

Magic Entanglement

BY RABBI DAVID WOLPE

Sir James Fraser, author of the anthropological classic "The Golden Bough" once formulated the second principle of magic as follows: "that things which have once been in contact with each other continue to act on each other at a distance after the physical contact has been severed." At first that seems magical indeed, contrary to our experience of the world. But modern physics agrees. The quantum theory of entanglement teaches that when two particles enter into a state of quantum entanglement they lose their individual identities and act as a unified system. Any change to one will be felt by another, even if they are light years apart.

What is true of particles is true of people. We continue to influence one another, inspire one another, both close and far. Joseph in Egypt was influenced by his brothers far away in Canaan. Once united, they would forever be entangled.

Rabbi Akiva left his wife Rachel to study for many years. When he returned he moved his students out of the way to greet her, insisting "Whatever I am is due to her." She lived with him in absence.

We meet and part; we live mobile lives. Yet those whom we have touched and those who have touched us, endure as a principle of magic, as a quantum entanglement.