

“רְאִיתִי וְהִנֵּה מְנוֹרַת זָהָב כְּלָה וְגָלָה”

(זכריה ד:ב)

The Golden Menorah: The Sigh That Fills What Is Missing

THE TEACHING

How precious is the sigh of a Jew (אֲנָחָה), for it fills what is missing. Everything lives by its breath (רוּחַ): “תִּשְׁלַח רוּחְךָ יְבָרְאוּן” (תהלים קד:ל). A lack is breath that has left, and a long sigh draws the spirit of life (רוּחַ חַיִּים) back into it.

That spirit is in the Torah and comes through the true tzaddik (צַדִּיק); the scorners of the tzaddik draw a stormy wind from Esav, strong for its hour but doomed. As Zechariah's golden menorah teaches:

“לֹא בְכֹחַ וְלֹא בִּזְמַחַת, אֲנִי הֵנִי” (זכריה ד:ו), “not by might, nor by power, but by My spirit.”

MAIN POINTS

- The spirit is in the Torah, “וְרוּחַ אֱלֹקִים מְרַחֶפֶת עַל פְּנֵי הַמַּיִם” (בראשית א:ב), and the tzaddik who clings to it is “אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר רוּחַ בּוֹ” (במדבר כו:יח), meeting each person's spirit. It is the north wind on David's harp, the spirit hidden, צָפוֹן, in the heart.
- The wicked draw from the rav of the other side, Esav, “יֵשׁ לִי רֶב” (בראשית לג:ט), the hairy man (שַׁעִיר), a storm (סַעֲרָה). So in exile Israel is “עֲנִיָּה סַעֲרָה” (ישעיהו נד:יא). Whoever clings to the tzaddikim receives the true spirit.
- Every lack comes from sin, so drawing the spirit into it atones: “וְאִישׁ חָכָם יִכְפָּרְנָה” (משלי טז:יד). In the Thirteen Attributes, long-patient (אָרַךְ אַפַּיִם) is the long breath, and abundant in kindness (רַב חֶסֶד) is the tzaddik, against Esav.
- Not everyone may provoke the wicked: only a complete tzaddik, “לֹא יֵאָנֶה לְצַדִּיק כָּל אָוֶן” (משלי יב:כא), with no evil left in any of the four elements, “מִשְׁפִּיל רְשָׁעִים עַדֵּי אָרֶץ” (תהלים קמו:ו). Otherwise “כִּבְלֵעַ רְשָׁע צַדִּיק מִמֶּנּוּ” (חבקוק א:יג).
- Good is separated from evil through Torah and prayer: learning the poskim “לָלוֹן לְעִמְקָהּ שֶׁל הַלֶּכֶה” (יואל ד:ח), with understanding drawn from prayer, “וּמַעַיֵן מַפִּית הִי יֵצֵא” (ישעיהו כד:טז), the river that waters the garden.
- The four tzitzis (צִיצִית) and the white tallis subdue Esav's storm and red mantle: “לְאַחֲזוֹ בְּכַנְפוֹת הָאֶרֶץ וַיִּנָּעְרוּ רְשָׁעִים מִמֶּנָּה” (איוב לח:יג). In the tale of the dead of the desert, the tzaddik cuts the channel of their bad trait, then gives back every trace of it, separating it from himself completely.
- After Egypt Israel received the Torah, and every lack is filled: “הִרְחֹב פִּיךָ וְאִמְלֵאָהוּ” (תהלים פא:יא). Now the storm has its hour, but “מִכְנַף הָאֶרֶץ זְמַרְתָּ שְׁמַעְנוּ צְבִי לְצַדִּיק” (ישעיהו כד:טז).

A PRACTICAL TAKEAWAY · OUR OWN REFLECTION

When something in your life is missing, do not swallow it: let out a real sigh to Hashem, and stay bound to the true tzaddik. And when the wicked look strong, remember that a storm is strong only for its hour.

In the full shiur: 1. The Sigh That Fills What Is Missing · 2. The Storm Wind and the Thirteen Attributes · 3. Who May Stand Up to the Wicked · 4. Not Swallowed, and the Depth of Halachah · 5. The Spring, the Garden and the River from Eden · 6. Tzitzis and the White Tallis · 7. The Dead of the Desert · 8. Give Back What You Took · 9. The Golden Menorah · 10. Short of Breath in Egypt, a Full Mouth After · 11. Songs from the Corner of the Earth

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