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Clarity Brings Happiness

On Purim we are happy. But what about the rest of the year? Can we be happy during the rest of the year as well?

We have already spoken about what the happiness of Purim is. But we **can** be happy during the year as well. How?

"Hashem rejoices in His creations." Why does Hashem rejoice in His creations? In the Gemara (*Chullin 60a*), it is apparent that Hashem felt joy because now there was **clarity** in each thing; each fruit tasted like that of its tree, which is utter clarity. This was the joy, the *simcha* that Hashem had in His creations: that there was clarity.

Happiness is thus associated with clarity. This is how we can always be happy, not only on Purim, but even throughout the whole year – when we have clarity.

Two Kinds Of Clarity

There are two kinds of clarity. When we learn Torah, Chazal tell us that they must be “enlightening and joyous as if they were given at Sinai.” This is to be clear in our actual learning – we need to clarify our *pshat* in Gemara. It should be clear, and only then can we enjoy the Torah.

But there is another kind of learning, and it too requires clarity. This is clarity in **da'as** – (lit. knowledge) -- to be clear in our way of life, to know how to live right. What do we mean by this?

We can find something troubling: a person can be a *Talmid Chochom* when it comes to his learning – the *sugyos* he learns -- but not when it comes to a basic way of how to live life.

Most of us are very unclear of how to live our lives. We heard a little bit from this *Rebbi* and another *Rebbi*, we got some *hadrachah* (guidance) here and there – but we are still very unclear of how to live our life.

We think that it's good enough that we have a life full of Torah, that we live a Torah-lifestyle – and that that is enough for our clarity in how to live life.

But although it is true that, *Baruch Hashem*, we can say on ourselves that we are living Torah-based

lives, it is not true that we feel clear about our life. We have no clarity.

Rabbeinu Yonah writes that a person must be profound in matters of *Yiras Hashem* (fear of heaven). We have to develop a profundity in our **Da'as** – in other words, we need to be very clear in how to live life.

Everything Is A “Sugya”

Knowing how to live life should be a *sugya* just like any other *sugya*! It is the *sugya* that is called “life”.

We need to be clear in how to live life if we are to be happy.

To give an example – does anyone know anything about *Gan Eden* or *Gehinnom*? What does *Gan Eden* and *Gehinnom* mean to you? Do you understand it merely as a “place” to get rewarded or punished, and nothing more? Have you ever thought about the “*sugya*” of *Gan Eden* or *Gehinnom*? Did you know that they each have seven rooms?

So it is not like what you thought – it is not just about reward and punishment; there is more to it, there are levels. *Gan Eden* is also a *sugya*, *Gehinnom* is also a *sugya*. We never think about it because we never even bother trying to clarify what the *sugya* known as *Gan Eden* and *Gehinnom* is. We're not clear in it.

This is what Rabbeinu Yonah wrote: to be profound in matters of *Yiras Hashem*. We should know these things.

We have to clarify **every** *sugya*, not just what we're learning in Yeshiva! If you try to clarify everything you learn and you make sure that you're not unclear, you will be living in a world of clarity – as one of the Sages remarked, “I see a clear world.”

The *Mesillas Yesharim* wrote that if a person would know what the depth of a sin is, it would be impossible to sin. From his words we can see that it is not enough merely to **know** every word of Chazal and review it many times and even to feel it very strongly, but a person must **clarify to himself**, with intense *iyun* (depth) – **all** matters we learn, not only the *sugyos* of Gemara.

There is a *sugya* called *Gemillas Chassadim* (kindness). It's not enough to be kind – we must clarify to ourselves this “*sugya*” of being kind. *Tefillah* (prayer), is known as *Avodah Sheb'lev* (Service of the heart), but it is not enough to daven – there is a *sugya* called *Tefillah*, and we must learn it with *iyun*.

What we are saying is here an inner, deeper approach on how to view life: **everything is really a *sugya* that needs to be learned in-depth**. *Ahavas Hashem* (loving G-d) is a *sugya* that must be learned. *D'veykus* (attachment to G-d) is another *sugya*.

Our *Avodas Hashem* is not merely a list of “what to do” and what not to do, nor is it our *Avodah* to simply keep away from the *Yetzer Hora*. Our *Avodah* is that when we learn something in *Mesillas Yesharim* such as *Zerizus* (zeal) or *Zehirus* (alacrity), we have to clarify to ourselves what it means.

When we aren't clear, we get sad.

The Problem Of Disconnection

We will elaborate further with this discussion.

Many people learn Torah, but they forget who they even are! People mistakenly assume that all you have to do is enjoy learning, and that there is nothing wrong with being disconnected from yourself. But is that the meaning of “*The laws of Hashem are upright and gladden the heart*”? Of course it doesn't mean that one should forget about himself! Learning the Torah is supposed to build a person.

What is a *Talmid Chochom*? If a person is full of problems in his soul, he cannot connect to the Torah. Only if his soul is connected to his learning can he truly learn with *iyun*, and from that he can arrive at the clarity found in learning the Torah. This we can understand; a person cannot be a *Talmid Chochom* if he doesn't have clarity.

The same goes for learning about matters of the soul. If we learn about these matters with *iyun* just like we do every other *sugya* – we can come to have clarity.

Most people have a hard time being happy. Why is this so? It's not because we have a lot of problems (although it's definitely true that we all suffer). The true reason why we aren't happy is because we aren't clear who we are, we don't know where our hearts are – our **heart** is not clear to us.

Simcha is found in the heart – the Torah “*gladdens the heart.*” But if our hearts aren't clear to us, we cannot find happiness there. Happiness can only come from our heart if there is clarity in our heart.

On Yom Tov and Purim, it's easy to be happy. But how can we be happy during the rest of the year? We are not talking about how to dance at a wedding and come up with new moves that only crazy or childish people do. We are searching for a *simcha* that comes from the depths of the heart.

It can only come if we live with clarity. When we have clarity in life, our soul is connected to what we learn in the Torah.

“*Simchas HaChaim*”

The sefer *Nefesh Hachaim* wrote that “The entire praise of the *Rishonim* is their original thinking (*sevara yeshara*).” If we don't have *sevara yeshara*, how can we have what we call “*simchas hachaim*” (a joy of life)?

Of course, there are Gedolim who reach *simcha* just when they do a *mitzvah*; this is a very high level that only the Gedolim reach. But what about us? How can we enjoy life, how can we have a *simchas hachaim* (joy of life)?

It is only through a life of clarity.

Clarity Clears Up The Confusion

Before Adam sinned, there was only good in the world, while evil was only an outer force. After Adam sinned, evil entered the world – meaning, evil became mixed up with good.

This is otherwise known as confusion. This is the root of all our evil -- confusion; all confusion is a mixture of good and evil, a result of the sin. Our entire problem, our entire *Yetzer Hora* is that our very *Da'as* has become confused; we have no clarity. We have to work on clarity to remove all our confusion. Our greatest tool in life is clarity.

This is why many people learn Torah and even *Mussar* yet they aren't successful – it is because they don't have clarity.

Clarity Is To Learn Everything In-Depth

Simcha comes from learning a *sugya* with *iyun*, analyzing the very depths of a *sugya*. This gives us clarity. The same goes as well for Avodas Hashem – we need clarity, and thus we must learn these matters as well with *iyun*.

This is why the Sages say that an “unlearned person cannot be a devout person.” Why? Because he has never clarified what it means to be kind, and therefore even if he practices acts of kindness he still isn’t considered one who is devout.

If a person wants to serve Hashem, but he never bothers to clarify these matters of Avodas Hashem (i.e. what it means to love Hashem, what it means to fear Hashem, etc.), he is like a *yungerman* who wants to become a *posek* in *Hilchos Shabbos* just by studying the headings of each *halacha*, without looking into any details of each *halacha*.

We will give another example of what it means to clarify.

All of us are familiar with the Gemara that says that “If a person gets angry, it is **as if** he served idols.” Have any of us ever thought about what “as if” means? Does that mean that a person who gets angry should be killed just like a person has to get killed for serving idols? Obviously not. But if the Gemara says that it is as if he worshipped an idol, why doesn’t he indeed get killed? What is the meaning of this Gemara?

Such a Gemara is a common example of how we fail to apply ourselves enough and are satisfied with a superficial understanding. Such a Gemara remains non-clarified to us; it is another example of our lack of clarity in subjects of *Da’as*.

Learning any *sugya* with *iyun* – whether it is what we learn in Yeshiva or whether it is *Agadta* – does not mean to simply gather all the information on the *sugya*, putting together all the facts. That is not yet *iyun*.

Iyun is that everything you learn must be clarified. Only then can a person’s soul become connected to what he learns, and only with the resulting clarity from learning everything with *iyun* can a person have happiness.

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