

“וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה, אֲמַר אֶל”

(ויקרא כא:א)

Prayer, the Weapon of Mashiach

THE TEACHING

Mashiach's main weapon is prayer (תפילה), which is the nose, the breath of life:

“מִנּוֹקְבֵּא דְּפִרְדְּשָׁקָא מִשְׁךְ רוּחָא דְּחַיִּי לְמַשִּׁיחָא” (זהר תרומה קעז), “from the openings of the nose the spirit of life is drawn to Mashiach”, as Hashem says, “וּתְהַלְלֵתִי אֲחֻטָּם לָךְ” (ישעיהו מח:ט), “with My praise I restrain My anger for you.”

That sword is won by guarding the covenant (שמירת הברית) and aimed true by judgement (משפט), which comes through charity (צדקה). And every prayer is bound to the tzaddik of the generation (צדיק הדור), who builds it into the Shechinah's (שכינה) complete form.

MAIN POINTS

- Prayer is Yaakov's “בְּחֶרֶבִי וּבִקְשָׁתִי” (בראשית מח:כב), “with my sword and my bow”, which Rashi explains as prayer and supplication. It is a double-edged sword, “וְיַחְרֹב פִּיפִיּוֹת בְּיָדָם” (תהלים קמט:ו): one edge praises Hashem, the other asks for our needs.
- Yosef, who guarded the covenant, received the birthright (בכורה), which is prayer; Reuven lost it. To aim the sword neither right nor left takes משפט, the middle pillar: “וַיִּכְלֹל דְּבָרָיו בְּמִשְׁפָּט” (תהלים קיב:ה), “he measures his words with judgement.”
- Judgement comes through צדקה: “אֲלֵקִים שׁוֹפֵט, זֶה יִשְׁפִּיל וְזֶה יָרִים” (תהלים עה:ח). Giving lowers your wealth and raises the poor, so we give before praying. Yosef sustained his family, “וַיִּכְלֹל יוֹסֵף אֶת אָבִיו” (בראשית מז:יב), and his prayer flowed freely.
- Foreign thoughts in prayer (מחשבות זרות) come from damaged judgement, which is the eyes: “כִּי הִשְׁחַד יַעֲזֹר עֵינֵי חֲכָמִים” (דברים טז:יט). They are clouds over the eyes. When judgement is repaired, “עֵינִי בָּעֵינִי יִרְאוּ בָּשׁוּב ה' צִיּוֹן” (ישעיהו נב:ח).
- Each prayer is a limb of the Shechinah, a piece of the Mishkan (משכן), and only Moshe could join every piece in its place: “וַיָּבִיאוּ אֶת הַמִּשְׁכָּן אֶל מֹשֶׁה” (שמות לט:לג). The Torah we learn joins the prayer as sparks of souls.
- Rabbah bar bar Chanah's great fish is the tzaddik; the sand on its back, our prayers; the grass, the souls. We thought prayers bear no fruit, but they rise and build until “גִּבְיָהּ אֶתְהַפֵּךְ”, its back turns over; judgement becomes mercy. The ship is חסד, His kindness, without which we would sink.
- So “אֲמַר אֶל הַכֹּהֲנִים”: speak is prayer, the Kohanim are Torah and souls, Aharon is judgement. And not becoming impure is guarding the covenant, for scent depends on purity: “בְּנִי, טָהֳרָה יֵשׁ בָּךְ” (סוטה מט), “my son, there is purity in you.”

A PRACTICAL TAKEAWAY · OUR OWN REFLECTION

Before you pray, give a coin of tzedakah. Bind your prayer to the true tzaddikim. And never think a prayer was wasted: each one is built into something whole.

In the full shiur: 1. Prayer, the Weapon of Mashiach · 2. Charity, Judgement and Clear Eyes · 3. Bringing Every Prayer to the Tzaddik · 4. The Great Fish, the Ship, and Emor

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