

הַאֲמוּנָה תּוֹלָה בְּפֶה שֶׁל אָדָם, בְּבִחִינַת: אוֹדִיעַ

Faith Depends on the Mouth

THE TEACHING

Faith (אֲמוּנָה) hangs on a person's mouth, as David says: "אוֹדִיעַ אֲמוּנָתְךָ בְּפִי" (תהלים פט:ב), "I will make known Your faithfulness with my mouth." Speaking faith aloud is itself faith, and it also brings you to faith.

A teaching about speech, simplicity (תְּמִימוּת), and peace of mind in serving Hashem: keep away from heresy and from speculation, and also from the anxious "wisdoms" of over-scrupulousness. Hashem wants the heart.

MAIN POINTS

- So be very careful with words of heresy (כְּפִירָה וְאַפִּיקוֹרְסוּת), even if you don't mean them, even if you are only repeating what others said, to mock them. Such words harm faith, and joking about Hashem is forbidden even in jest.
- Keep far from books of philosophical speculation (חִקְיָה), even those written by great Jewish thinkers; they harm faith greatly. "דִּי לָנוּ בְּאֲמוּנָתֵנוּ שְׁקִבְלָנוּ מֵאַבּוֹתֵינוּ הַקְדוּשִׁים", "the faith we received from our holy ancestors is enough." The great rule is to be "תָּם וְיָשָׁר", simple and upright.
- Keep far even from "wisdoms" within serving Hashem: endless checking whether you did a mitzvah well enough. These are not wisdom at all, only confusions. No human can fulfil his duty perfectly: "אֵין הַקְדוֹשׁ-בְּרוּךְ-הוּא כָּא בְטְרוּנְיָא" (עבודה זרה ג.), Hashem does not make impossible demands, and "לֹא נִתְּנָה תּוֹרָה לְמַלְאָכֵי-הַשָּׁרָת" (קידושין נד.), the Torah was not given to angels.
- About those who pile on needless stringencies (חֲמֻרֹת יִתְרוֹת), the Torah says "וַחֲיֵי בָהֶם" (ויקרא יח:ה), "live by them", and not die by them. They have no life in their mitzvos and are always gloomy (מָרָה שְׁחֵרָה), sure they never fulfilled anything. A note adds that Rebbe Nachman himself took on no extra stringency at all.
- In truth, after all wisdom, even true wisdom, throw it all away and serve Hashem with complete simplicity (בְּתִמְיּוּת כְּפִשְׁיּוּת). That is the greatest wisdom: not to be clever at all. Before Him there is no wisdom; the main thing is "רַחֲמָנָא לְבָא בְּעֵי" (Sanhedrin 106b), "Hashem wants the heart."

A PRACTICAL TAKEAWAY · OUR OWN REFLECTION

Say your faith out loud, every day. Do your mitzvos with joy and simplicity, without endless second-guessing. Hashem wants your heart, not perfection.

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