

על-ידי זעה טובה

A Good Sweat Brings Joy

THE TEACHING

Through a good sweat (זעה טובה), the sweat of effort in something holy, joy (שמחה) comes about:

“וְשִׂמְחָתָּ בְּחֻגֶּךָ” (דברים טז:יג), “you shall rejoice in your festival”, the joy of a יום טוב. Not only a real festival: any day that is good is called a יום טוב.

Joy depends on the blood. Sadness (עצבות) comes from the spleen (טחול), which holds the cloudiness of the blood, and sweat draws that out.

MAIN POINTS

- In its measure, the spleen does good: it takes in the cloudy blood, and the rest of the blood stays pure.
- When that cloudiness overpowers, Heaven forbid, weakness and illness follow.
- The remedy is sweat. It carries out the poison (אָרס) in the cloudy blood that laid the person low; the blood is left pure, and joy comes instead of sadness.
- The letters of זעה are the first letters of “זֶה הַיּוֹם עָשָׂה ה'” (תהלים קיח:כד), “this is the day Hashem has made”: the joy of a יום טוב, made through a good sweat.
- So we see: a sick person, as soon as he begins to sweat, feels joy come over him.

A PRACTICAL TAKEAWAY · OUR OWN REFLECTION

When a mitzvah makes you work hard, welcome the effort. It clears away heaviness, and can turn an ordinary day into a יום טוב.

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