

דע, שפונת אלול הם תקון לפגם הברית

Elul: A Way Through the Sea

THE TEACHING

A short teaching on the kavanos of Elul (כְּנוֹנוֹת אֱלוּל), as the Arizal teaches them: they are a repair for a blemish of the covenant (פְּגַם הַבְּרִית). Their secret is “הַנּוֹתֵן בַּיָּם דֶּרֶךְ” (ישעיה מו:טז), “Who makes a way in the sea”: to light up a way, דֶּרֶךְ, within the sea, and this way opens in the month of Elul.

Through this repair a person finds his match (זוּג), and she is of one will with him. Avraham passed this very secret to Eliezer.

MAIN POINTS

- דֶּרֶךְ is the 224 lights (רכ"ד) that should be lit within the sea, which is faith (אֱמוּנָה). The blemish of the covenant is turning aside from this way: “כִּי הִשְׁחִית כָּל בָּשָׂר אֶת דֶּרְכּוֹ” (בראשית ו:יב), “for all flesh had corrupted its way.”
- A wife is called דֶּרֶךְ, as Chazal teach, and there is another way: “דֶּרֶךְ אִשָּׁה מְנַאֲפֶת” (משלי ל:כ), “the way of an adulterous woman.” The main blemish is not lighting the way in the sea.
- Because he turned aside from his match, he may struggle to find her; and even if he finds her, she may be set against him, with a will opposed to his: “לֹא זָכָה – כְּנֻגְדּוֹ” (יבמות סג), “not worthy, she is against him.”
- In Elul this can be repaired and the way in the sea lit up. Then he finds his match, and she is not against him but of his will.
- Avraham told Eliezer “וְאִם לֹא תֵאָכֵל הָאִשָּׁה לְלֶכֶת אַחֲרָיִךְ” (בראשית כד:ח), “if the woman will not be willing to follow you.” The first letters spell אֱלוּל, and in the middle stand the words “תֵּאָכֵל הָאִשָּׁה”, “the woman will be willing.” In the words of the worry itself he revealed its repair.
- Another repair: to study Likutei Moharan I:6, which speaks of the kavanos of Elul, to understand it, and to do some real service of Hashem (עֲבוֹדַת הַשֵּׁם) with it.

A PRACTICAL TAKEAWAY · OUR OWN REFLECTION

Whatever way we turned from, Elul opens a path back through the sea of faith. Study, תשובה, and faith rebuild what was damaged, and even bring blessing into the home.

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