

back on us through all of Simchas Torah! Dancing with the Torah on Simchas Torah is the time when we can shine out our simchah that Hashem gave

us the greatest gift in the world — the Torah — and this simchah will carry on through the entire year when we learn and serve Hashem!

קונטרס

The Ways of My Heart

נתיבות לבי

Adapted from the shiurim of
R' Dovid Steiman shlit"א
Be a Fire on Simchas Torah

Shmini Atzeres · Simchas Torah 5787

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THE WAYS OF MY HEART · WEEKLY SERIES

נתיבות לבי — The Ways of My Heart

A WEEKLY MAAMAR · ADAPTED FROM THE SHIURIM OF R' DOVID STEIMAN
SHLIT"א

ABOUT THE PUBLICATION

Nesivos Libi — The Ways of My Heart is a weekly maamar on emunah, bitachon, and avodas Hashem, adapted from the shiurim of R' Dovid Steiman shlit"א in the derech of the *Nesivos Shalom*.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

R' Dovid Steiman shlit"א teaches emunah, bitachon, and avodas Hashem in the derech of the *Nesivos Shalom*, and for nearly two decades has shared his Torah — in English and Russian — with talmidim and readers around the world. He taught at Ohr Somayach and today teaches at Yeshiva Toras Dovid, both in Monsey, New York. He is the author of the sefer *The Ways of My Heart* / נתיבות לבי.



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to go looking for the fight?

It must be that the fight itself is what He wants from us. He wants us living in that mode. Because where there is no fight, there is no life — a person is just sitting there, and nothing is

..... **Bring the fire; do not only come collecting**

So where is this fire supposed to come from?

Not from anywhere out there. From us.

Do you know how many people need chizuk today? Today we can say that every single person needs chizuk. But we cannot just all be standing with our hands out — give me chizuk, give me chizuk — like a person collecting tzedakah. Somebody has to be giving. And a person collecting tzedakah is also obligated to give tzedakah.

And it is not a big thing to give. You walk in with a fire. You

burning, and nothing is moving. It is the fight that gives the light. It is the fight that makes the fire.

And then, when a person stands up and fights, He helps him.

walk in with a smile. Bring the excitement with you, and it is seen — the whole beis medrash feels it, like a flame that gives light to everything around it.

That is what the Ribbono shel Olam wants from us: that we should show Him our love by being willing to fight for it. And He helps us.

May the Ribbono shel Olam give us the strength to keep the fight going, and the siyata dishmaya to win it, and may we be the ones who bring the light to everybody around us. And this ohr — this light — will shine

Think for a moment what that means. You have a problem, so you come and say: Ribbono shel Olam, give me another Yom Tov. Another Yom Tov? Who gives out Yamim Tovim? Pesach, Shavuot, Sukkos, Rosh Hashana, Yom Kippur — these are His.

And the answer is that they were not complaining. They felt that something was being taken away from them. They had a real shaychus to it, and it was their diamond being carried out

of the room. That is why they were given a day of their own.

It is brought down about a woman who was not zocheh to be at Krias Yam Suf, and she could not say the shirah with everyone else, and it pained her — and her neshamah came back into Devorah HaNeviah, who said her own shirah and had ruach hakodesh besides, like the Yidden by Krias Yam Suf. She was given both. How? Because of how much she wanted it. That is what wanting does.

..... Why we are told to pick a fight

Now to the part that does not seem to make sense.

Chazal tell us: *l'olam yargiz adam yetzer tov al yetzer hara* — a person should always rouse his good inclination against the yetzer hara. Pick the fight, every day.

But Chazal also tell us, about that very same yetzer hara: *il-malei HaKadosh Baruch Hu ozro, ein yachol lo* — if the Ribbono shel Olam did not help him, he could never overcome it.

So which is it? If we cannot win without Him, why are we told

Be a Fire on Simchas Torah

Where the excitement in learning actually comes from, why Chazal tell us to pick a fight we cannot win on our own — and why the fire has to come from us

People ask: how do we get the most out of the Torah?

How do you get that excitement when you sit down to learn —

and once you have it, how do you not lose it?

The answer is not where we usually look for it. Let us start with a story.

..... The biggest diamond in the world

There were three kings whose countries met at one border. One of them was a little wiser than the other two, and to keep the peace he arranged that the three of them would meet once a month.

That same king found himself an outstanding advisor: a Yid, not a frum one, who understood money and property better than anyone around him. So

when the next meeting was called, the invitation said that this Jew would be sitting with them.

One of the other kings was a Jew-hater. Three crowns at one table, he said, and a Jew sits down with us? And he arranged that this Jew should never arrive.

The day came. The Yid set out for the palace, and on the way

he found the road blocked by a crowd of hooligans, shouting *a Jew, a Jew, a Jew*. Sounds familiar.

His driver turned around: what do we do now? I am not fighting twenty men. He took a thousand gold coins and threw them into the road in front of them — and they were finished with shouting, and he rode through to the palace.

The king who had arranged it went white when he walked in. *Did you not meet anybody on the way?*

And the Yid understood exactly whose idea it had been. Of course I met them, he said. They gave me the greatest gift I have ever been given.

A gift? What kind of gift does a hooligan give?

So let me tell you a story, said the Yid.

A wealthy man died and left his son a great deal of money, and besides the money, one enormous diamond. The son was a gambler, and he gambled away everything his father had left him. When the money was gone he took the diamond to the bank and borrowed against it, and lost that too. And again. And again — until the banker came out himself and said: enough. I will not lend you another coin. This stone is worth many times what you have taken. Why would you throw it away?

He went to a friend, and the friend said the obvious thing: you want to keep gambling? Sell the diamond.

And the son said: are you crazy? Sell the diamond? That is not money. That is who I am. That is what my father left me. We

are the family with the greatest diamond in the world.

That, said the Yid to the king, is what those men in the road did for me. They stood there and shouted at me what I am. They

..... **Where would the fire come from?**

We have an identity, and we have to do something with it. It is not enough to come in, sit down, and learn. First we have to be shaken awake by what we are — because if that is not clear to you, where exactly is excitement supposed to come from?

..... **They asked for another Yom Tov**

There is a place in the Torah that shows exactly what that wanting looks like.

There were men who were tamei at the time of the korban Pesach on Erev Pesach, and could not bring it. And they came and said: why should we be less? Why are we worse than

reminded me that I am carrying the biggest diamond in the world. If it had been ten thousand coins in my pocket, I would have thrown them all — it is worth more than that.

And look how the learning goes without it. You sit, and you ask, and you answer, and you ask, and you answer. Correct, and quiet, and nothing is moving. That is not how we are meant to learn Torah. You are supposed to be *boiling* from it.

everybody else? Give us another chance. And a day of Peisach Sheni was added.

Reb Moshe Feinstein zt"l asked a question nobody would think to ask. How did these people merit that a whole new day should be added to the year for them?