

“וַיְהִי מִקֵּץ שְׁנָתַיִם יָמִים, וּפָרְעָה חָלָם וְכוּ'”

(בראשית מא:א)

The Compassionate Leader

THE TEACHING

“כִּי מִרְחֻמִּים יִנְהַגִּם” (ישעיה מט:י): only one who is truly compassionate (רַחֲמָן) can lead. Real compassion knows what each can receive: milk for a baby, bread for a grown man. And the greatest compassion is to bring knowledge (דַּעַת) into a person, for sin, the heaviest burden for a Jew, comes only from folly.

A soul is complete only when its דַּעַת lives on below through a son or a student, and whoever teaches is filled with higher, surrounding lights (מְקִיפִים). The true tzaddik (צַדִּיק) shows the great that they do not yet know, and the fallen that Hashem is with them, so no one despairs.

MAIN POINTS

- Moshe ignored “I will make you a great nation” and said only “אִם תִּשָּׂא חֲסָאתָם” (שמות לב:לב): his compassion was to fill the world with people of דַּעַת. (סוטה ג.)
- The righteous have “חֲלִיפּוֹת”, a son or a student; the word is the initials of “תְּבוּנוֹת לְפִי וְהַגּוֹת לְבָרִךְ חֲכָמוֹת” (תהלים מט:ד). Even two friends speaking of fear of Heaven (יִרְאַת שָׁמַיִם) become teacher and student, and only words with fear of Heaven are heard and last.
- When you pour out your understanding, the surrounding light comes in: “מָה תִּכְלִית הִידִיעָה אֲשֶׁר לֹא נִדְעָ” (דברים ל:יד). Its peak is “כִּי קָרוֹב אֵלֶיךָ הַדְּבָר מְאֹד, בְּפִיךָ וּבִלְבָבְךָ לַעֲשׂוֹתוֹ” (סוטה ג.).
- The tzaddik holds heaven and earth: to those above, “אֵיחָה מְקוֹם כְּבוֹדוֹ”; to those below, even in the lowest depths, “מֵלֵא כָּל הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדוֹ” (ישעיה ו:ג). Never despair, whatever may be.
- Each answer opens a higher question, so the sage must fence his words, as Moshe was told: “וְהָיוּ מִתּוֹנִים בְּדִין, וְהָעֲמִידוֹ תִּלְמִידֵי הָרֶבֶה, וְעָשׂוּ סִיג לַתּוֹרָה” (אבות א:א). So: “שִׁתְּקָה, כִּי עָלָה בְּמַחֲשָׁבָה” (מנחות כט:).
- Then a shining of will (רְצוֹן) at the meal, beyond words; livelihood through kingship (מַלְכוּת), the Leviathan; and “סֵלַח נָא לַעֲוֹן הָעָם הַזֶּה” (במדבר יד:יט), whose initials spell חֲנֻכָּה. Last, the Torah decodes the voyage of Rabbi Eliezer and Rabbi Yehoshua, and the verse of Pharaoh's dream.

A PRACTICAL TAKEAWAY · OUR OWN REFLECTION

Share one true word of fear of Heaven with a friend today. If you feel far, remember that the whole earth is full of His glory, and never give up.

In the full shiur: 1. Compassion That Knows How to Lead · 2. The Heaviest Burden · 3. Filling the Earth with Da'as · 4. Chalifos: What Lives On After a Person · 5. Surrounding Lights: Very Near to You · 6. The World to Come, and Holding Heaven and Earth · 7. Never Despair, and Knowing What Not to Say · 8. Be Silent: Moshe, Rabbi Akiva and Pirkei Avos · 9. Son and Student: Two Kinds of Grasp · 10. Ratzon at the Table: Eating and Livelihood · 11. The Leviathan, the Manna, and Silence at the Meal · 12. Selach Na and the Secret of Chanukah · 13. Kohen and King, and the Breath of Life · 14. The Voyage of Rabbi Eliezer and Rabbi Yehoshua · 15. The Eyes of the Leviathan, and Pharaoh's Dream · 16. Moshe's Burial, and Closing Notes

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