

OU JERUSALEM CENTRE.

RABBI DR ALAN ABRAHAM KIMCHE

“Great Jewish Thinkers”

Rabbi Joseph Ber Soloveitchik (1903-1993)

1. A most influential and significant Jewish Leader of 20th century.
2. a 200 years rabbinical dynasty of both paternal and maternal.
3. Named after his great-grandfather the “Beis Halevy” RY Volozhin
4. Talmudic training in Russia and academic training in Berlin
5. 1932 moved to USA Boston representative of Agudat Yisrael
6. 1935 only visit to Israel to submit candidacy for ChR of Tel Aviv
7. 1944 Chairman of Mizrachi Religious Zionists of America.
8. Rosh Yeshiva University RIETS Rabbinical College 1941-1986
9. Non-messianic Religious Zionism - “Kol Dodi Dofek” 1956
10. “Lonely Man of Faith” - 1965. Religious Existentialism.

KOL DODI DOFEK: COVENANT OF FATE – COVENANT OF DESTINY

The two halves of Judaism which together create Klal Yisrael.

The Covenant of Fate (goral) and the Covenant of Destiny (yeud).

The Jewish People are a community of Fate in four ways: We have historical events in common; We identify with each other’s suffering; We recognize responsibility in confronting challenges; and we engage in shared action. Regardless of the degree or nature of religious commitment, Jews share a history; we feel the suffering of fellow Jews, we feel responsibility for other Jews, in good times and in bad; and we are capable of concerted action.

Fate is not chosen. Fate is what happens TO us. The Holocaust was the most tragic form of Fate.

In contrast, Destiny is about choice. A nation, like an individual, “freely chooses an existence in which it finds the full realization of its historical experience.” Destiny is about what we choose to DO with our life.

The Exodus from Egypt constituted the Jewish people in terms of a Covenant of Fate: God extracted the people from slavery unilaterally. In contrast the Covenant at Sinai gave the Jewish people its destiny and it is consequently negotiated between God and the nation. We had to choose to accept it, naaseh ve'nishma.

In the halacha, all male conversion requires circumcision and immersion, in addition to acceptance of Mitzvot. **Circumcision introduces the male convert into the Jewish people. It represents the covenant of Fate**, the indelible physical mark of being separated from other nations to become part of the Jewish people. **Immersion represents the covenant of Destiny**, the “elevation from life as it is, to a life infused with a unique exalted vision.” The personal individual conversion into Judaism totally reflects the national historical conversion of the nation into People of God.

THE COVENANT OF SINAI RAMBAM. ISSUREI BIAH CH.13

בְּשִׁלְשָׁה דְּבָרִים נִכְנָסוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל לְבְרִית. בְּמִילָה וּטְבִילָה וְקֶרֶבֶן

There were three ways in which the Jewish People entered the covenant: 1)circumcision, 2)immersion, and 3)by an offering.

**מִילָה הֵיְתָה בְּמִצְרַיִם שְׁנֶאֱמַר (שמות יב מח) "וְכָל עֶרְל לֹא יֹאכַל בו". מֵל אוֹתָם מִשֶּׁה רָבִנוּ שְׁכַלְמִים בְּטָלוּ בְרִית מִילָה בְּמִצְרַיִם חוּץ
"מִשְׁבֵּט לְוִי וְעַל זֶה נֶאֱמַר (דברים לג ט) "וּבְרִיתְךָ יִנְצְרוּ**

Circumcision as it was in Egypt, as it says, "Every uncircumcised person shall not eat of it (the Passover offering)." Moses our teacher circumcised them as everyone forgot circumcision in

Egypt with the exception of the Tribe of Levi. On this it says, "Your covenant was preserved."

**וּטְבִילָה הִיְתָה בַּמִּדְבָּר קֹדֶם מִתֵּן תּוֹרָה שְׁנֵאָמַר (שְׁמוֹת י ט י)
 "וְקִדְשְׁתֶּם הַיּוֹם וּמָחָר וְכַבְּסוּ שְׂמֹלֵתְכֶם". וְקָרְבַּן שְׁנֵאָמַר (שְׁמוֹת כד
 ה) "וַיִּשְׁלַח אֶת נְעָרֵי בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיַּעֲלוּ עֵלֶיךָ", עַל יְדֵי כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל
 הַקְּרִיבוּ:**

Immersion was in the desert before receiving the Torah, as is said, "Sanctify yourselves today and tomorrow; wash your clothes." The offering, as is said, "Send the young ones of Israel to bring elevation offerings" - on behalf of everyone in Israel.

**וְכִן לְדוֹרוֹת כְּשִׁירְצָה הָעַכְשָׁנִים לְהַכְנִיס לְבְרִית וְלְהַסְתּוֹפֵף תַּחַת כַּנְּפֵי
 הַשְּׁכִינָה וַיִּקְבַּל עֲלֵיוֹ עַל תּוֹרָה צָרִיךְ מִילָה וּטְבִילָה וְהִרְצָאת קָרְבַּן.
 וְאִם נִקְבָּה הִיא טְבִילָה וְקָרְבַּן שְׁנֵאָמַר (בַּמִּדְבָּר טו טו) "כָּכֶם כָּגֵר".
 מָה אַתֶּם בְּמִילָה וּטְבִילָה וְהִרְצָאת קָרְבַּן אִף הַגֵּר לְדוֹרוֹת בְּמִילָה
 וּטְבִילָה וְהִרְצָאת קָרְבַּן:**

Similarly for all future generations, any non-Jew who wants to enter the covenant and come in under the 'wings of the Presence of God' and accepts upon him or herself the yoke of Torah - he needs circumcision, immersion and a Temple offering. If female, she needs only immersion and an offering, as is said "As for you, so for the foreigner." That's to say, just as you (entered the Covenant via) circumcision, immersion and an offering, so too the foreigner (shall enter via) circumcision, immersion and an offering.