

“וַיֵּחַד יִתְרוֹ עַל כָּל הַטּוֹבָה”

(שמות יח:ט)

And Yisro Rejoiced: All the Joys Together

THE TEACHING

A second teaching on “וַיֵּחַד יִתְרוֹ עַל כָּל הַטּוֹבָה”, Yisro rejoiced over all the good. Most people do not rejoice in all the good together (בְּיֶחָד); there are many kinds of joy (שְׂמֵחָה), each separate.

The fullness of joy (שְׂמֵחוֹת הַשְּׂמֵחָה) is to rejoice in all the good together. That is only possible by looking up, over all the good, to the root (שֹׁרֶשׁ) from which all good flows. There, at the root, all is one.

MAIN POINTS

- Go to a wedding: one person is happy with the fish and the meat, another with the musicians, others with other things. The families (מִחֲתָנִים) are happy with the wedding itself, and hardly notice the food.
- No one rejoices in all the joys at once: “אֵין אָדָם שֶׁיִּהְיֶה שֶׁמֶח מְכֹל הַשְּׂמֵחוֹת בְּיֶחָד”. Even someone who enjoys everything enjoys each thing in turn, one after another.
- And one person enjoys nothing at all: he has only jealousy and pain (קִנְיָאָה וְצָעַר), envying the match (שְׂדוּךְ).
- Looking up to the root, where all is one, one rejoices in every good together, and the joy is very great and shines with a great light.
- Each joy, joined with its companion, sparkles into it (הִתְנוֹצְצוֹת), and the more joys join together, the more the light of joy grows.
- That is “וַיֵּחַד יִתְרוֹ” (שמות יח:ט): he rejoiced in all the good יֶחָד, together, because he looked “עַל כָּל הַטּוֹבָה”, above all the good, to the root where everything is one and all joys are joined.

A PRACTICAL TAKEAWAY · OUR OWN REFLECTION

The food, the music, the people: each is a separate pleasure. See the One who gives them all, and they become a single joy, and envy has no room.

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