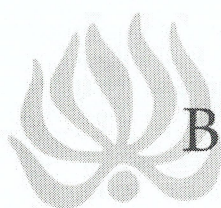


Hour of Learning - Yom Kippur 5783

Source Sheet by Rabbi Philip Sherman



B'NAI JEHOASHUA BETH ELOHIM
where *community* matters

Kabir, medieval Sufi poet:

I talk to my inner lover and I say, why such a rush?
We sense that there is some sort of spirit that loves birds
and animals and the ants --
perhaps the same one who have radiance to you in your
mother's womb,
Is it logical you would be walking around entirely
orphaned now?
The truth is you turned away yourself, and decided to
go into the dark alone.
Now you're tangled up in others and have forgotten what
you once knew,
and that's why everything you do has some weird failure
in it.

Isaiah 58:1-14

(5) Is this the fast I have chosen,
Is this your affliction of the soul?
Is it to droop your head like a bullrush, to
grovel in sackcloth and ashes?
Is this what you call fasting, a fast that the
LORD would accept? (6) No, this is the fast I
desire:
To loosen all the bonds that bind men
unfairly, let the oppressed go free, break
every yoke.
(7) It is to share your bread with the hungry,

ישעיהו נ"ח:א'-י"ד

(ה) הַכֹּזֶה יִהְיֶה צוֹם אֲבָחֶהוּ יוֹם עֲנוּת
אָדָם נַפְשׁוֹ הִלְכָּהּ כְּאֶגְמֹן רֹאשׁוֹ וְשָׁק וְאָפֶר
יֵצִיעַ הִלָּזָה תִּקְרָא-צוֹם וַיּוֹם רָצוֹן לַיהוָה:
(ו) הֲלוֹא זֶה צוֹם אֲבָחֶהוּ פִתְחַל חֲרָצְבוֹת
לְשַׁע הַתֵּר אֲגַדּוֹת מוֹטָה וְשִׁלַּח רְצוּצִים
חֲפָשִׁים וְכָל-מוֹטָה תִּנְתְּקוּ: (ז) הֲלוֹא פָרַס
לְרֹעַב לַחֲמֶה וְעֲנִיִּים מְרוּדִים תִּבְיֵא בֵּית
כִּי-תִרְאֶה עָרֶם וְכִסְתִּיתוּ וּמִבְשָׂרְךָ לֹא

and to take the homeless into your home;
Clothe the naked when you see him, do not
turn away from people in need.

(8) Then shall your light burst through like
the dawn,

And your healing spring up quickly.

תתעלם: (ח) אז יבקע כשחר אורך
וארכתך מהרה תצמח והלך לפניך צדקך
כבוד יהוה יאסף:

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks z"l, A Letter in the Scroll, pg. 43-44

Several centuries of Western thought, beginning in the Enlightenment, have left us with the idea that when we choose to live, we are on our own. Nothing in the past binds us. We are whoever and whatever we choose to be.... One way of dramatizing the contrast [between this idea and Judaism] is to imagine we are in a vast library. In every direction we look there are bookcases. Each has shelves stretching from floor to ceiling and each shelf is full of books. We are surrounded by the recorded thoughts of many people, some great, some less so, and we can reach out and take any book we wish. All we have to do is choose. We begin to read, and for a while we are immersed in the world, real or imaginary, of the writer. It may intrigue us enough to lead us to look for another book by the same writer, or perhaps on the same subject. Alternatively, we can break off and try a different subject, a different approach; there is no limit...

Now imagine that while browsing in the library, you come across one book unlike the rest, which catches your eye because on its spine is written the name of your family. Intrigued, you open it and see many pages written by different hands in many languages. You start reading it, and gradually you begin to understand what it is. It is the story each generation of your ancestors has told for the sake of the next, so that everyone born into this family can learn where they came from, what happened to them, what they lived for and why. As you turn the pages, you reach the last which carries no entry but a heading. It bears your name....



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