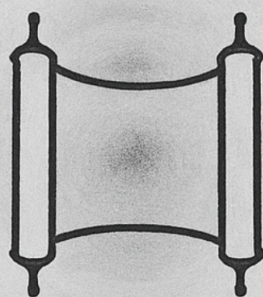


בס"ד

Reb Meir of Premishlan

Divrie Meir

Parshas Vayigash



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Rabbi Meir of Premishlan

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Parshas Vayigash

כִּי אֵיךְ אֶעֱלֶה אֶל אָבִי וְהִנֵּעַר אֵינָנו אִתִּי כֹן אֶרְאֶה בָּרַע אֲשֶׁר יִמָּצֵא אֶת אָבִי מִדֹּ, לֵד

For how could I go up to my father, and the lad is not with me, lest I see the evil that will befall my father
(Bereishis 44:34)

“For how could I go up to my Father who is in Heaven, and the lad is not with me?”—if the children, Heaven forbid, are not conducting themselves in the ways of our forefathers,

כִּי אֵיךְ אֶעֱלֶה אֶל אָבִי וְהִנֵּעַר אֵינָנו אִתִּי. אָמַר הָרַב
הַקְדוּשׁ רַבִּי מְאִיר מִפְּרִימְשְׁלָאן זְכוּתוֹ יִגַּן עָלֵינוּ אֵיךְ
אֶעֱלֶה אֶל אָבִי וְשִׁבְשָׁמִים אִם הִנֵּעַר אֵינָנו אִתִּי, אִם
הַבָּנִים חֹס וְשָׁלוֹם אֵין מִתְנַהֲגִים בְּדַרְכֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ

for your servant became surety for the lad (ibid. 43:9). Behold, we accepted upon ourselves that our children will be guarantors for us, just as at Mount Sinai we accepted the holy Torah upon ourselves and upon our children—and lips will kiss.

כִּי עֲבָדְךָ עָרַב אֶת הִנֵּעַר (שם לב), הֲלֹא קִבְּלָנוּ עָלֵינוּ
שִׁבְנֵינוּ יִהְיוּ עָרָבִים לָנוּ כְּאֲשֶׁר בָּהָר סִינַי הִתּוֹרָה
הַקְדוּשָׁה קִבְּלָנוּ עָלֵינוּ וְעַל בְּנֵינוּ, וּשְׁפָתַיִם יִשָּׁק

[NOTE Summary:

Rabbi Meir of Premishlan interprets Yehudah’s words to Yosef, “For how could I go up to my father and the lad is not with me,” as a deep spiritual message. The “Father” here refers to our Father in Heaven, and the “lad” refers to our children. If the children, Heaven forbid, are not following the ways of our ancestors, we cannot truly “ascend” to our Father. Just as Yehudah became a guarantor for Binyamin, we accepted at Har Sinai that our children would be our guarantors in the keeping of the Torah. Our own closeness to Hashem is bound to their spiritual commitment.

Practical Takeaway:

Each generation holds the responsibility to guide the next in Torah and mitzvos. By investing in the spiritual growth of our children and students, we secure our own bond with Hashem and ensure the Torah’s continuity.

Chassidic Story:

It is told that Rabbi Meir of Premishlan once noticed a father in his community distressed because his son was drifting from Torah observance. Rabbi Meir took the man by the hand and said, “At Sinai, you pledged for your child, and your child for you. The link between your souls is unbreakable—strengthen your own Torah and mitzvos, and it will awaken his as well.” The father took the advice to heart, and in time, his son returned to a life of Torah. This, Rabbi Meir explained, is the secret of Yehudah’s guarantee for Binyamin—it flows both ways.

END NOTE]

וַיֵּשְׁבֶת בְּאֶרֶץ גֹּשֶׁן וְהָיִיתָ קָרוֹב אֵלַי אִתָּהּ וּבְנֵיךָ וּבְנֵי בְנֵיךָ וְצֹאֲנֶךָ וּבְקָרְךָ וְכָל אֲשֶׁר לְךָ מֵהָ, י

And you shall dwell in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near to me—you, and your sons, and your sons’ sons, and your flocks, and your cattle, and all that you have (Bereishis 45:10)

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“And you shall dwell in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near to me.” I heard in the name of the holy and famous Rabbi Meir, may his merit shield us, from Premishlan, that he asked: Why did Yosef not want his father, his brothers, and their households to live in Egypt in the royal city, where Yosef himself and his household lived, where they would be even closer to him than by dwelling in the land of Goshen?

And he, may his memory be a blessing, answered that Yosef feared that if they lived with him in one city, perhaps, Heaven forbid, strife would arise at the outset between his people and the people of his father and brothers, and afterwards the love between them would dissolve—even between Yosef and his brothers themselves.

Especially since there had already been division at the beginning, when they all lived together in their father’s house in the land of Canaan, and look at what had resulted. Therefore, Yosef said that if you dwell in the land of Goshen, then “you shall be near to me,” meaning that then there would be no separation, Heaven forbid, between us; on the contrary, there would be love, brotherhood, and friendship, and no jealousy toward me from my brothers. Understand this. These are his words, and the words of a wise man are gracious.

וְיִשְׁכְּתוּ בְּאֶרֶץ גֹּשֶׁן וְהָיִיתָ קְרוֹב אֵלַי. וְשָׁמַעְתִּי בְּשֵׁם הָרֵב הַקָּדוֹשׁ הַמְּפָרָס מוֹרְנוּ הָרֵב מֵאִיר וְצ"ל מִפְּרַעַמִּי שֶׁלֹּאן שֶׁהִקְשָׁה דְּלָמָּה לֹא רָצָה יוֹסֵף שְׂאֲבָיו וְאֶחָיו וְכָל בְּנֵי בֵיתָם יִגְוּרוּ בְּמִצְרַיִם בְּעִיר הַמְּלָכוֹת, שֶׁשָּׁם יֵשֵׁב יוֹסֵף וְכָל בְּנֵי בֵיתוֹ, וְשָׁם הָיוּ יוֹתֵר קְרוֹבִים אֵלָיו מִשִּׁישְׁבוּ בְּאֶרֶץ גֹּשֶׁן וּבְמוֹכָן.

וְאָמַר הוּא ז"ל לְתַרְזֵן בְּזֶה, דְּיוֹסֵף חָשַׁשׁ כֵּן כְּשִׁישְׁבוּ עִמּוֹ בְּעִיר אַחַת שְׂמָא חָס וְשָׁלוֹם תִּפְּל קִטְטָה מִתְחַלָּה בֵּין אֲנָשָׁיו שָׁלוּ וּבֵין אֲנָשֵׁי אָבִיו וְאֶחָיו, וְאַחֲרֵי כֵן תִּפְרֹד הָאַהֲבָה גַם מֵהֶם עֲצָמָם, הִינּוּ גַם מִיוֹסֵף, וּמֵאֶחָיו.

וּבְפֶרֶט שָׁכֵן הָיָה הַפְּרוֹד גַּם בְּתַחֲלָה שֶׁהָיוּ גַם בְּבֵית אָבִיו בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנַעַן בְּצֻרְתָּא חָדָא עִם אֶחָיו, וְחִזּוּ מָה עָלְתָה בְּיָדָם, עַל כֵּן אָמַר יוֹסֵף דָּאֵם יֵשְׁבוּ בְּאֶרֶץ גֹּשֶׁן אֲזִי וְהָיִיתָ קְרוֹב אֵלַי, פְּרוּשׁ דָּאֵז לֹא יִהְיֶה שׁוּם פְּרוֹד חָס וְשָׁלוֹם בֵּינֵינוּ וְאַדְרָבָּה יִהְיֶה אַהֲבָה וְאַתְנָה וְרַעוּת, וְלֹא תִהְיֶה שׁוּם קִנְאָה עָלַי מִהָאֲחִים שְׁלִי, וְהִבֵּן. אֵלּוּ דְּבָרֵי ז"ל וְדְּבָרֵי פִי חֲכָם חֵן

[NOTE Summary:

Rabbi Meir of Premishlan explains Yosef’s words to his father, “And you shall dwell in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near to me,” as more than a logistical arrangement. Yosef intentionally avoided having his father, brothers, and their households live in the royal city where he resided, despite its physical closeness. He feared that constant proximity might lead to friction between his attendants and his brothers’ households, potentially weakening the bond between himself and his family. Given their earlier history of conflict even while living together in Canaan, Yosef sought to preserve unity by maintaining a respectful distance. In Goshen, they would remain “near” in love and harmony, without the jealousy or strife that proximity could spark.

Practical Takeaway:

True closeness is measured not only by physical distance but by the preservation of peace and love. Sometimes

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maintaining a little space allows relationships to flourish, protecting them from unnecessary tension and ensuring that affection remains pure and undisturbed.

Chassidic Story:

It is related that Rabbi Meir of Premishlan was once asked why he sometimes declined to live near close friends or family, even though they longed for his company. He replied, “Two flames placed too close may burn each other out—but with a little space, they can give light together.” On one occasion, a young couple sought his advice about living near relatives. Rabbi Meir gently told them this teaching, and years later, they shared how that wisdom had preserved both their marriage and their extended family’s peace.

END NOTE]

וַיִּלְקֹט יוֹסֵף אֶת כָּל הַכֶּסֶף הַנִּמְצָא בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם וּבְאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן בְּשֶׁבֶר אֲשֶׁר הֵם שֹׂבְרִים מִזֶּה יָד

And Yosef gathered all the money that was found in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan, for the grain that they were buying (Bereishis 47:14)

“And Yosef gathered all the money that was found in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan for the grain that they were buying.” I heard in the name of my master and teacher, Rabbi Meir of Premishlan, to explain this based on that which is taught in Maseches Avodah Zarah (41a): “One who finds fragments of idols—these are permitted, since once they are broken they are certainly nullified.” Rabbah bar bar Chana said in the name of Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi: Once I was walking after Rabbi Eliezer HaKappar on the road, and he found a ring with the image of a serpent on it.

He found a young non-Jew and said nothing to him. He found an adult non-Jew and told him to nullify it, but he did not nullify it—so he struck him (as Rashi explains, “he hit him”)—and he nullified it. From this we learn three things: We learn that a non-Jew may nullify idolatry, whether his own or another’s, and we learn that a non-Jew may nullify idolatry even against his will, etc. (ibid. 43b).

וַיִּלְקֹט יוֹסֵף אֶת כָּל הַכֶּסֶף הַנִּמְצָא בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם וּבְאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן בְּשֶׁבֶר אֲשֶׁר הֵם שֹׂבְרִים. שְׂמַעְתִּי בְּשֵׁם מוֹרֵי וְרַבֵּי רַבִּי מֵאִיר מִפְּרֵמִישְׁלָן לִפְרֹשׁ עַל פִּי דְאִיתָא בְּמַסְכֵּת עֲבוּדָה זָרָה (מֵא). הַמּוֹצִיא שִׁבְרֵי צִלָּמִים הֲרִי אֵלּוּ מִתְּרִים, כִּי וְנִשְׁבְּרוּ בְּיָדָיו בְּטָלִים. אָמַר רַבָּה בַּר בַּר חַנָּה אָמַר רַבִּי יְהוֹשֻעַ בֶּן לֵוִי, פַּעַם אַחַת הָיִיתִי מִהֲלֹךְ אַחֵר רַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר הַקָּפָר בְּדֶרֶךְ, וּמָצָא טַבַּעַת וְעָלֶיהָ צוּרַת הַדְּרָקוֹן.

וּמָצָא נִכְרִי קָטָן וְלֹא אָמַר לוֹ כְּלוּם, מָצָא נִכְרִי גָדוֹל וְאָמַר לוֹ בְּטָלָה וְלֹא בְטָלָה, סָטְרוּ—פְּרוּשׁ רַשִׁי הִכָּהוּ—וּבְטָלוּ. שְׂמַע מִנֵּה תָלַת: שְׂמַע מִנֵּה נִכְרִי מְבִטֵּל עֲבוּדָה זָרָה שְׁלוֹ וְשֶׁל חֲבֵרוֹ, וְשְׂמַע מִנֵּה נִכְרִי (מְבִטֵּל בְּעַל כְּרַחוּ, וְכו') (שם מג).

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And in Egypt there was an image of idolatry on the coins, and the nullification of a Jew was of no effect—only the non-Jew himself was able to nullify it. This is the meaning of the verse, “And Yosef gathered all the money that was found in Egypt,” for since the coins had images of idolatry, it was necessary for the Egyptians to break the coins and nullify them. This is the meaning of “for the grain that they were buying”—meaning, that the Egyptians themselves broke and nullified the coins.

ובמִצְרַיִם הָיְתָה צוּרַת עֲבוּדָה נֹרָה עַל הַמִּטְבָּעוֹת, וְאִין מוֹעִיל הַבְטוּלָה שֶׁל יִשְׂרָאֵל—רַק הַנִּכְרִי בַּעֲצָמוֹ מִכְרִית לְבָטְלוֹ. וְזֶה פְּרוּשׁ הַפֶּסוּק, וַיִּלְקֹט יוֹסֵף אֶת כָּל הַכֶּסֶף הַנִּמְצָא בְּמִצְרַיִם, וַיַּחֲמִית שֶׁהָיְתָה צוּרַת עֲבוּדָה נֹרָה עַל הַמִּטְבָּעוֹת לְכֹן הָיָה מִצְוָה לַמִּצְרַיִם לְשַׁבֵּר אֶת הַמִּטְבָּעוֹת וּלְבָטְלָם, וְזֶהוּ פִּשְׁבָּר אֲשֶׁר הֵם שִׁבְּרִים, פְּרוּשׁ אֲשֶׁר הַמִּצְרַיִם בַּעֲצָמָם שִׁבְּרוּ וּבָטְלוּ הַמִּטְבָּעוֹת.

[NOTE Summary:

Rabbi Meir of Premishlan explains the verse “And Yosef gathered all the money that was found in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan for the grain they were buying” through a teaching from the Gemara (Avodah Zarah 41a, 43b). The Gemara discusses that broken pieces of idols are permitted because they are certainly nullified, and that only a non-Jew can nullify idolatry, even that of another, and even against his will. In Egypt, the coins bore images of idolatry. Since a Jew’s nullification was ineffective, Yosef required the Egyptians themselves to break and nullify their coins before use. Thus, “for the grain they were buying” means the Egyptians themselves broke and annulled the coins.

Practical Takeaway:

When removing impurity or negative influence, the change must come from the source itself. External pressure can help, but lasting transformation requires the one bound to the problem to break it from within.

Chassidic Story:

It is told that Rabbi Meir of Premishlan once advised a man whose son had fallen into bad company. The father wanted to forcibly remove him, but Rabbi Meir said, “If the coin bears a false image, you must let its owner break it. You can guide him to the hammer, but the hand must be his.” The father took this to heart, patiently guiding his son until the boy himself chose to abandon the harmful influences. **END NOTE]**

הָא לָכֶם זֶרַע וְזֵרְעֵתֶם אֶת הָאֲדָמָה מִזֵּי, כֵּן

Here for you is seed, and you shall sow the land (Bereishis 47:23)

I heard in the name of Rabbi Meir of Premishlan: “May you have seed.” The word “הָא” (here) is an acronym for “Hachnasas Orchim” (hospitality to guests). Through this, one merits to have seed and all good.

שֶׁמֵּעֵתִי בִּשְׁמוֹ שֶׁל רַבִּי מֵאִיר מִפְּרִי־מִשְׁלָאן, יְהֵא לָכֶם זֶרַע, הָא רִאשִׁי תְּבוּת הַכִּנְסַת אוֹרְחִים. עַל יְדֵי זֶה זֹכָה לְהֵיוֹת לוֹ זֶרַע וְכָל טוֹב.

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Rabbi Meir of Premishlan interprets Yosef's words, "Here for you is seed," as containing a hidden allusion. The word "זר" is read as an acronym for "Hachnasas Orchim" (hospitality to guests). By welcoming guests, a person merits to have "seed"—offspring and continuity—as well as all forms of blessing and goodness.

Practical Takeaway:

Hospitality is not only a kindness to others; it is a channel for bringing blessing into one's own life. By opening our homes and hearts to guests, we open ourselves to the gift of lasting legacy and abundance. **END NOTE]**