

BEING JOYOUS

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לימוד הדבר תורה לזכות ר' שלום מרדכי הלוי שיי' בן רבקה לגאולה קרובה מן המיצר אל המרחב

THE GREATNESS OF SIMCHA

It is written in Tehillim "עבדו את ה' בשמחה", one should serve Hashem with Joy.

The Rambam writes: "The happiness a person should rejoice with when fulfilling mitzvos and having Ahavas Hashem is a great avoda. There is no greatness or honor other than celebrating before Hashem." The Rebbe explains that since a Yid is constantly serving Hashem in all he does, he should always be joyful.

(רמב"ם הל' לולב פ"ח הט"ו' שמחה ובטחון בה' ע' כ)

Chazal say that the Shechina does not rest on those who are sad, downhearted, or lightheaded. It only rests where the simcha of a mitzva is present.

When Elisha Hanavi became angry at Yehoiram Melech Yisroel for his wicked ways, the spirit of nevuah left him. Only after music was played before him, did the spirit of nevuah return.

(שבת ל' ע"ב, מלכים א' פ"ג)

The Alter Rebbe writes in Tanya that the only way to be victorious over the Yetzer Horah is through zerizus from simcha, not tainted with worries or sadness. This is comparable to two men wrestling; if one is downhearted and dejected, even if he is physically stronger, his opponent will easily overcome be victorious over him.

The Rebbe writes in a letter that one of the Yetzer Horah's most affective tactics is to cause a person to feel sad and downhearted. He looks for an opportune time, when one is tired and weary, and it is easy to pull him into a bad mood.

(תניא פרק כ"ו, אגרות קודש ח"כ ע' קכ"ז)

Reb Shlomo, a great chossid once related to his fellow chassidim, "Late one night, while learning, I suddenly felt the presence of someone sitting near me. Alarmed, I extinguished the candle and went to bed." The chassidim asked why he had done so, claiming that it may have been Eliyahu Hanavi. "It wasn't," answered Reb Shlomo. "Eliyahu Hanavi is always happy and this fellow was full of sadness, so I knew he must have come from kelipah."

(סיפורי חסידים זוין תורה ע' 147)

Walking around the marketplace, the Amora Rav Broika asked Eliyahu Hanavi if anyone who was there was meritorious of Olam Haboh, and Eliyahu Hanavi answered in the negative. Soon two

brothers entered the marketplace, and Eliyahu Hanavi pointed to them, saying, "These will merit Olam Haboh." Rav Broika approached them and asked them how they conduct themselves. "We are joyful people and we make those who are sad, happy. If we hear about an argument, we make peace, using humor, between those quarreling."

(תענית כ"ב ע"א)

At a Farbrengen (יום ב' דחה"ס תשט"ז) the Rebbe quoted the tzaddik Reb Shimon of Yerislaw, one of the Talmidim of the Chozeh of Lublin ("גריוסע אידן"): "אז, when Moshiach comes, 'יאמרו בגוים, הגדיל ה' לעשות עם אלה', the goyim will ask us, 'היינו שמחים, in the merit of our simcha.'"

The Rebbe explained that Yidden should rejoice out of trust that Hashem will bring moshiach soon. This will then (כביכול) hasten Hashem in sending moshiach."

(תורת מנחם חט"ז ע' 51, מס' תורת שמעון' לקו"ש ח"כ ע' 384)

THE POWER OF SIMCHA

Crossing over a bridge in Danzig, the holy tzaddik Reb Simcha Bunim of P'shischa saw a man struggling in the waters below. Seeing no way of saving the Yid, he called out to him, "Send regards to the Levyasan!" At that moment, Hashem came to the man's aid, and he managed to catch onto a plank and save himself. Reb Simcha Bunim explained that due to the man's broken spirit, he could not be helped. "When I made a comment that slightly gladdened him, he was able to save himself with the power of simcha."

(שיח שרפי קודש עניני שמחה אות 5)

The Mittlerer Rebbe's kapelia included two groups of chassidim, musicians and horse riders, who would enliven joyous occasions. The Rebbe's son Nachum was one of the horse riders. One ordinary day, the Rebbe called for a performance and stood by his window to watch. Suddenly, Reb Nachum was flung from his horse and was badly hurt, but surprisingly, the Rebbe motioned that the performance continue. Meanwhile, a doctor was called, and after inspecting Reb Nachum, concluded, "He has only broken his leg." Later on, some chassidim asked the Mittlerer Rebbe why he had ordered that the performance continue despite the accident. "Why don't you ask the reason for calling for a performance on a regular day?" responded the Rebbe and he explained, "I became aware of a harsh decree being passed in

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shamayim above on my son, and being that simcha sweetens judgment, I called for the kapelia. The simcha helped, for his fall turned out much less than what had been planned for him, and to assure a complete recovery, I instructed that the festivities continue. With Hashem's help, he will recover completely."

(רשימות דברים ח"א ע' צד)

The Zohar says that the way one acts in this world, is the way that he is dealt with above. If a person is happy and acts joyously, then his situation will improve.

(זהר ח"ב קפ"ד ע"ב)

One Motzoei Yom Kippur, the Baal Shem Tov went out with his chassidim to say Kiddush Levana, but the moon was concealed by the many clouds covering the sky. Returning to his room, the Baal Shem Tov immersed himself in davening, and with heartfelt crying, he begged that the moon be revealed. But, the clouds did not part. The chassidim, waiting for their Rebbe, broke out in joyful dancing, thanking Hashem for the Yom Kippur they had properly spent. Soon, the Baal Shem Tov, drawn by their simcha, joined them, and suddenly, the clouds moved and the moon came out. With great ecstasy, the chassidim recited Kiddush Levana. Regarding this episode, the Baal Shem Tov would say, "What I could not bring about with my tefilos and yichudim, the chassidim were able to accomplish with the power of simcha."

(סיפורי חסידים זוין תורה ע' 115)

The holy Tzaddik Reb Elimelech from Lizhensk would often perform various afflictions on himself (סיגיפים) as a kappara, one of which was rolling in the snow without warm clothes. One cold, winter night, while rolling in the snow, Reb Elimelech did not notice a nail sticking out from a board, for it was covered in snow, and he rolled over it, piercing his hand. When he arrived home, his relatives, seeing the hole in his hand, made a great tumult and each gave their advice on how to stop the blood flow. Reb Elimelech's daughter, overhearing snippets of the discussion, thought they were discussing a hole in the wall, called out, "What's the big deal? Take some straw and stuff it up!" Hearing this, everyone began laughing, and suddenly Reb Elimelech stopped bleeding. Having this distraction taken care of, he then returned to his avoda. He later explained that there had been a decree passed above, but through the simcha his daughter had caused, a simcha had been aroused above, nullifying the decree.

(סיפורים למעשה ח"א)

BECOMING HAPPY

A chossid once told the Tzemach Tzedek of the sadness he felt, and the Rebbe told him, "This is truly shocking, for when one says 'שלא עשני גוי' in the morning and remembers that he is a Yid, this should give him sufficient simcha for the entire day."

Once, a Yid entered Reb Levi Yitzchok from Barditchev's room and saw him dancing happily whilst saying ברכות השחר. "Why all the simcha?" he asked. Reb Levi Yitzchok answered, "When I came to the bracha of 'שלא עשני גוי', I thought about the great merit of being a Yid and the possibility that it could have been otherwise..."

(מעשי אבותי בספר 'מגדל עז' אות קל"ו, תורת מנחם ח"ה ע' 172)

The Rebbe gave many reasons why one should have simcha: Hashem created him, He made him a Yid, He is always with him, He has given him so many things (as we say in ברכות השחר), for the ability one has to connect with Him, and that we are heading towards moshiach.

A chossid once wrote to the Tzemach Tzedek that he has difficulty feeling simcha. The Rebbe responded, "The thought, speech and action of a person have the greatest influence on his behavior. Therefore, one must make sure to only think thoughts that evoke happiness, to refrain from speaking about negative and dispiriting things, and behave in a joyful manner (even if he is currently not feeling so)."

To one person complaining about sadness the Rebbe wrote that one should be so busy doing what needs to be accomplished, that there be no time to think about sadness.

(אגרות קודש אדמו"ר הצ"צ ע' שכ"ג, אגרות קודש הי"ד ע' תק"ג)

Regarding a person's worries, it is written in Mishlei, "דאגה בלב איש." Rav Ami explains that this means one should remove the troubles from his mind (ישיחנה), and Rav Assi interprets it to mean that one should share them with another (ישיחנה).

(סנהדרין ק ע"ב)

The Baal Shem Tov said: "Worry and sadness is the source for all kelipos, and one cannot serve Hashem properly without simcha. The Yetzer Horah tries to persuade a person to be sad for failing to fulfill a certain Chumrah, telling him that he has committed a serious aveirah. The person must tell his Yetzer Horah, 'This is a trick to disturb my service of Hashem! For even if it truly is an aveira, it is more important to Hashem that I serve him with simcha.'"

(תולדות יעקב יוסף פ' משפטים, צוואת הריב"ש אות מ"ד)

Chazal say, משנכנס אדר מרבין בשמחה. The Rebbe explains (אדר) that this simcha begins with learning Torah, which 'gladdens the heart', and then brings it into action through the performance of mitzvos. This leads one to physical joy.

(סד"ש תשנ"ב ח"ב ע' 391)

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