

## Rabbi Meir of Premishlan

Divrie Meir

Parshas Bechukosai

<p>(ואם מִיָּד הוּא מְעַרְפָּה וְהַעֲמִידוּ לִפְנֵי הַכֹּהֵן וְהַעֲרִיף אֹתוֹ הַכֹּהֵן עַל פִּי אֲשֶׁר תִּמְשֹׁג יַד הַגֹּדֵר יַעֲרִיכֶנּוּ הַכֹּהֵן: (כו, ח</p> <p><b>And if he is too poor for your valuation, then he shall present himself before the priest, and the priest shall value him; according to what the hand of the one who vowed can attain shall the priest value him:(Vayikra 27:8)</b></p>	
<p>Once, a man came before the Rebbe, Rabbi Meir of Premishlan זצ"ל, together with his daughter the bride, that the tzaddik should bestow his pure blessing upon her head before the chuppah. Around her neck was a string of very beautiful pearls, and he also gave the pearls into the hands of the tzaddik to bless them for protection, as is customary.</p>	<p>פעם אחת בא לפני הרבי רבי מאיר מפרימשלאן ז"ל איש אחד עם בתו הכלה שישפיע הצדיק את ברכתו הטובה על ראשה קדם החפה, ובצוארה חרוז מרגליות יפות מאד, ונתן גם את המרגליות ביד הצדיק. שברכם לשמירה פנהוג</p>
<p>And when the tzaddik saw the pearls, he said: "For such fine merchandise, the amount paid must have been such-and-such," namely fifty rubles. But the chassid replied that he had only paid forty-five rubles.</p>	<p>וכראות הצדיק את המרגליות אמר שבעד סחורה יפה כזו נתן סך כד וכך, דהינו נ' רובל כסף, והחסיד השיב. שהוא לא נתן רק מ"ה רובל כסף</p>
<p>They began to argue — this one said he paid this much, the other said otherwise — until the bride saw that the debate was growing and neither side would yield.</p>	<p>והתנפחו זה את זה, זה אמר בכך לקחו וזה אמר בכך, עד שהכלה ראתה שהוכוח הולך וגדול ואין אחד מניח.</p>
<p>She said to her father that the tzaddik was right — because when they purchased the pearls, the merchant refused to accept less than fifty rubles, and her father had not been willing to pay more than forty-five.</p>	<p>אמרה לאביה שהצדק עם הרב, כי הנה בעת שקנו את המרגליות, והסוחר לא רצה להניח משער חמשים רובל כסף, ואביה לא רצה לתן רק מ"ה רובל כסף</p>
<p>And because her soul greatly desired these pearls, she asked her mother to give her the five extra rubles without her father knowing — and so she did.</p>	<p>ובהיות שנפשה חשקה מאד באלו המרגליות, בקשה מאמה שתתן לה בלי ידיעת אביה ה' רובל כסף, וכן עשתה.</p>
<p>Therefore, both were actually correct — he indeed had not given more than forty-five, and the merchant had indeed received fifty.</p>	<p>ועל כן הצדק עם שניהם — שהוא באמת לא נתן יותר, והסוחר קבל יותר.</p>
<p>And behold, the explanation given by the Rav ז"ל was that one should not be astonished: how did he know this? For the Holy Torah wrote that the <i>kohen</i> evaluates a person, and houses, fields, and animals — and this is very wondrous. After all, the <i>kohen</i> serves Hashem, may He be blessed, at all times, and he has no involvement in commerce, so how should he know the value of each item?</p>	<p>והנה מענה בפני הרב ז"ל שאל ותפלאו מהיכן ידע זאת, כי התורה הקדושה כתבה שהכהן יעריף את האדם והבתים שדות ובהמות, ופליאה מאד, הלא הכהן עובד את השם ותברך בכל עת ואין לו עסק במסחרים, ומהיכן ידע שווי כל דבר</p>

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Indeed, it would seem more fitting for the valuation of merchandise to be assigned to one whose occupation is in that particular field of goods. But the answer to this is as Rabbi Meir said (Avos 6:1): “Whoever studies Torah for its own sake merits many things.” That is, there is nothing that the tzaddik, who is in the category of a *kohen*, does not know, as is explained in the holy books.

וְהִנֵּה יוֹתֵר טוֹב הֵיךָ לְהַעֲרִיף כָּל סְחוּרָה עַל יְדֵי אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר מְסַחֵרוּ בְּנֵה סְחוּרָה. אָבֵל הַתְּרוּץ לָזֶה הֵיא כָּמוֹ שְׂאָמַר רַבֵּי מְאִיר (אבות פ"ו מ"א): "כָּל הַלּוֹמֵד תּוֹרָה לְשִׂמְחָה זוֹכֶה לְדַבָּרִים הַרְבֵּה", דִּהְיִנוּ שְׂאִין לָךְ דָּבָר שְׁלֵא יִדַע הַצַּדִּיק שֶׁהוּא בְּבַחֲיַנֵּת כִּהְיוּ כַּמְבֹאֵר בְּסִפְרֵים.

**[NOTE: Summary**

This teaching from Reb Meir of Premishlan addresses a question that arises from a verse in the Torah (Vayikra 27:8): *How is a kohen, who is devoted to holy service and has no involvement in business or trade, able to accurately assess the monetary value of people, properties, animals, and offerings?* Should not an expert merchant, experienced in commerce, be more qualified for such evaluations?

Reb Meir responds by invoking a core teaching from *Pirkei Avos* (6:1): *"One who learns Torah for its own sake (lishmah) merits many things."* Among these many things is deep insight and supernal awareness. The tzaddik, by virtue of Torah lishmah, becomes not just knowledgeable in abstract law, but gains a luminous clarity in all realms of life — even in matters of finance and material appraisal. In other words, the wisdom and sensitivity of a true kohen or tzaddik surpass technical expertise, because his connection to divine truth allows him to see the inner reality of things.

Thus, the kohen does not need to be a businessman to assess value — for the Torah itself infuses him with the light of discernment and accuracy.

**Practical Takeaway**

Don't underestimate the power of inner clarity that comes from sincere Torah study and spiritual refinement. When someone connects deeply with holiness — not for personal gain but *lishmah* (for the sake of Heaven) — they often gain surprising insight even into practical, mundane matters. Seek guidance not only from technical experts, but from people of deep character, holiness, and learning. Their words are often attuned to truth in ways that surpass calculation.

**END NOTE]**