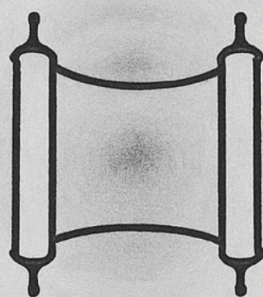


בס"ד

**Menachem Nachum  
of Chernobyl  
Me'or Einayim  
Parshas Ki Teitzei**



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# Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl

## Me'or Einayim Parshas Ki Teitzei

### Introduction

Rabbi Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl, known as the *Me'or Einayim*, was a leading disciple of the Baal Shem Tov and the Maggid of Mezritch, and the first Rebbe of the Chernobyl dynasty. Living in 18th-century Ukraine, he was renowned for revealing the Divine spark within all aspects of life. In this teaching on the verse “*When you build a new house, you shall make a guardrail for your roof*” (Deuteronomy 22:8), the Rebbe interprets the building of a physical home as a metaphor for constructing one’s inner spiritual home. He connects the commandment to make a protective railing on the roof with the higher work of guarding one’s thoughts, rising above the influence of judgment, and attaching the mind to the Divine.

**When you build a new house, you shall make a guardrail for your roof (Deuteronomy 22:8), etc. Behold, it is stated in the Gemara (Gittin 7a), “He sent to Mar Ukva: ‘People who rise up, etc.’ He drew lines and wrote to him: ‘Be silent for Hashem and wait patiently for Him, and He will cast them down slain,’ etc.”**

כִּי תִבְנֶה בַּיִת חֲדָשׁ וְעָשִׂיתָ מִצְעָה לְגִנְיָךְ גו'. הִנֵּה אֵימָא בְּגִמְרָא דְגִיטִין שְׁלַח לֵיהּ לְמַר עוֹקְבָא בְּנֵי אָדָם הַקָּמִים וְכו', שְׂרִיטְט וְכַתֵּב לֵיהּ דּוּם לֵה' וְהִתְחַלֵּל לוֹ וְהוּא יִפֹּל אוֹתָם חֲלָלִים וְכו'.

The matter is that when, at times, people cause distress to someone, it is because of judgments upon him Above, and they clothe themselves in people below to distress him.

הַעֲנִין הוּא, כִּי מָה שְׁלַפְעָמִים מַצְעָרִים בְּנֵי אָדָם לְאַחַד, הוּא מִחֲמַת הַדִּינִים שֶׁיֵּשׁ עָלָיו לְמַעְלָה, וּמִתְלַבָּשִׁים בְּבְנֵי אָדָם לְמַטָּה לְצַעֲרוֹ.

As it is said (Psalms 118:7), “Hashem is for me among my helpers, and I will see in those who hate me,” meaning: it is for help that the judgments clothe themselves below in people, for from this one can recognize what is Above as well.

כָּאֵמֹר עַל פְּסוּק (תְּהִלִּים קי"ח, ז') ה' לִי בְּעֹזְרֵי וְאֲנִי אֶרְאֶה בְּשֹׁנְאֵי, פִּירוּשׁ כִּי הוּא לְעֶזֶר מֵה שְׁמִתְלַבָּשִׁים הַדִּינִים לְמַטָּה בְּבְנֵי אָדָם, כִּי מִזֶּה יוּכַל לְדַעַת מֵה שְׁלַמְעָלָה גַם כֵּן.

Thus it means: “and I will see Above in those who hate me,” meaning—through the enemies below. And the rectification for this is to elevate oneself to the level of the World of Thought, where there are no judgments, as it is written (Psalms 5:5), “No evil will dwell with You.”

כִּךְ רָצָה לֹמַר, וְאֲנִי אֶרְאֶה לְמַעְלָה בְּשֹׁנְאֵי, פִּירוּשׁ עַל יְדֵי שֹׁנְאִים שְׁלַמְעָלָה. וְהִתְקוּן לְזֶה, לְהַעֲלוֹת אֶת עַצְמוֹ לְבְחִינַת עוֹלָם הַמַּחְשָׁבָה שֶׁשָּׁם אֵין דִּינִים, כְּמוֹ שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (שֵׁם ה', ה') לֹא יִגוּרְךָ רָע.

This is accomplished by being silent and accepting what comes upon him, trembling and remaining still, and elevating his thought, as it is said (Psalms 37:7), “Be silent for Hashem, etc.,” meaning to elevate the silence—that is, the thought—to Hashem.

וְהִינּוּ עַל יְדֵי שְׁשׁוּתָק וּמִקְבֵּל אֶת הַבָּא עָלָיו, חֲזִיל וְדוּמָם, וּמַעְלָה אֶת מַחְשַׁבְתּוֹ, כְּמוֹ שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר דּוּם (שֵׁם ל"ז, ז') דּוּם לֵה' וְגו', פִּירוּשׁ שֶׁיַּעֲלֶה אֶת הַדְּמִיָּה, דְּהִינּוּ הַמַּחְשָׁבָה, לֵה'.

Then “they will fall slain,” meaning—the judgments will become secondary through the cleaving of his thought to Hashem.

וְאִזּוּ יִפְּלוּ חֲלָלִים, פִּירוּשׁ הַדִּינִים טִפְלִים עַל יְדֵי דְּבִקּוּת מַחְשַׁבְתּוֹ לֵה'.

## Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl

### Me'or Einayim

### Parshas Ki Teitzei

And just as the roof is the main part of the house, so too the thought is the main part of a person and shelters him, for through thought a person is protected and knows how to settle himself, as is known. Therefore, thought is called “roof.”

וְכֵמוֹ שֶׁהֵגֵג הוּא עֵיקָר הַבֵּיִת, כִּדּוּם הַמַּחְשְׁבָה הִיא הָעֵיקָר בְּאֶדָם, וְסוֹכְכֶת עָלָיו, כִּי עַל יְדֵי הַמַּחְשְׁבָה נִשְׁמָר הָאָדָם וְיֹדֵעַ לְהִתְיַשֵּׁב אֶת עַצְמוֹ כְּנוֹדָע, לְכַד נִקְרָאת הַמַּחְשְׁבָה בְּשֵׁם גֵּג.

And behold, when a person builds a house, the judgments are aroused, and especially outside of the Land [of Israel], for they are filled with all the voids of the world, as is known. And he constricts their boundary.

וְהִנֵּה כְּשֶׁאָדָם בּוֹנֶה בֵּית מִתְעוֹרְרִים הַדִּינִים, וּבִפְרֹט בַּחוּץ לְאֶרֶץ, כִּי הֵן מְלֵאִים כָּל חֲלָלֵי דְעֻלְמָא כְּנוֹדָע, וְהוּא מְצַמֵּצֵם אֶת גְּבוּלָן.

Therefore, the Torah said, “When you build a new house, and you shall make” — meaning rectification — “a guardrail” — from the term “oppressors” — the ones who oppress you, you shall rectify them by attaching yourself Above to the place of thought, that is, “for your roof” (Deuteronomy 22:8), as stated.

לְכֵן אָמְרָה הַתּוֹרָה כִּי תִבְנֶה בֵּית חָדָשׁ וְעָשִׂיתָ — הוּא מְלִשׁוֹן תִּקּוּן — מַעֲקֶה — מְלִשׁוֹן מַעֲיָקִים — הַמַּעֲיָקִים לָהּ, תִּתְקַנֵּם עַל יְדֵי שִׁתְדָּלְכָם אֶת עַצְמָךְ לְמַעֲלָה לְמָקוֹם הַמַּחְשְׁבָה, דְּהֵינּוּ לְגִגִּית (דְּבָרִים כ"ב, ח'). כְּאֲמֹר

And then, if you attach your thought to the Creator, blessed be He, then “when the faller will fall” (Deuteronomy 22:8), and our Sages expounded that he is worthy to fall — for the judgments are worthy to fall from the seven days of Creation, as is known.

וְאִז, אִם תִּדְבֹק אֶת מַחְשְׁבְּתְךָ בְּבוֹרָא בְרוּךְ הוּא, אִז כִּי יִפֹּל הַנִּפְל (דְּבָרִים כ"ב, ח'), וְדָרְשׁוּ רַז"ל שְׂרָאוֹי לִפְל, כִּי הַדִּינִים רְאוּיִים לִפְל מִשְׁבָּעַת יְמֵי בְרָאשִׁית כְּנוֹדָע.

Meaning to say, that the judgments will fall away from you. And understand this.

רֹאצָה לוֹמַר שִׁיפְלוּ הַדִּינִים מִמֶּךָ, וְהֵבִן

#### [NOTE Summary

The verse about building a new house and making a guardrail is not merely architectural instruction — it contains a profound teaching about spiritual protection. The *Me'or Einayim* begins with the Talmudic exchange (Gittin 7a) where Mar Ukva is told, “Be silent for Hashem... and He will cast them down slain.” When others cause a person distress, it may be a manifestation of heavenly judgments clothed in human form. Recognizing this allows one to understand what is occurring Above.

The remedy is to rise to the “World of Thought” — a spiritual level free of judgments — by accepting suffering in silence and focusing one’s mind on Hashem. This focus causes the judgments to “fall” and lose their power, just as a roof protects the house beneath it. The roof represents thought, the highest and most protective faculty of a person.

In the continuation, the Rebbe explains that building a house stirs up judgments, especially outside the Land of Israel, where spiritual voids abound. The Torah’s command to “make a guardrail” is read as “rectify the oppressors” by elevating thought to the Divine. If one’s mind clings to the Creator, the “faller” — the judgments destined to fall since the world’s creation — will indeed fall away from the person.



## Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl

### Me'or Einayim

### Parshas Ki Teitzei

#### Practical Takeaway

Life inevitably brings challenges and interpersonal strife. Instead of reacting with anger or despair, one can recognize such moments as opportunities to ascend inwardly — to retreat into the “roof” of thought, elevating the mind to Hashem. In that silent attachment, judgments lose their hold, and spiritual protection is strengthened. Just as a physical guardrail prevents a dangerous fall, disciplined, God-focused thought prevents a spiritual one.

#### Chassidic Story

Once, Rabbi Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl was visiting a Jewish community where a certain wealthy man, known for his hostility toward Chassidim, publicly insulted him during a gathering. The room grew tense, expecting the Rebbe to respond sharply. Instead, he closed his eyes, sat in silence, and remained motionless for a long moment. Then he softly said a teaching about transforming bitterness into sweetness and continued speaking words of Torah as if nothing had happened. Later, he explained to a disciple that the insults were but garments for heavenly decrees, and by holding his peace and lifting his mind to Hashem, he saw the decrees fall away. That same year, the hostile man underwent a change of heart and became one of the Rebbe's supporters.

(Source: *Me'or Einayim*, Parshas Ki Seitzei; *Beis Chernobyl* p. 142)

**END NOTE]**