

Noam Elimelech Yalkut on Shabbos & Moadim



A Collection of Teachings, Stories and Parables of the Rebbe Reb Melech and the Rebbe Reb Zisha on Shabbos & the Holidays

Chodesh Elul

The Power of Elul –

In the name of Rav Itzikil of Pshevorsk: Once during one of the days of the month of Elul the Rebbe Elimelech entered his Beis Midrash and approached one of the yungeleit, the young men who sat and learned there and said to him: “Chodesh Elul – It is the month of Elul!” His knees began to shake and quiver in fear, his teeth began to chatter in sheer fright and he broke out in a sweat. Eventually he fainted and fell to the floor. All this happened simply from the Rebbe's pure statement that the month of Elul had arrived! (Shivchei Rebbe Elimelech Chap 3 p26)

Rejoice over Forgiveness –

Besulah Tismach BeMachol. This verse in Yirmiyahu 31:12 is usually translated as “The virgin shall rejoice in the circle [dance].” However the holy Rebbe Elimelech of Lizhensk saw in this verse a hint at the month of Elul, he read the verse as “The virgin which alludes to Elul, since the Mazal (the zodiac constellation) of Elul is the virgin, shall rejoice BeMachol – in the forgiveness, Elul rejoices when Hashem forgives the sins of Israel [who are repenting during this month]. (Bnei Yisaschar Elul 1:5)

Animal Intelligence –

On the first of Elul is the Rosh HaShana for the animal tithe. Rabbi Elazar and Rabbi Shimon say it is on the first of Tishrei. (Rosh HaShanah 2a) Our master and teacher the righteous Tzadik Rebbe Elimelech of Lizhensk explained this Gemarra according to the manner of Remez using hints. The Zohar teaches us that the letter yud hints at the tithe (which is a tenth) which hints at the attribute of fear of Heaven. (See Zohar Parshas Naso 122b) The first opinion in the Mishnah is that whoever acts all year long like a fool and only wakes up on the first of Elul to repent and fear Hashem is acting like an animal that has no intelligence. This is the meaning of “On the first Elul is the RoshHaShana for the animal tithe, only a person who has animal intelligence wakes up so late to start repenting, since a person with human intellect should fear Hashem all year long. However the second opinion held by both R. Elazar and R. Shimon is that even someone who wakes up in Elul is still one of human intelligence, however someone who only waits till the first of Tishrei to wake up on Rosh HaShanah when the entire world is being judged, then he has only animal intelligence since we would need at least thirty days in advance to prepare! The words of the wise find favor. (Avodas Yisroel Parshas Re'eh sv Aser)

Opening the Gates of Repentance –

Rebbe Elimelech the author of the Noam Elimelech taught that Elul can be read as a compound word which means Alef – Lul. Alef refers to Hashem the Alufo shel olam – Master of the World. Lul means a coop or enclosure like a chicken coop. Elul therefore is a time when the Alef – Alufo shel Olam that is the Master of the World opens the Lul or enclosure for those who knock on its door begging Hashem to open wide the gates of repentance. Whoever attaches himself to that Alef – Alufo shel Olam that is the Master of the World, with rapture and dveykus merits that the gates of repentance hinted at in Elul are opened before him. (Yismach Yisroel Alexander Re'eh 40:1)

Splitting the Heavens –

The first Gerrer Rebbe the author of Chiddushei Harim said that in previous generations people would afflict themselves with great forms of suffering and self torture during the month of Elul. However Rebbe Elimelech used to say that he split open the very Heavens themselves in order that we would no longer need to resort to the method of self affliction, punishment and torture. (Siach Sarfei Kodesh I #88)

Do not Disturb –

Rebbe Elimelech's holy custom was that once Rosh Chodesh Elul arrived he would seclude himself meditating alone in his until after the holy day of Yom Kippur. He was extremely careful and adamant that he would not be disturbed with any requests of any kind unless they were extremely urgent such as matters of life and death heaven forbid. Only then we accept a kvittel – a note with a petition and a request. Even then, it would be done with the utmost brevity possible so as not to disturb nor interrupt his holy avodah.

(Sippurei Tzadikim Zinkovitz #25 in the name of Rav Yisroel Avraham the son of Reb Zisha)

Teshuvah

A Broken Heart –

Once before Rosh HaShanah the Tzadik, Rebbe Elimelech of Lizhensk sat brooding and sighing to himself, "How can I ever face G-d on the day of judgment? Look how many sins I have transgressed!" He sat counting out his sins, one by one as was his holy custom. Finally he changed his tone and remarked: "If so, my broken heart will stand by me when I reach judgment day!" (Ohel Elimelech) - Yomim Noraim – S.Y. Agnon p. 30

Rosh HaShanah

Additional Souls –

When the YomTov holiday of Rosh HaShanah falls out on Shabbos (Rosh HaShanah 29b) The Rebbe of Alexander said in the name of the author of Noam Elimelech: It is known in the name of the AriZal that on Rosh Chodesh – the beginning of a new month one is given an additional soul called the nefesh yesayrah. On Yom Tov one is given a Ruach yesayrah – an additional spirit and on Shabbos one is given a Neshama yesayrah – an additional soul. When does a person receive all three additional dimensions of soul simultaneously – Nefesh, Ruach and Neshamah Yesayrah? This occurs on the YomTov of Rosh HaShanah which falls out on Shabbos, since the sanctity of the new month, Rosh Chodesh Tishrei, YomTov and Shabbos all join together. (Chashvah LeTovah on Rosh HaShanah sv Yom Tov 18a)

A Fleeting Moment –

Rav Zisha of Anippoli taught that on each of the four Rosh HaShannahs mentioned in the Mishnah a shefa of spiritual sustenance and abundant blessings awakens and rouses every Jewish soul. On the Rosh HaShanah of the month of Tishrei this continues unabated for two whole days straight. Whereas on the other Rosh HaShannahs this awakening lasts but a mere instant and one must be able to catch it before that fleeting moment passes by.

(Yalkut Chassidim LeRosh HaShanah Rav Menachem Gutman p29)

High Holiday Poems & Liturgy –

Our master the AriZal would pray with the Askenazi Jews during the Days of Awe and he would recite all the liturgical poems call *piyutim* that are found during the blessings of the Shema, and he held that this was not considered an interruption. Our master the holy Rav Yisroel Ba'al Shal Tov had the custom to refrain from reciting them. Our master the holy Rebbe Elimelech of Lizhensk had the custom to

recite them on Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur since the AriZal recited them then as well.

(Shulchan HaTahor Siman 68:1-2)

Tehillim –

On Rosh HaShannah Rebbe Elimelech prayed Shacharis at dawn and he himself led the congregation as the Shaliach Tzibur. Before blowing the Shofar he would enter a special room and close the door behind him. The services ended one hour after midday. The festive Yom Tov meal lasted but a half hour. Afterwards he would himself stand in the Beis Midrash before the lectern and recite the entire sefer Tehillim in public with the congregation.

(Ohel Elimelech 345-346)

Shofar

The Kavanos of the Shofar –

How are harsh judgments sweetened? This is accomplished through the Shofar. If we have in mind as we blow the shofar to fulfill the will of our Creator as my master the holy Rebbe Elimelech taught regarding the Gemarra (Rosh HaShana 16a) “Why do we blow [the shofar]? The Merciful G-d said to blow it.” The Rebbe Elimelech explained this to mean that the Gemarra asked why do we blow, asking what is the intention and meaning behind blowing the shofar? The Gemarra answers “The Merciful G-d said to blow it,” this means that this should be our primary intention and kavanah when we blow the shofar; namely to fulfill the will of our Blessed Creator, and since we blow the shofar in order to fulfill the will of our Blessed Creator, we thereby sweeten the harsh judgments and transform them into mercy. (Maor VaShemesh - Rosh HaShanah sv Ashrei Ha'am)

The Humility of the Shofar –

“Raise your voice like a Shofar,” (Yishaya 54:1) I heard from my teacher and master the holy man of G-d Rebbe Elimelech that just as the Shofar is not proud and haughty due to the sound that it produces even if it is pleasant and and fine. Similarly one who wishes to give mussar and lecture others as to how to improve their character and refine their traits should not be vain and proud at all.

(Maor VaShemesh - Shemos sv VaYomer Moshe etc Mi Anochi)

Erev Yom Kippur

Kaparos in Lizensk –

A day before Yom Kippur Rav Elimelech of Lizensk was visited by a chassid, who pleaded and strongly entreated [the rebbe's gabbai] to be allowed to watch the Rebbe shlog kaparos (the custom where one waves a fowl over the head on erev yom kippur to symbolically take the place of one's sins).

As soon as the Rebbe Elimelech heard this he called the chassid in to him and told him to quickly take a trip and travel to such and such village situated not far from Lizensk. Once there he should go to the local tavern. The chassid dutifully followed the rebbe's orders and when he entered the tavern he found it full with drunk peasants among whom the local innkeeper; a simple and ignorant looking Jew together his simple ignorant looking Jewess was busy serving and attending to. The chassid hid himself in a unnoticed corner and feigned sleep, keeping watch with one eye open and waited. . .

After midnight when the drunk peasants had stumbled and been pushed and shoved out the door, and the windows and doors were locked and barred, the chassid watched the simple innkeeper pacing back

and forth until he said finally to his wife, “Bring , me the book from under the bed.” She schlepped an old well worn volume and handed it to him. The innkeeper sat down by the table and began thumbing through the worn pages reading aloud while turning page after page, “On this and this day of such and such week I did not properly attend to a poor traveler and so I failed to fulfill the commandment of welcoming guests, and on a different day I listened to the vulgar language of one of my customers, on another day I failed to concentrate during my prayers and I had foreign and extraneous thoughts,” and so on did the list of sins continue, since the ledger was a book full of the records of all the sins and transgressions that he had committed that past year. After reciting many of the sins, the innkeeper sighed deeply, and there were many times that he wept quite bitterly after reciting a particular sin.

After he had finished, the innkeeper once again motioned to his wife, to bring the second book which lay in the corner under the other bed. Again she schlepped a second old and worn volume and handed it to him. Once again he began to turn pages while reading aloud. This ledger contained an accounting listing all the woes, troubles and sorrows that had befallen the innkeeper and his family that year. The list was quite long since there did not seem to be any day that something had not befallen them. And when the innkeeper finished reading from the second book he lay his head down on the table, while deep in thought. Afterwards he looked up to heaven and declared, “Ribono Shel Olam! - Master of the World, I am quite guilty, I owe You quite a lot, but You also have a great debt that You owe me so to speak! I do not know whose debt is greater, whether min or Yours? The reckoning is simply too great and difficult to work out. Therefore Ribono Shel Olam! - Master of the World, let us make a trade, my debt for Your debt? This book for that book, my ledger of sins for Your ledger of troubles. “This is my exchange, this is my atonement,” said the innkeeper as he echoed the well known liturgy of the kapparos as the innkeeper swung the books above his head like one does with the kapparos chicken.

Afterwards the chassid traveled back to Lizhensk to Rebbe Elimelech. The Rebbe greeted the chassid with a smile, “Nu, so what did you see there?” The chassid told the Rebbe all he had witnessed. Rebbe Elimelech then said, “This complaint which the innkeeper had, King David had as well against the Ribono Shel Olam – The Master of the World, and that is the meaning if the verse in Tehillim 31 “Hashem all my sighs and desires opposite You are not hidden from You.” It is true that my desires oppose You, however my sighs are not hidden from You either. So let's make a deal and make an exchange. Now do you know how to truly shlog kapparos?”

(As heard from Rav Yechezkel Michelson, Fun Unser Alten Otzar p33-34)

Shemini Atzeres & Simchas Torah

Drinking –

By Rebbe Elimelech, at the end of Succos, during Simchas Torah it was absolutely forbidden to drink any alcoholic beverages until after the Hakafos – the circuits danced with the Torahs. This was done in order that no foreigner (that is the evil inclination) be mixed in with that holy joy.

(Heichal HaBracha Parshas Shemini 76:2) [See also Hanhagos HaAdam #18 regarding drinking and our sages taught in Brachos (29b) Do not get drunk and you won't sin.]

Reading of the Torah –

The Nusach liturgy of the Hakafos circuits during the night of Shemini Atzeres and Simchas Torah as they were recited in the Beis Midrash of Rebbe Elimelech of Lizhensk, were printed in a special pamphlet in Klomzsh in TavReishPayHay by his grandson Rav Shimon Shif of Lizhensk who wrote on page 21-22 that the reading of the Torah on Simchas Torah night was divided as follows: Kohen –

Parshas Naso Birkas Kohanim (BaMidbar 6:22-27). Levi Parshas Beha'aloscha (BaMidbar 10:29-36). Shelishi Parshas Chukas (BaMidbar 21:10-20) and Revi'i Parshas Balak (BaMidbar 24:1-5)

Shabbos Bereshis

Liar! You have not even begun! –

Rav Chanoch Henoch HaCohen of Alexander said in the name of Rav Yakeli Mogalinitzer the son of the author of Noam Eliemelch: after the month of Tishrei which includes all the avodah, that is all the many forms of serving Hashem that we did. We now begin to read from Bereshis, which can be read as Brosh – which means “*Bist Gevayzen A Ligner – You were a liar!*,” since the truth is you have not even begun!

(Chashvah LeTovah Likutim p35a)

Tevilas Mikveh

The Fragrances of Gan Eden –

Rav Menachem Mendel of Kosov author of Ahavas Shalom once related that he had heard from Rav Zechariah Mendel of Shandishov say: "I was once visiting our master the Rebbe Elimelech. When he returned from the mikvah on Erev Shabbos Kodesh and he lay himself down afterwards on his bed and exclaimed: "Who can withstand the scents and fragrances of the Garden of Eden!" (Ahavas Shalom Parshas VaYetzeh sv O Yomar)

The gaon Rav Pinchas HaLevi Horowitz of Kosov once related in the name of Rav Alter Menachem Dechner the Rav and Av Beis Din of Barhumt, how Rav Menachem Mendel of Kosov visited Rebbe Elimelech in his youth and he was allowed to enter the holy inner sanctum on Erev Shabbos Kodesh when rebbe Elimelech had returned from the mikvah on Erev Shabbos Kodesh and he lay himself down afterwards on his bed and exclaimed: "Who can withstand the scents and fragrances of the Garden of Eden!" (Ohel Elimelech p40 188)

The Mikveh aids in understanding Noam Elimelech –

The Rebbe Rav Mendel Rimanover used to say that only on the eve of Shabbos, after immersing in the waters of the mikveh, could he understand a shtikel, a piece, of the Noam Elimelech (Ohel Elimelech 92)

The Mikveh Purifies –

“He shall immerse himself in water and then don them” — this hints at the idea that one should not learn Torah or pray if the body is tainted and impure. If he needs to immerse [in order to become pure] then he should immerse himself [in the pool of the mikveh], thereby purifying himself so that the immersion, too, will be like a spiritual garment for his soul. This will protect him from nocturnal emissions and the need to immerse himself in the mikveh yet again. (Noam Elimelech - Achrei Mos)

The Mikveh Heals from Apostacy –

The av beis din of Brezan related the following story which he himself heard:

In the days of the Rebbe Reb Elimelech and his brother the Rebbe Reb Zisha, a grandchild of the gaon Rav Simcha HaKohen Rappaport, the av beis din of Lublin, became deathly ill. The doctors had given up all hope that the rav would ever recover. The patient’s mother begged her husband to allow her to

travel to Lizhensk to ask Rebbe Elimelech for a berachah. Though he himself was a misnaged, an opponent of Chassidus, under the circumstances he allowed her to go.

When she arrived, she gave the Rebbe a kvittel (a note customarily given to the Rebbe with the name of the petitioner and his or her family so that the Rebbe should mention their name when praying on their behalf). The kvittel contained the sick man's name and the name of his mother. Rebbe Elimelech told her that if she wished her son to recover, she must promise that once he regained his strength he would come and be the Rebbe's guest for Shabbos. If she would promise this, he would guarantee the rav's recovery.

She promised, and the Rebbe told her to go home and rest assured that the rav would indeed recover his health. The Rebbe gave her a sign that this would come true: When she returned home she would find three expert physicians meeting there. They would all say that there was no hope left, and they would go home. But then they would come back and write her a prescription for medicine from which the rav would indeed recover. However, the doctor who would sign the prescription would die suddenly. The events transpired exactly as Rebbe Elimelech had predicted. When he had fully recovered, the rav traveled with his mother to Lizhensk to fulfill her promise, and they spent Shabbos with Rebbe Elimelech.

During that Shabbos, the Rebbe told his guest that he knew that in his youth the rav had studied philosophical works dealing with heretical questions against belief in G-d. This had brought him to lose faith in G-d and His holy Torah. This is what had caused his illness, and though he was now well, the root of his sickness had not been purged. The Rebbe told him he must travel to Hanipoli to Rebbe Elimelech's brother Rebbe Zisha, where he would have a full recovery.

After Shabbos, the rav did as Rebbe Elimelech advised and traveled to Hanipoli. He arrived on Friday before daybreak and went to find lodgings at an inn. There he met an older man who welcomed him and called him by name. The rav was surprised to hear a stranger call him by name and he asked who the older man was. The man introduced himself: he was Reb Zisha, the brother of Rebbe Elimelech of Lizhensk.

"Come now, come with me to the mikveh," Reb Zisha urged the rav. Awed by the Rebbe's amazing intuition, the rav went with him. After they had immersed in the purifying waters, the rav could feel that all the questions, doubts, and lack in his faith that he had been harboring in his heart had dissipated.

"Now," said Reb Zisha, "you are completely cured." And so he was. (Menoras Zahav, p. 2; Ohel Elimelech 41)

The Mikveh Prepares for Torah Study –

"It is impossible for a man to achieve complete awe and fear of Hashem unless he is meticulous about immersing in a mikveh, as Ezra instituted... If one prays and learns and is not careful in this, it is utterly impossible to achieve an understanding of Torah knowledge and mitzvah observance. Furthermore, if he studies the mystical writings of Kabbalah and he is impure, it can bring him to heresy. In earlier times, when the word of Hashem was precious and scarce, they did not understand the awe called 'yiras haromemus' at all. This is because they studied Torah but were not meticulous in mikveh. The cult of Shabbsai Tzvi (the false messiah), yemach shemam, became heretics in those days as a result of this: they studied Kabbalah while their bodies were in an impure state.

“The world was desolate until the two great luminaries, the holy Ba'al Shem Tov and our master and teacher the Rebbe Elimelech came and opened the gate of Hashem so the righteous could enter. They taught that one should not even think or meditate on Torah thoughts until he immerses himself to be purified. The wise Sages of the Talmud had nullified this decree only because the majority of the public could not live up to it. However, those who wish to achieve Torah knowledge and pure mitzvah observance must be very careful in this... Thus we still see the holy light of these two luminaries shining in this world.” (Ma'or VaShemesh Parshas Emor)

Shabbos Kodesh

Transforming your Week into Shabbos –

The righteous Tzaddik must constantly be in a high state of deveikus, cleaving tightly to Hashem. * Thus it says that from there, the middle candle, he would begin [lighting the Menorah] — because he is constantly attached to the Shechinah, which dwells there. This is the level that one can achieve on Shabbos, and this is why a talmid chacham is called “Shabbos,” because his level of deveikus all week long is as great as it is on Shabbos.* This then is the interpretation of the verse “When you light the candles” — it hints at deveikus “toward the face of the Menorah,” meaning the middle candle which symbolizes the Shechinah. “All seven candles shall shine” means that you should also rectify all the days of the week so that they will shine together with Shabbos as one light [thereby elevating the weekdays to the level of Shabbos]. * (Noam Elimelech Beha'aloscha)

Count Down to Shabbos Kodesh –

This is the deeper meaning behind the commandment to “safeguard My Shabbosos” (Shemos 31:13). It should really say “Shabbosai [שַׁבְּתַי] — My Shabbos.” Why does the verse use two tavs here?

Shabbos is completely enveloped in the aspect of love of Hashem, and a person must connect the Shabbos with the rest of the week, which represents the aspect of fear of Hashem. As we just learned, fear must spring forth from love. When we connect the holy Shabbos to the weekday, the love of Shabbos then precedes the fear of the weekday, and thus fear grows from love.

This is why we count the days of the week according to Shabbos, as we say each day, “Today is the first day from Shabbos [i.e., Sunday],” and so on for each day of the week. In this way, the days are connected to Shabbos, and love thus permeates the weekday as well, causing fear to grow from love. Once fear and awe of Hashem develop from love, then even the weekdays can be called “Shabbos” since they are also on the level of divine love. However, they never reach the level of Shabbos itself, because Shabbos is pure love and the weekday is only fear that developed from love. Thus the week becomes only a partial or miniature Shabbos. This is why the word Shabbosai is in the plural form in the verse “Safeguard My Shabbosos” — to hint at two Shabbosos, the weekdays and the day of Shabbos, because the weekdays can also be called “Shabbos,” as we just proved. Therefore the verse contains two tavs, alluding to the fact that the weekday is different and never quite reaches the level of Shabbos, which is pure love.

The word תשמרו , “safeguard,” alludes to thought, as in the verse “And his father guarded [שמר] the matter in his thoughts” (Bereishis 37:11). This hints that love is mainly rooted in thoughts and contemplations of the heart, as we mentioned above.

What emerges from this is that we must connect the weekday to the holy Shabbos in order to permeate the weekday with the love of Shabbos, so that the fear of the weekdays will grow from love of Shabbos. Thus it says in the verse in Tehillim, “Teach us to count our days.” Hashem in His great mercy has taught us to count the weekdays according to Shabbos — “Today is the first day from Shabbos [Sunday]” and so on — so that our fear and awe will spring from love, just as Hashem’s fear comes from His love for us. (Noam Elimelech VaYigash)

Wednesday A Taste of Shabbos –

One of Rebbe Elimelech’s chassidim related that every Wednesday, when they chanted the psalm of the day from the daily shacharis morning prayers, and they reached the verse of “Lechu neranenah...” they already felt a taste of Shabbos. (Eser Tzachtzachos 26; Ohel Elimelech 247)

Erev Shabbos Like Erev Yom Kippur –

Once, the Tiferes Shlomo, the Rebbe of Radomsk, inquired after a woman who was old enough to remember Rebbe Elimelech. He wanted to hear from her one tale about the Rebbe. She related to him that she used to be a maid servant in the Rebbe's household she related that on Friday the atmosphere in Lizhensk was like that of Yom Kippur. The whole town would gather together in the shul and say tehillim with tears and emotion. Then the Rebbe would give them a mussar schmuess. (Eser Tzachtzachos 11, 65)

In The sefer Ohr LaShamayim (Parshas Behar): “I heard in the name of the holy Rebbe Elimelech that erev Shabbos has the same aspect as erev Yom Kippur.”

The author of Chesed L’Avraham, Rav Azulai, asked Rebbe Elimelech after they had already entered the higher worlds, “How is it that I authored ten sefarim and merited that they are even studied in the heavens, but at the mere mention of the name of the Rebbe Reb Elimelech, there is a great tumult in the heavens? What did you do to merit this?”

Rebbe Elimelech answered, “Every erev Shabbos, my household was full of such awe that even the maids would fall down crying and begging each other for forgiveness saying, ‘Forgive me if I offended you all week long!’ They would cry and forgive one another as people do on erev Yom Kippur. This great feeling of awe emanated from me because of my awe of the approaching holy Shabbos day.” (Ohel Elimelech 197)

Shabbos is Coming –

The sound of Shabbos approaching rang in the Rebbe Reb Elimelech’s ears like a bell. When Shabbos would arrive, Rebbe Elimelech couldn’t stand the lofty sirens and heavenly tolling that he heard, warning of the arrival of the holy day. The sounds of the holiness of Shabbos caused him so much pain that he had to stop up his ears. Not only did the Rebbe shudder from the sound of the approaching Shabbos, but everyone in the house was seized with trembling and fear. The maidservants had to finish all their preparations before midday; if they did any type of work afterward, it would spill or fall from their hands. (Ohel Elimelech 30, and 229 in the name of the Koznitzer Maggid; Eser Tzachtzachos 41)

Shabbos Atones for the 39 Curses –

A piece of advice. The root of all sins comes from the original sin of eating from the tree of knowledge,

which resulted in the land being cursed with thirty-nine curses which pollute man. When a person keeps Shabbos properly, safeguarding all of its laws and abstaining from the thirty-nine forbidden categories of work, he rectifies the thirty-nine curses, and all the klippos, the impure shells and husks, disperse. * This is why our Sages say, “Anyone who keeps the Shabbos, even if he worships idols like the generation of Enosh he is forgiven” (Shabbos 118b). * This is what Moshe Rabbeinu was hinting at when he spoke to the people [at the beginning of Devarim]; he was giving them these pieces of advice. [The gematria of] “Eileh hadevarim — these words” alludes to safeguarding Shabbos with its thirty-nine categories of forbidden labor, as our Sages taught: “Rebbi said: ‘Devarim, hadevarim, eileh hadevarim’ — these are the thirty-nine categories of labor told to Moshe at Sinai” (Shabbos 97b). [Rashi explains on this gemara that the word devarim from the pasuk in Shemos 35:1 is plural. This alludes to two. The extra hei of hadevarim in our verse makes three. The “extra” word אלה equals 36. Together this comes to 39, thus hinting at the thirty-nine melachos.] The other piece of advice mentioned above is alluded to in the words of the verse “kol Yisrael” — that Moshe spoke to “all the Jewish people” — because one should bind oneself to the entire collective of klal Yisrael. * This then is the meaning of our verse, “These are the words which Moshe spoke to all of Israel” — besides the piece of advice regarding “all of Israel” [that we should include ourselves among the collective nation], Moshe added “these words” — a second piece of advice that alludes to keeping Shabbos in order to rectify the original sin. * (Noam Elimelech Devarim)

Friday Night Glow –

Rebbe Elimelech taught that it is a sign that one’s week passed in holiness if he feels a spiritual glow on Friday night. (Nesiv Mitzvosecha, Emunah 4:2)

Shabbos Seudah – the Soup –

Before Rav Mendel Rimanover was revealed as a Tzaddik and Rebbe possessing ruach hakodesh, divine intuition, he appeared at Rebbe Elimelech’s table as just another chassid, a regular devoted follower.

One Shabbos, the Rimanover was sitting with all the other chassidim when the shamash brought in the Rebbe’s soup and placed it in front of the Rebbe. The Rebbe took the bowl of soup in his hands, overturned it, and spilled its contents onto the table. Suddenly gripped with fear, the Rimanover shouted, “Oy! Rebbe! Surely they will put us all in jail. You must stop immediately!”

The other guests almost burst out laughing at hearing such strange remarks coming from Reb Mendel, but they restrained themselves in the presence of their holy Rebbe. Rebbe Elimelech said to Reb Mendel, “Relax, my son, we are all safe. We are all here right now.” The others were astonished at the Rebbe’s remarks until Rebbe Elimelech explained what had transpired that had led him and Reb Mendel to say what they did.

“A high-ranking government official had decided to pass a harsh decree against the Jews. He had tried many times before, unsuccessfully, to write out charges and have the king stamp and seal them with his ring. Today he wrote out the charges once again, determined that this time nothing would stop him from carrying out his wicked plan. He was about to use sand to blot the ink and dry it when I overturned my soup bowl. The official became momentarily confused, picked up the inkwell instead, and proceeded to spill ink all over the accusatory letter he had just written! This young man,” the Rebbe concluded, indicating Reb Mendel, “was able to witness what I did, but only by divesting himself fully from the physical world. He forgot that we were in fact here in this room. He imagined

that I had actually used my hand and physically overturned the inkwell. He became frightened, and in his terror he called out for fear that we would be arrested for my actions.”

Now everyone understood what lofty a level of ruach hakodesh this young man could perceive. (Ohel Elimelech 185)

Mussaf and Kedushas Keser –

The holy Rebbe of Kozmir related that the holy Rebbe Elimelech was once reciting the Kedushas Keser service in the Shabbos mussaf prayers, where we declare that we should crown Hashem just as the angels do in Heaven, and Rebbe Elimelech took out his pocket watch and glanced at it. Later he said, “I looked at my watch because I felt such sweetness when reciting the Keser I was afraid my soul would expire from the intensity of it. I felt that I had to look at some physical object from this world so that I could force my soul to remain in my body.” (Eser Tzachtzachos 42; Ohel Elimelech 31 from Mishmeres Isamar, Acharei Mos)

Shalosh Seudos – An Inheritance without boundaries –

There are two levels for Tzaddikim. There is the Tzaddik who serves Hashem out of fear all week long until Shabbos, and when Shabbos comes he serves Him out of love. This is because the aspect of Shabbos is that of love, and thus, through Shabbos, the Tzaddik comes to serve Hashem out of love. Then there is the Tzaddik who serves Hashem out of love during the week as well. Such a Tzaddik is called “Shabbos,” as the holy Zohar teaches, “A talmid chacham is called ‘Shabbos’ ” (Zohar III:29a). This is because Shabbos itself is an aspect of love, and since such a Tzaddik has the same aspect he is called “Shabbos” as well.

This is what the Sages meant when they said, “All who delight in Shabbos are given an inheritance without constraints” (Shabbos 118a). Nachalah, inheritance, can be read as a compound of “nachal Hashem,” the river of G-d, referring to the spiritual river that flows in the higher worlds from which the Tzaddik draws down the influx of divine blessing called shefa to klal Yisrael. The Tzaddik who is on the level of love, which is also the aspect of Shabbos, receives that influx of divine blessing without suffering or constraints. (Noam Elimelech Ki Savo)

Melaveh Malka

A segulah for an easy childbirth — eat every motza’ei Shabbos in honor of the melaveh malkah meal. (Ohel Elimelech 39)

Rebbe Elimelech of Lizhensk left this world on 21 Adar 5547 (1787) at the age of seventy. It is said that before his passing, Eliyahu HaNavi paid him a visit. Rebbe Elimelech asked the prophet to invite the holy Avos to see him. They all came except David HaMelech, who refused to come. He said he felt slighted because “the Rebbe did not honor me and he did honor my meal, the seudah of melaveh malkah, which escorts out the Shabbos Queen.

Therefore I do not wish to come.” Rebbe Elimelech promised David HaMelech that he would command his children and offspring to guard the path of Hashem and to honor the seudah of melaveh malkah as well. Upon hearing the Rebbe’s promise, David HaMelech consented to come and visit Rebbe Elimelech. (Ohel Elimelech 212)

Rebbe Elazar, the son of Rebbe Elimelech of Lizhensk, was once staying in Koznitz for Shabbos. During the melaveh malkah meal escorting out the Shabbos Queen, several people came up to Rebbe Elazar and told him that they had been commanded to prepare an ice-cold mikveh for the Koznitzer Maggid by the Maggid himself. The Maggid was extremely weak and such an immersion would be dangerous for the Tzaddik; but orders were orders.

The Maggid had requested that the dangerously cold mikveh be prepared in order to fulfill a request that someone had given him on a kvittel that requested he aid a woman who was having difficulty in childbirth. Rebbe Elazar told them not to prepare the mikveh. It was unnecessary because she had already given birth. The next day, when Rebbe Elazar was in the presence of the Maggid, he asked him how Rebbe Elazar had succeeded in helping the woman so easily without the use of the cold mikveh. Rebbe Elazar answered that his father Rebbe Elimelech once told him to be scrupulously careful in melaveh malkah.

“I told my father that it was hard for me to eat on motza’ei Shabbos. However, he promised me that whatever I would wish to achieve I would succeed in doing if I made sure to eat melaveh malkah. Since I knew the mikveh was cold and the Maggid was in mortal danger, I used my father’s holy promise.”
(Ohel Elimelech 285)