

מצוה גדולה להיות בשמחה תמיד, ולהתגבר להרחיק

Always Be Happy

THE TEACHING

“מצוה גדולה להיות בשמחה תמיד”, “it is a great mitzvah to be happy always”, and to fight with all one’s strength to push away sadness and gloom (שחרה ומרה שחרה).

Every illness (חולאת) that comes upon a person comes only from damaged joy, and joy is a great remedy (רפואה). Human nature pulls toward gloom, so one must force oneself to be happy; a broken heart (לב נשבר) belongs only to a set time each day.

MAIN POINTS

- There are ten kinds of song (עשרה מיני נגינה), and song is joy: “עלי עשור” (תהלים צב:ד), “upon a ten-stringed instrument”, “כי שמחתני ה' בפעלך” (תהלים צב:ה), “for You have made me glad, Hashem, with Your work.”
- These ten kinds of song flow into the ten kinds of pulse (עשרה מיני דפיקין) and give them life. When joy is damaged, the pulses are damaged and illness comes. Even the physicians wrote at length that all illness comes from gloom and sadness.
- In the future joy will grow very great. Chazal said: “עתיד הקדוש-ברוך-הוא להיות ראש חולה לצדיקים”, “the Holy One will be the head of the circle (מחול) of the tzaddikim”: He will make a dance for them and lead it.
- For “שכינה למעלה מראשותיו של חולה”, the Shechinah is above the head of the sick, as it says “ה' יסעדנו על ערש דוי” (תהלים מא:ד), “Hashem will support him on his sickbed”; only the Shechinah gives him life. When joy heals every illness, the חולה, the sick one, becomes the dance.
- The rule: everyone is full of troubles, so force yourself with great strength to be happy always, any way you can, even “במלי דשטותא”, with lighthearted things.
- A broken heart is also very good, but only for a while: set an hour each day to break your heart and pour out your words before Hashem, and be happy the rest of the day. A broken heart slides into gloom far more easily than joy slides into foolishness.

A PRACTICAL TAKEAWAY · OUR OWN REFLECTION

Joy is a mitzvah, so it takes effort, like any mitzvah. A niggun, a dance, even a joke can be holy work. And give your tears their own hour, so they don't take over the day.

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