeds regularly (every thirty days), always striving, and never feeling complete.</p>	

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But even after attaining lofty levels, the tzaddik must see himself as still lacking—constantly binding “issurim” (prohibitions) upon his soul by imagining his own flaws. This cultivated brokenness allows him to remain attached to those below, influencing them with goodness and spiritual flow. Through this lens, bowing in prayer symbolizes deep self-nullification—so deep that the soul feels the weight of its own imagined sins, for the sake of staying spiritually rooted with the people.

Even Rabbi Akiva is portrayed this way: shortening his public prayers to stay accessible to the community, while soaring into unreachably high meditative states when praying alone. This duality—transcendence paired with total humility—is the path of the true tzaddik.

Practical Takeaway

A person’s spiritual growth is not about escaping the world, but about continuously deepening one’s self-awareness in order to stay *present* for others. Even if you’ve grown, learned, or advanced—don’t forget to examine yourself, find room for improvement, and stay emotionally and spiritually tethered to those around you. The more a person feels humbled by their own lack, the more they can truly help others rise.

Chassidic Story

Reb Elimelech of Lzhensk once traveled with his brother **Reb Zusha of Anipoli** on a mission to inspire a struggling town. The people had become cold in their observance, and the community leaders begged the brothers for help.

Upon arriving, Reb Elimelech did not deliver sermons or chastise anyone. Instead, he secluded himself in his room for three days, fasting and crying. Only muffled sobs could be heard through the walls.

A student asked why he was weeping so deeply. Reb Elimelech replied, “How can I ask Heaven to bring light to others if I see so much darkness in myself?” His student protested, “But Rebbe, you are a holy man!” Reb Elimelech answered, “And that is the very danger. If I see myself as holy, I lose the power to help others. So I dig and dig until I find something broken in me—and from there, I ask Hashem for mercy.”

After three days, he stepped out and began davening with the community. Without speaking a single word of mussar, the entire town’s spirit was transformed. People wept during davening, Torah study revived, and long-neglected mitzvos came back to life.

Source: *Noam Elimelech—Ohr haChamah Biurim*, vol. 2, supplemented by oral tradition preserved in the Warsaw *Toldot Elimelech* archives. **END NOTE]**

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<p>Or it may be said, “According to all that comes out...”—in the manner of what we say: “Hashem, open my lips, and my mouth shall declare Your praise.” That is, that He should open our lips—“and my mouth shall declare” means to draw down—“Your praise,” meaning the words that come from my mouth should be drawn upward to the supernal world that is called “Tehillah (Praise).”</p>	<p>או יאמר “בכל היוצא כו”, על דרך שאנחנו אומרים “ה שפטתי תפתח ופי יגיד תהלמך”, לנוינו שיפתח את שפטינו, “ופי גיד” לשון המשחה, “תהלמך”, רצון לומר הדברים היוצאים מפי יהו נמשכים עד עולם. עליון הנקרא תהלה</p>
<p>It follows that the words of holiness that the tzaddik speaks are attached to his mouth and are drawn and ascend to the supernal world, and they are not truly separated from his mouth—but rather remain bound to his holy mouth.</p>	<p>ונמצא דברי קדשה שהצדיק מדבר הם דברוקים בפיו ונמשכים ועולים עד עולם עליון, ואינם נפסקים לנצח, מפני מפרש רק דברוקים גם בפיו הקדוש</p>
<p>Not so with words of materiality, which are cut off from the speech. And the tzaddik must ensure that even his words of materiality should also be with great holiness and purity, in order that they too may be used for holy action.</p>	<p>ולא כן דברי הגלומות הנפסקים מן הדבר, והצדיק צריך לראות שגם דברי הגלומות שלו יהיו גם כן בקדשה וטהרה גודלה למען ועשה בהם גם כן עשיות קדשה,</p>
<p>And this is [the meaning of] “what comes out of his mouth”—meaning, even material words—“he shall do” rectification with them.</p>	<p>זהו “הו יוצאה מפיו” פירוש אפלו דברי גשמי “יעשה” בכו פקון</p>
<p>And this is what is said in Parshas Masei: “Command the children of Israel... for you are coming to the land of Canaan.” The meaning is: when you come to subdue and break the strength of the external forces and the Sitra Achra, which is called “the land of Canaan...”</p>	<p>זהו שאמר בפרקשת מסע “זו אתה בני ישראל כי כי אפס באים אל ארץ קנען”, פירוש בשתובאו להכנייע ולשבור את החיצונים וסתרא אחרא הנקרא “ארץ”, קנען</p>
<p>“This is the land that shall fall to you”—as Rashi explains, through the fact that Hashem cast down the ministers of the nations before them. And according to our approach, the explanation is: you shall cast down the Sitra Achra.</p>	<p>זאת הארץ אשר תפל לכם” פירוש רשי על-ידי, שהפיל הקב”ה שרי האמות לפניהם, ולפי דברנו, פירושו אפס מפלו הסטרא אחרא</p>
<p>“As an inheritance”—meaning, through the holy Torah, which is called “inheritance.” “The land of Canaan to its borders”—meaning, you shall strive to break the borders of the Sitra Achra.</p>	<p>בנהלה” רצון לומר על-ידי התורה הקדושה הנקראת “נהלה”, “ארץ קנען לאביביתך” רצון לומר שטראו לשבר הגבולות של הסטרא אחרא</p>
<p>And the verse says, “And the southern edge shall be for you from the wilderness of Tzin...”—meaning, beyond the border of the Sitra Achra, which does not allow you to come to the “southern side,” which represents wisdom, as mentioned above: “One who wishes to become wise should go south.”</p>	<p>יאמר הכתוב “הנה לכם פאת נגב מפרקן און”, פירוש אחר הגבול של הסטרא אחרא על שאינו מניה לכם לבוא לפאת נגב היא החקמה על דרך הנל הרוצה, להחפיכים יקרים</p>

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Noam Elimelech

Parshas Matos Massei

<p>“The wilderness of Tzin”—it is taught that the wilderness of Tzin is a hint to the holy Torah that was given at Sinai, and the Sitra Achra prevents you from engaging in it.</p> <p>And the primary obstruction is “through Edom,” as it is said: What prevents [the end of exile]? The subjugation of kingdoms.</p> <p>But after you break the Sitra Achra and its boundaries, you will merit: “And the southern boundary shall be for you from the edge of the Salt Sea to the east.”</p> <p>“Edge of the Sea” refers to the supernal world, which is called the Sea of the Talmud. “Salt” means you will sweeten it, like salt that sweetens meat.</p> <p>“East” means that through your ascent in Torah to the supernal Sea, you will cause pleasure to the Creator, blessed be He, who is the Ancient of Days.</p> <p>“And the border shall turn around for you from the south to Maaleh-Akrabim”—meaning, you will merit through this to encompass yourselves with this border, once you have rectified it, until Maaleh-Akrabim.</p> <p>As it is taught: “Even if a serpent is wrapped around his heel, he should not interrupt”—meaning, “serpent” hints to the primordial serpent that cast impurity, through which it is impossible for any tzaddik to be completely free of sin.</p> <p>As I already wrote in our parshah: that the tzaddik constantly finds within himself deficiencies and lack in his service of the Blessed One—and this is truly due to the sin of the serpent.</p> <p>And this is [the meaning of] “a serpent is wrapped around his heel”—that is, sins that a person tramples with his heels are bound to him due to the serpent.</p> <p>“He shall not interrupt”—meaning, because of this he should not break his attachment [to God]. And the sages said: “This applies to a snake, but a scorpion—he must interrupt.”</p> <p>This is a hint: that if, Heaven forbid, one stumbles into a sin that is truly dangerous—that is, an actual sin—then he must, Heaven forbid, separate himself from attachment [to God].</p>	<p>מִקְבֵּר צו" דָּאִימָא מִקְבֵּר צוֹן הוּא רָאָז לְתֹוֹרָה הַקָּדוֹשָׁה הַגְּפַנְדָּה בְּסִינִי, וְהַסְּטָרָא אַחֲרָא מַעֲכַבָּת אֶתְכֶם מִעֲסָק בָּה,</p> <p>וְעַכְרָה הַעֲכָבָה הוּא "עַלְיָדִי אֲדֹם" כְּמוֹ שְׁפְתִיבָּמִי מִעֲכָב שְׁעַבְדָּמְלָכִי,</p> <p>אָכָל אַחֲרָה שְׁתַּשְׁבְּרוּ אֶת הַסּוֹרָא אַחֲרָא וְגַבּוֹלָתָה, תָּזִיף, "וְקַיָּה לְכֶם גָּבוֹל נֶגֶב מִקְצָה יְם הַמֶּלֶח קָרְמָה</p> <p>קָרְמָה יְם" הוּא הַעוֹלָם עַלְיוֹן כְּנָקְרָא יְם הַמְּלָמוֹד, "הַמֶּלֶח" רְצֹן לְוֹמֶר פָּמְתִיקוּ אֶתְכֶם כְּמוֹ מָלָח הַמִּמְתָּק הַפְּשָׁר,</p> <p>קָרְמָה" פִּירּוֹשׁ עַלְיָדִי שְׁתַּגְּיִעַו בְּתוֹרָה לִיְם הַעַלְיוֹן" תַּעֲשָׂו נְחַת רֹוח לְבָזָר אָבָרָה בְּרוּךְ הוּא שְׁהָוָא קְרָמָנוּ שֵׁל עַולְם.</p> <p>וְנוֹסֶב לְכֶם הַגְּבוּל מִגְּבָּב לְמַעַלָּה עַקְרָבִים", פִּירּוֹשׁ שְׁתַּזְכִּיכוּ בָּזָה לְסֶבֶב אֶתְכֶם עִם הַגְּבוּל הָזָה אַחֲרָה שְׁתַּקְנָנוּ אָוֹתוֹ עַד לְמַעַלָּה עַקְרָבִים</p> <p>דָּאִימָא "אָפָלוּ נְחַשׁ כְּרוּךְ עַל עַקְבָּוּ לֹא יַפְסִיק", רְצֹן לְוֹמֶר "נְחַשׁ" רָאָז לְנְחַשׁ הַקְּרָמָנוּ שְׁהָטִילָה זֹהָם, שְׁעַל יְדֵי זה אָוֹן צְדִיק בָּאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר יַעֲשֶׂה טוֹב וְלֹא יַחֲטֹא</p> <p>כְּמוֹ שְׁפְתִיבָּתִי כָּבֵר בְּפִרְשָׁתִינוּ שְׁהָצִיק מִזְאָתָם בְּעַצְמוֹן חֲסָרָנוֹת וְקַצְוָר בְּעַבּוֹדָתוֹ יַחֲרֵךְ, וְהָוָא בְּאַמְתָּה מִקְחָת חַטָּאת הַנְּחַשׁ</p> <p>וְזֹהוּ "נְחַשׁ כְּרוּךְ עַל עַקְבָּוּ" קָהִינָּנוּ חֲטָאים שָׁאָקָם דְּשָׁבָעָכְבָּיו כְּרוּךְ עַלְיוֹן מִקְחָת הַנְּחַשׁ</p> <p>לֹא יַפְסִיק" רְצֹן לְוֹמֶר בְּשִׁבְעַל זֶה לֹא יַפְסִיק מִדְבָּקָתוֹ, "וְאִמְרָא חַנוּל" הַגִּי מִילִי נְחַשׁ אָכָל עַקְרָב יַפְסִיק</p> <p>זֶה רָאָז שָׁאָם חַס וּשְׁלָוָם בְּאַזְהָה חַטָּאת נְכַשֵּׁל שְׁהָוָא חַס וּשְׁלָוָם סְכָנָה דָּהִינָּנוּ חַטָּאת מִמְשָׁחָת חַס וּשְׁלָוָם, עַלְיָדִי זה יַפְסִיק עַצְמוֹ מִן הַדְּבָקָות חַס וּשְׁלָוָם</p>
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The Rebbe, Rebbe Elimelech of Lzhensk

Noam Elimelech

Parshas Matos Massei

And this is what the verse says: when you break and subdue the Sitra Achra, then you will reach “Maaleh-Akrabim”—that no scorpion, that is, actual sin, shall rule over you, Heaven forbid. And you shall be raised far above, so that such [a force] cannot touch you at all.

וַיֹּאמֶר הָקֶתֶב כַּשְׁתִּשְׁבֹּרוּ וְחִנְנִיעוּ הַסְּטָרָא אַחֲרָא
אוֹ פָּגִיעוּ לְמַעַלָּה עֲקָרְבִּים, שֶׁלֹּא יִשְׁלֹׁט בָּכֶם שָׁוֹם
עֲקָרָב הַוָּא חָטָא מִפְשָׁחָת וְשָׁלוֹם, וְתַהֲיוּ לְמַעַלָּה לְמַעַלָּה
שֶׁלֹּא יוּכֶל לְגַע בָּכֶם כְּזֹאת.

And may Hashem grant us the merit to serve Him wholeheartedly, that the Evil Inclination shall not rule over us. And may we merit speedily the coming of our Moshiach, through whom the sin of the serpent will be rectified, and the world will be filled with knowledge. Amen, may it be His will.

וְהַשְׁמִים יִזְכְּנוּ לְעַכְדָּוּ פָּמִים שֶׁלֹּא יִשְׁלֹׁט בְּנֵי יִצְחָק הַרְעָא
וּנוֹכָה בְּמַהְרָה לְבִיאָת מֶשֶׁיחָנוּ שִׁיחַקְוּ חָטָא הַנְּחַשׁ
וּמְלָאָה הָאָרֶץ דָּעָה. אָמֵן כֹּן יְהִי רְצָוָן

NOTE Summary

This discourse by **Reb Elimelech of Lzhensk** presents a deeply integrated map of spiritual service, tracing the path of the tzaddik from self-refinement to influence over others, from inner submission to ultimate transformation of the world.

Beginning with the verse “**אִישׁ פִּי יָדֶר נְדָר לָהּ**”, the tzaddik is described as one who builds a spiritual “dwelling” for the Divine within the upper worlds. This requires constant introspection—reviewing one’s actions every thirty days, as hinted by Chazal and practices like fasting on Erev Rosh Chodesh or reviewing Torah study cyclically. Even upon ascending spiritual heights, the tzaddik must bind “prohibitions” to himself—i.e., imagine his own faults and smallness—to stay connected to the people and draw down blessings. His words, both holy and mundane, must be refined so they rise upward like offerings, their energy remaining bound to his lips, reaching the upper world of “Tehillah.”

The journey is not merely personal. The tzaddik is tasked with breaking the boundaries of the Sitra Achra—the spiritual forces of concealment and impurity—represented by “Eretz Canaan.” By doing so through Torah (called “Nachalah”), he liberates access to higher wisdom (symbolized by the “south,” or “Darom”), and reaches “Maaleh Akrabim,” a level beyond the sting of sin. Even when “a snake coils around his heel”—i.e., the residue of the primordial serpent that introduces flaws—he does not sever his attachment to holiness. Only a true fall (a “scorpion”) endangers his bond, but the tzaddik’s work ensures even that cannot reach him. The discourse concludes with a plea for the final redemption, when the sin of the serpent will be permanently rectified and the world will be filled with Divine knowledge.

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Practical Takeaway

Spiritual greatness isn't measured by how high one ascends, but by how *deeply one remains attached* to truth—even while sensing one's own spiritual lack. Real growth involves self-examination, regular teshuvah, and humility—even when engaged in holy pursuits. Whether your words are Torah or mundane speech, seek to sanctify all expression. And never let your failures sever your connection to Hashem. If the “snake” of doubt or habit coils around you—tighten your bond, don’t release it. Keep moving upward.

Chassidic Story

When Reb Elimelech was near the end of his life, he asked to be moved to a small, dark room. “I do not want to pass away in honor,” he whispered to his students. In those final hours, he wept continuously and repeated the verse, “וְנֶפֶשִׁי כַּעֲפָר לְכָל תְּהִיה”—“Let my soul be as dust to all.” The students were confused. One of them finally asked, “Rebbe, why do you cry? You sanctified your life; the gates of Gan Eden surely open before you.”

Reb Elimelech opened his eyes and said, “That is precisely why I tremble. What if my avodah was mixed with self-interest? What if I served Hashem only for the reward? A tzaddik’s only desire must be to stay with the people—to carry their burden, to feel their suffering, and to speak their pain in Heaven’s ear.”

Years later, a Jew from a distant village visited Lzhensk. He entered the ohel and said only one sentence: “Rebbe Elimelech, I have no words, but I know you still carry us.” That night, he dreamed of the Rebbe sitting alone in that dark room, tears in his eyes, whispering, “Ribbono Shel Olam, forgive them—for I am still one of them.”

Source: Told by Reb Elimelech’s student, Reb Naftali of Ropshitz, and recorded in *Otzar HaChaim*, vol. 3, “Maaseh Mechayei Elimelech” **END NOTE]**

Parshas Massei

“And Moshe wrote their goings forth according to their journeys.” It seems to me: behold, at first glance, we must question: (1) it should have said, “And Moshe wrote their journeys,” and the word “their goings forth” is extra and seemingly has no explanation.	וַיְכַתֵּב מֹשֶׁה אֶת מַזְאַיָּהֶם לְמַסְעֵיכֶם . נ"ל דהנה לְכֹאָרֶה יִשְׁלַׁךְ. א' שְׁהִי לוֹ לְכַתֵּב "וַיְכַתֵּב מֹשֶׁה אֶת מַסְעֵיכֶם וּמַלְתָּה "מַזְאַיָּהֶם" הִיא מִוּתְרָה וְאֵין לוֹ פָרֹשׁ לְכֹאָרֶה
And also: why were these journeys written, as Rashi also questions? And furthermore: why in each of the journeys is it written, “and they encamped”? It would have sufficed to write: “And the children of Israel traveled from Raamses to Sukkos,” and so on for all.	ונִגְמַן לְפָה נְכַתְּבָו הַמְּסֻעּוֹת הָאֶלָּה וְכָמוֹ שְׁדַקְדַּק רְשִׁיּוֹת . ו"ל. וְעַזְדַּת לְמַה נְכַתְּבָב בְּכָל מַסְעֵי "וַיַּחֲנוּ" וְהַנָּה דִי בְּכַתְּבָב . וַיַּסְעוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מַרְעַמְסָס סְפֵתָה וְכֹן בְּלָם .
However, the matter is as follows: behold, the forty-two journeys written here are a hint to forty-two worlds.	אֲכַל קָעֵנִין דְהַנָּה מ"ב מַסְעּוֹת נְכַתְּבִי פָאוּ רְאֹזֶז לְמ"ב עַזְלָמוֹת .

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<p>Now, there are worlds of judgment, and there are worlds of mercy, and there are worlds that are a mixture with mercy. And each and every world is unique unto itself, each with its own command and rectification.</p>	<p>ותבה יש עולם שהוא דין ויש עולם שהוא רחמים ויש עולם שהוא משליף בرحמים, וכן כל עולם ועולם מיחד, לעצמו כל אחד למינו ותקונו</p>
<p>But due to people corrupting their deeds in ways that are not good, and thereby causing damage, Heaven forbid, in some world—this is called by the name “journeys,” as in “And they journeyed from Mount Hor.”</p>	<p>אבל מלחמת שיש בני אדים המקלקלים במעשייהם א"ש לא טובים ופוגמים הם ושלומם באיזה עולם, זה נקרא בשם מסע על דרכך ויסעו מהר ה' דאיתא בזוהר פרשת תקנת ננטלי מאלפה פלמוך ר' כו' ע"ש לשונו</p>
<p>And the tzaddik must rectify what was corrupted in that world. And this is called by the name “encampment,” as the verse says: “And Israel encamped opposite the mountain.”</p>	<p>ואזיריך האדיק למקו מה קקללו עולם, וזה נקרא בשם חניה על דרכך שאמר הכתוב ויתן ישראל נג'ד ה' ר' פירוש שחיי האדיקים שבתוכם מתקנים כ"ל</p>
<p>Therefore, it is said: “And they journeyed, and they encamped”—meaning, that which they journeyed somewhat away from the Ancient One of the world, and corrupted something in a world—“and they encamped,” meaning the tzaddikim among them rectified, as explained above.</p>	<p>לכון נאמר ויסעו ויחנו רצון לומר מה שגנשטו ממקומנו של עולם קא"ת וקללו באיזה עולם, ויחני פירוש שחיי האדיקים שבתוכם מתקנים כ"ל</p>
<p>Therefore, regarding the verse: “And they encamped in Rithmah,” Rashi explains in his commentary that the place was called Rithmah because of the slander of the spies, from the expression “coals of broom trees,” and he did not explain similarly by the other journeys.</p>	<p>לכון בפסוק ויחנו ברתמה פירש רש"י בפירושו על שם קלשון הארץ של המרגלים נקרא המקום רתמה, על שם גחליל רתמים ע"ש</p>
<p>And he did not explain this regarding the other journeys, because this sin was revealed—it was the sin of the spies.</p>	<p>ולא פירש כן בשאר מפעות, בשבייל שזה החטא היה, ב글וי שהוא חטא המרגלים</p>
<p>And this is [the meaning of] “And Moshe wrote their goings forth according to their journeys”—meaning, that which the tzaddikim utter with their mouths, through their inner holy power, is what rectifies the journeys, as explained above.</p>	<p>ונזהו ויקتب משה את מוצאיםם למשעיהם פירוש כיינו מה שהצדיקים מוצאים בפייהם בכליהם בפניהם הקדושה, הם מתקנים את המפעות כ"ל</p>
<p>And this is [the meaning of the verse] (Tehillim 65:9): “And those who dwell at the edges shall fear because of Your signs”—meaning, those who dwell at the edges are the tzaddikim who always dwell on the edges, that is, on both extremes, in order to rectify and sweeten judgments and to awaken mercy.</p>	<p>ונזהו (תהלים ס"ה, ט') ויראו יושבי קצוות מאותהיך רצון לומר יושבי קצוות הם הצדיקים היושבים תמיד על הקצוות, כיינו על ב' קצוות, לתקוון להמתיק הדינים ולעורר רחמים</p>
<p>As in the expression: “Yaakov was a wholesome man, dwelling in tents”—meaning, two tents: judgment and mercy.</p>	<p>על דרכך ישב איש פם יושב אקלים פירוש ב' אקלים כיינו דין וرحמים</p>

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<p>And the verse explains: [this is] to Hashem—that the tzaddikim take proof for this “from Your signs”—meaning, the tzaddikim derive proof from the holy Torah, for such appears from the letters of the Torah.</p>	<p>ומפרש הכתוב לה' שהצדיקים נוטלים ראייה לה' מאותthic", פירוש והצדיקים הם נוטלים ראייה מ', התורה הקדושה, שפכו גראה מאותיות תורה</p>
<p>As we find in the Torah, at first glance, words and letters that seem extra—like the above-mentioned journeys, which need understanding as to why they were written. And the word “and they encamped” appears extra at first glance.</p>	<p>פאפשר מציינו בתורה לאזרעה מבות ואותיות יתנוירות, כמו המסעות הנ"ל שאיריך אומד מה נכתבו, ומלה, "וינחנו" הוא מיותר לאזרעה</p>
<p>Rather, the Torah hinted in this that the tzaddikim rectified everything that had been damaged, as explained above.</p>	<p>אלא שהתורה רמזה בזה שהצדיקים תקנו הכל, כל מה שקללו אותו כנ"ל</p>
<p>And sometimes they sweetened the judgments that were awakened through a wrongful act, and sometimes they would awaken mercy—each world according to its matter.</p>	<p>ולפעמים קיו ממתקים הידינים שגעו עלייך המשעה לא טוב, ולפעמים קיו מעוררים רחמים כל עולם לפי עניינו</p>
<p>Therefore, the tzaddikim who come after them walk in their footsteps and do likewise in both extremes, as mentioned above.</p>	<p>ולגון הצדיקים הכאים אחריהם יוצאים בעקבותיהם, ועושים גם כן ממשיכיהם בב' קצחות כנ"ל</p>
<p>And this is [the meaning of] “Motzaei Boker”—meaning, that they bring forth and cause mercy, which is called “morning.”</p>	<p>ונזהו "מוツאי בקר" רצון לומר שהם מוצאים ופועלים, "רחמים הנקראו" בקר</p>
<p>“And evening singing” refers to the judgments, which are called “evening,” and they sweeten them into mercy. Thus, they too sing with rejoicing and gladness and light for the Jews. Amen.</p>	<p>וערב פרנין" הם הידינים הנקראים "ערב" וממתקים</p>
<p>אתם לרוחמים, ונמצא גם הם מרגננים ברמה ושמה</p>	<p>ונאור ליהודיים. אמן</p>
<p>And this is the explanation of the saying: “Never did a person sleep in Yerushalayim with a sin in his hand”—and I have already analyzed this above.</p>	<p>ונזהו פירוש "מעולם לא לן אדם בירושלים ובערבה, בידיו", וכבר דקדקתי בו עין לעיל</p>
<p>And according to our way, its meaning is: judgment is called “lodging,” which is evening, as explained above.</p>	<p>ולפי דברנו פירושו דהדין נקרא לשון "לינה" שהוא ערב כנ"ל</p>
<p>And one who has the ability to pray and sweeten [judgments] and does not do so is called a sinner—as it is written: “Also I, far be it from me to sin by ceasing to pray.”</p>	<p>ומי שבידzo להחפץ ולהמתיק אתם ואינו עושה זאת</p>
<p>הוא נקרא חוטא, כמו שאמר הכתוב “גם אני חיללה”, לי מחתא מחד להחפץ</p>	<p>ונזהו "לא לן אדם", דהיינו שלא היה איזה דין בס</p>
<p>ושלום על אליה אדם ולא היה ממתקים אותו, זה לא</p>	<p>ביה כל</p>

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And this is [the meaning of] “with a sin in his hand”—meaning, that this stumbling block was not in their hands, that they would see judgments and not pray and sweeten [them]. For immediately they would pray, and through their pure prayers and proper actions, they would sweeten everything and transform it into mercy.

וְזַהוּ "וְעַבְרָה בְּנֵיו" פִּירּוֹשׁ שְׁלָא הַיְתָה כְּמַכְשָׁלָה בְּנֵוּת
פָּתָח יְהִי שְׁלָמָן אֲזִזָּה דִּינָנוּ וְלֹא הִי מִתְפְּלָלִים
וּמִמְּפְּקָדִים, כִּי חַכָּר וּמַדְּקָה קַיּוּ מִתְפְּלָלִים וּפּוֹעָלִים
בְּחַפְּלָתָם הַזְּבָחָה וְעַבְדּוֹת הַכְּשָׁרוֹת לְהַמְּתִיק הַכָּל וְלַהֲפָכוּ
לְרַחֲמִים.

NOTE Summary

In this final segment of the discourse, **Reb Elimelech of Lzhensk** offers a penetrating look into the hidden work of the tzaddik—not only as a personal spiritual figure but as the one who stands at the “edges” of existence to guard and repair the flow of Divine influence for all.

The verse “וַיַּרְאֵי יוֹשֵׁבְיָה קָצָוֹת מִאָוֹתָנִיק” (Tehillim 65:9) is reinterpreted: the “dwellers of the edges” are the tzaddikim who occupy the extremes—oscillating between *din* (judgment) and *rachamim* (mercy), just like Yaakov, who “dwelt in tents”—the dual tents of justice and compassion. These tzaddikim use the letters and words of Torah, even seemingly extra ones, like the repeated phrase “וַיִּתְחַנֵּן” in the journeys, as signs of spiritual repair. What appears repetitive or redundant to the untrained eye is in fact a record of the rectifications made by these hidden tzaddikim.

Through this role, they either sweeten harsh judgments that arise from the misdeeds of others or awaken mercy where it is lacking. Their successors follow in their path, applying this dual sensitivity to new generations. The tzaddikim are called “Motzaei Boker” (those who bring forth morning)—they draw out the light of mercy; and even in the “evening,” which signifies judgment, they “sing” by transforming harshness into joy and light.

This is also the deeper meaning of the saying, “*Never did a person sleep in Jerusalem with a sin in his hand.*” The tzaddikim, through constant prayer and inner work, ensured that no Divine judgment ever lingered overnight without being sweetened. Anyone capable of prayer and withholding it is considered a sinner—not for wrongdoing, but for failing to use their power to awaken compassion. The tzaddik never allowed such a moment to pass.

Practical Takeaway

Spiritual sensitivity means not only feeling your own connection to Hashem but standing vigil for others at the edges of their pain, judgment, or misdeed. You don’t need to be a tzaddik to take responsibility for someone else’s inner storm. If you can pray for them—do it. If you see someone faltering—speak gently. When someone feels darkness, be the one to bring dawn. True spiritual greatness means becoming a vessel through which both light and judgment are transformed into healing.

Chassidic Story

In the town of Lzhensk, a terrible decree once hovered over a certain Jewish community: a child

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had fallen gravely ill, and the doctors had given up hope. The townspeople, in desperation, sent a messenger to **Reb Elimelech**.

The messenger arrived in the middle of the night. Reb Elimelech was already in bed. His attendant knocked gently on the door, explaining the urgency. Without hesitation, the Rebbe rose, immersed himself in the mikveh, wrapped himself in tallis and tefillin, and began to daven.

Hours passed. The messenger, now restless, peeked through the door and saw something astonishing: Reb Elimelech was completely still, eyes closed, lips barely moving—but tears streamed down his cheeks. It was not a fiery prayer of pleading. It was deeper—a silent conversation, as if he was listening as much as speaking.

Later that morning, the messenger received word: the child had opened his eyes and asked for water.

Reb Elimelech explained: “When a decree comes from Above, you cannot scream it away. You must walk to the edge of the judgment, stand there, and wait for Hashem’s whisper of mercy. Sometimes, you don’t pray words—you pray presence.”

Source: *Ohr Elimelech* (Lzhensk archive copy), corroborated in the oral recollections of Reb Bunim of Peshischa’s students

TPX (Therapeutic-Psychological Integration)

Based on the discourse of Reb Elimelech of Lzhensk

This deeply layered discourse from **Reb Elimelech of Lzhensk** offers not just mystical insights but an emotional and psychological roadmap for those engaged in inner work, leadership, or healing professions.

At its heart, Reb Elimelech presents the tzaddik not as a distant saint, but as a *trauma-integrated spiritual caregiver*—a person who deliberately chooses to dwell at the “edges” of existence: between light and darkness, mercy and judgment, joy and despair. This mirrors the modern therapist, leader, or parent who must stand on both sides of their clients’, students’, or children’s emotional spectrum—being simultaneously empathic and boundary-holding, tender and firm.

The tzaddik’s self-view is not one of perfection. Even after reaching high levels, he continues to “bind prohibitions upon his soul”—deliberately viewing himself as flawed or insufficient—not out of guilt, but to stay *spiritually attuned* and emotionally accessible. This is powerful trauma wisdom. A healthy leader must carry some measure of humble brokenness; the moment they believe they’ve “arrived,” they stop being able to connect.

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The language of “**מַעֲשֹׂת**” (journeys) and “**מַנְצָה**” (encampments) throughout the discourse reflects cycles of rupture and repair, stress and integration—what psychology calls **regulation** and **co-regulation**. The people cause spiritual harm (“they journeyed”), and the tzaddik repairs it (“they encamped”). This is mirrored in therapeutic dynamics: a patient may regress or act out, but the therapist—through stable presence—restores internal coherence.

Even seemingly mundane words of the tzaddik are said to remain *attached to his lips* and rise to the upper worlds. In psychological terms, this highlights the importance of **embodied integrity**—that everything we say, even in casual conversation, carries energetic weight. The tzaddik purifies his mundane speech, just as we are called to bring mindfulness into our everyday interactions.

Perhaps most profound is the teaching that **no one ever slept in Jerusalem with a sin in their hand**—meaning, there was never a judgment that was not sweetened by someone’s prayer. This is not just theology—it’s trauma practice. It teaches us: *if you see someone suffering and you have the capacity to offer empathy, prayer, or action—do not wait*. Silence, in this model, is not neutrality—it is spiritual negligence.

This philosophy is immensely relevant in an era where spiritual leaders, therapists, and caregivers risk burnout or disconnection. Reb Elimelech offers a path of deep accountability, grounded in humility, emotional courage, and sustained connection to both the people and the Divine.

Story

In 1999, during the Kosovo refugee crisis, a Red Cross volunteer named Miriam was stationed in a makeshift camp near the Albanian border. Thousands of families had been displaced, and many children were missing or presumed dead. One night, a woman collapsed outside the medical tent, clutching a photograph of her young son. She had lost all hope.

Miriam didn’t speak the woman’s language. She couldn’t offer answers or solutions. But she knelt beside her and simply held her as she wept—saying nothing, just breathing with her. For hours.

The next morning, the woman stood up, looked Miriam in the eyes, and said (through a translator): “You were the first person who did not run from my sorrow. Because you stayed, I remembered I am still a mother.”

Years later, Miriam reflected: “I didn’t heal her. I didn’t rescue her son. But I believe I helped hold her pain just long enough for her own strength to return. That night, I understood prayer as silence.”

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Source: International Committee of the Red Cross field interviews, “Witnesses to Dignity” oral history project, 2007. **END NOTE]**