

Be Like A Theshold

רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר הַקָּפָר אָמַר: אַל תִּהְיֶה כְּמַשְׁקוֹף הָעֲלִיוֹן, שֶׁאֵין יָד בְּנִי-אָדָם יְכוּלָה לִגַּע בּוֹ. וְלֹא כְּאַסְקָפָה הָעֲלִיוֹנָה שֶׁמְבַלְעַת פְּרָצוּפוֹת. וְלֹא כְּאַסְקָפָה הָאֲמֻצָּעִית, שֶׁמְנַגֶּפֶת הָרִגְלִים. אֲלֹא הָיִי כְּאַסְקָפָה תַּחְתּוֹנָה שֶׁהַכֹּל דָּשִׁין בָּהּ. וְסוֹף כָּל הַבְּנֵן נִסְתָּר, וְהִיא בְּמִקּוֹמָה עוֹמֶדֶת.

Rabbi Elazar HaKappar said: Do not be like a lintel overhead that no one can reach; neither be like a door beam that injures faces, nor like a raised threshold that bruises feet. Rather, be like a low threshold that everyone crosses easily. In the end, the entire building might disappear, but the threshold will remain in place.

Avot d'Rabbi Natah end of chapter 26



How ironic and fitting that the lintel of Rabbi Eleazar's academy survives! The black basalt lintel with two eagles stretching a ribbon and wreath between them announces: *This is the academy of Rabbi Eleazar HaKappar. Zeh bet midrasho shel l'rabbi Eleazar HaKappar.*