

Doors Have Soul

They are the guardians of boundaries, they serve both to divide and connect the psychic topography of the house keeping its imaginations multiple, and each part in direct or indirect relation with every other part. Doors make and mark tension between the diverse elements within the house...the art of the door makes of arriving, departing, and returning a ritual process that assures that the house will not be taken for granted. Clothe your entrance with such images.

(Robert Sardello, Facing the World with Soul: The Reimagination of Modern Life)



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The Teacher Is The Door

רבי מאיר אומר: אם למדת מרוב אחד, אל תאמר: די. אלא לך אצל חכם ולמד תורה, ואל תאמר: לא אלך אלא למי שהוא קרוב אלי. שנאמר: "אם תבקשנה ככסף וכמטמונים תחפשנה" (משלי ב:ד). וחובה הוא לאדם שישמש שלשה תלמידי חכמים, כגון רבי אליעזר ורבי יהושע ורבי עקיבא. שנאמר: "אשרי אדם שומע לי לשקד על דלתתי יום יום, לשמר מזוזת פתחיי" (משלי ח: לד). אל תקרי "דלתתי", אלא "דלת דלתתי". "כי אינך יודע איזה מהם יתקיימו ביך. הנה או זה, או שניהם כאחד טובים, שנאמר: "בבקר זרע את זרעך" (קהלת יא: ו).

Rabbi Meir says: If you have learned from one master, do not say, that's enough. Rather, go to a sage and learn Torah. Do not say, I won't go except to someone who is close by. As it says: *Seek it as you do silver, and search for it as for treasures* (Proverbs 2:4). And it is a person's obligation to seek out three sages like Rabbi Eliezer, Rabbi Yehoshua, and Rabbi Akiba; as it says: *Happy is the one who listens to me, coming early to my doors each day, watching at my doorposts/mezuzot.* (Proverbs 8:34). Do not take it to mean, *my doors/daltotai*, but rather, *one door that leads to my other my doors/delet-daltotai*. For you do not know which of them might succeed for you. Perhaps this one, or this one; or perhaps one is just as good as the other. As it says: *Sow your seed in the morning and do not hold back your hand in the evening, since you do not know which is going to succeed, the one or the other, or if both are equally good* (Ecclesiastes 11:4).

(Avot d'Rabbi Natan, chapter 3)



You Open for Him

אֶת פֶּתַח לוֹ
בְּהִיּוֹתוֹ נְמוּד מְלִפְתָּח
אֶת שְׂאֵהוּ עַל כְּתֻפֵּיךְ
וְהַרְגִיעָהוּ "אַל תִּירָא"
לְאֵט פֶּתַח לוֹ, בְּפִתּוּחַ אֵינוֹ מְרַגֵּל
עַד כֹּה דָמָה שֶׁהַכֹּל פְּתוּחַ
הַקִּירוֹת, דָּמָה, עֲבִירִים וְשְׂקוּפִים כְּמִשָּׁב שֶׁל רוּחַ
הַקִּירוֹת, דָּמָה, פְּקוּחִים כְּמִשׁוֹר סְבֻלָּנִי, מִפְּהֶק
מִשְׂקוּף וּמְזוּזָה לֹא הִכִּיר לְדַעַת
לֹא צִיר וְלֹא דָלֶת
אֶת שְׂאֵהוּ לְחַכֵּךְ צְדִיו בְּמְזוּזוֹת
תַּחַת הַמִּשְׂקוּף לְהַרְכִּין רֹאשׁוֹ
לְאֵט עַל הַסֵּף הַנִּיחָהוּ
עַד בְּטַח יִפְסַע, לֹא כְּנִמְלֵט
מִבַּעַד מִפִּתְּן הַדָּלֶת.

You open for him
when he is too small to open
you lift him to your shoulders
and soothe him with "don't be afraid"
open for him slowly, he is unaccustomed to openings
'til now he imagined that everything was open
the walls, he imagined, were as open and transparent as the breeze
the walls, he imagined, as were as open eyed as a patient plain, yawning
he recognized neither lintel nor doorposts
neither hinge nor door
you lift him so that he rubs his sides against the doorposts
so that he bows his head beneath the lintel
gently you set him on the threshold
so that he is surefooted, not like a refugee
standing on the threshold.

Rivka Miriam

Translated by Rabbi Steven Sager

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