

צִרִיךְ לְזַהֵר מְאֹד, שֶׁלֹּא לֵאכֹל פְּרִי שֶׁלֹּא

Fruit Before Its Time

THE TEACHING

Rebbe Nachman warns: be very careful not to eat fruit (פְּרִי) that has not fully ripened. Just as Chazal forbid cutting down a tree before its time, so it is forbidden to pick fruit before it ripens, and to eat it; it can do great harm to the soul.

A fruit that is still growing needs life (חַיּוּת), so it has a drawing power, כֹּחַ הַמּוֹשֵׁךְ, that keeps drawing its nourishment. Once it is fully ripe that power stops. So one who eats it too early is in danger: the fruit can draw the life of his soul into itself.

MAIN POINTS

- Even so, if he says the blessing (בְּרַכָּה) over the fruit with כּוֹנֵנָה and fear of Heaven (יִרְאַת־שָׁמַיִם), he can be saved. One very strong in serving Hashem can even draw more life out of the fruit and find lost things (אֲבֵדוֹת) there.
- Cooking unripe fruit at home does not help. But picked fruit left for a while until it ripens by itself may be eaten: like a tired man panting until he rests, it must first rest from its panting.
- There is an angel (מַלְאָךְ) with officers under him, all holding shofars. They dig and search for lost things always, blowing תְּקִיעָה, תְּרוּעָה, תְּקִיעָה; when they find one there is great tumult and joy.
- Much is lost through desires (תַּאֲוֹת): “תַּאֲוֹת רָשָׁעִים תֵּאבֵד” (תהלים קיב:), “the desire of the wicked shall perish.” Its first letters are תְּקִיעָה, תְּרוּעָה, תְּקִיעָה, the very sounds the angels blow.
- Even a tzaddik is sometimes lost: “יֵשׁ צַדִּיק אֶבֶד בְּצַדִּיקוֹ” (קהלת ז:טו), “there is a tzaddik lost in his righteousness.” Even those who dig for lost things are sometimes lost: “יִתְחַפְּרוּ וַיֵּאבְדוּ” (תהלים פג:יח); “עֵת לֵאבֵד” (קהלת ג:ו), “a time to lose.”
- The Rebbe also spoke of how very hard it is to be a receiver (מְקַבֵּל), and of “קִנְיַת סוֹפְרִים תִּרְבֶּה חֲכָמָה” (בבא בתרא כא.), “the rivalry of scholars increases wisdom”, without explaining.
- Reb Noson adds that the Rebbe said all of it is one: the fruit, the angel, and the kavanos of Elul (כּוֹנֵנַת אֱלוּל), which repair the covenant. And there are great secrets in it.

A PRACTICAL TAKEAWAY · OUR OWN REFLECTION

Don't rush what isn't ready yet. Make every בְּרַכָּה count; it can turn even a risk into a find. And nothing lost is beyond finding.

In the full shiur: 1. Fruit Before Its Time · 2. The Angels Who Search for Lost Things

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