



The Wisdom of the Seismograph

Rabbi Noah Farkas

The first seismograph was invented in 132 C.E. by the Chinese astronomer and mathematician Chang Heng. He called it an "earthquake weathercock." He created an earthen vessel with eight dragons around its perimeter facing towards the center. When the earth shook, the ball balanced precariously between the teeth of the monster would slip down its throat making a ringing sound that would alert those around of an earthquake and from which direction it came from. Chang found out that if you can make an instrument sensitive enough, tremors miles away can be seen right in front of you.

Modern seismographs are even more sensitive. A shaking of the earth in any part of the world can be felt by a sufficiently sensitive instrument everywhere else in the world. What the seismograph shows us is what has always been there. That everything in the universe is connected somehow. The foundation of spiritual truth is our connectedness. Boundaries are a destructive illusion because they seduce us to think that we are alone in the world and thus can neglect the needs of others. Under this illusion is a deeper truth that our lives are intertwined.

To be a Jew is to have a heart like a seismograph. Every deed, every laugh, every cry, can be felt anywhere and everywhere in the world. Never think that our actions do not affect others or that the deeds of others do not affect us. We are all one. Under the One. All you have to do is develop your heart to be sensitive enough to feel it. Develop your eyes to see beyond yourself. Develop your ears to listen to the heart song of the universe and you will know it.

Shema Yisrael Adonai Eloheinu Adonai Echad.