

from it. That is what it means to mean business.

May the Ribbono shel Olam give us the koach and the siyata dishmaya to be b'simchah, to

hold onto it, and to be mechazek one another in it and Hashem should help us to achieve this real Simcha on Yom Tov Sukkos and carry it throughout the entire year!

קונטרס

**The Ways of
My Heart**

נתיבות לבי

Adapted from the shiurim of
R' Dovid Steiman shlit"א

We Know Simchah Is the Key — But How?

Sukkos 5787 · Z'man Simchaseinu

נתיבות לבי

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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..... A person has to be sholem in three directions

And there is something else here, something practical.

What is *shleimus*? A person who is sholem is at peace in three directions: with Hashem, with other people, and with himself.

If one of the three is missing, your simchah has nowhere to be.

There are people who cut themselves off from everybody and live only for themselves. And there are people who decide they will speak only to Hashem and have nothing to do with anyone else. A person is built to

be connected, to Hashem and to other people and to himself.

And then he has to have peace with himself, which is usually the hardest one. Because look what a person does instead: he knocks himself down all day. *Something is wrong with me. I am not okay.* His brain wants one thing, his heart wants another thing, and the rest of him wants something else entirely. Everything is pulling in a different direction. That is a person with no shleimus, and there is no way for simchah to come to him like that.

..... Make it the goal, not the decoration

So what comes out of all this is that simchah asks a whole workout from us. It is not a nice extra — oh, how beautiful, he is a happy person — it is a major goal itself. It is an achievement of life. It is an achievement of every Yid.

We get up in the morning and ask what we have to do today, and the answer is that our purpose is to be b'simchah.

And once that is the goal, everything else arranges itself around it. Whatever stands in the way of that simchah — you move it to the side, or you walk away

meant to keep moving. And that push is a push to life of hope and emunah, in the mid-

..... **What the Saba Kadisha had to give up**

There is a story told about the Saba Kadisha of Slonim, one of the great tzaddikim.

One time he was on his way to shul when he felt that he could not bring himself to simchah.

Can you imagine? It is not only us — the greatest tzaddikim had exactly the same avodah, and it is the work of a life.

So he tried, he was mevatel everything physical, similar to what we are doing on Sukkos, by moving out of our comfort but he said even more: I am mevater on the pleasures of this world, I want only You. I just want to be besimcha. And nothing happened.

Until he understood what was standing in his way. It was his own spiritual wants. *I want to know Shas. I want to know Shulchan Aruch.*

dle of that darkness, it is the light.

And what is wrong with that? Nothing. But he felt, for him — that is yeshus.

So he said: I do not need anything at all. Not this world, and not even the next world. I want one thing — to be b'simchah, because this is the ratzon of Hashem. And that is how he became besimchah. That is what bitul hayeshus means: nullifying the yesh, the "I have" — whatever a person holds onto that will not let him besimcha.

And let us be clear about what this does not mean. It does not mean that a person drops his responsibilities. Of course not — a person has responsibilities and he carries them. The point here is one thing only: how important simchah is. That is how far it goes.

SUKKOS IS ZMAN SIMCHOSEINU!

We Know Simchah Is the Key — But How?

Everyone knows that everything good comes from simchah; the question is what to do when the brain knows it and the heart is not pumping — and what the Saba Kadisha had to give up before he reached it

There is a lot of misunderstanding about what simchah actually is. Everybody knows the principle: all the good comes from simchah. Everything in ruchniyus, and everything in gashmiyus too — parnassah, whatever a person needs. All the hashpa'os come through simchah.

Fine, so let us go and be b'simchah.

Ask yourself honestly: are you b'simchah? Always?

We all know the answer, and that is exactly the point: simchah is not something that comes to us overnight. It is *avodas chayim*, the work of a lifetime. What does a person actually have to do so that his simchah should not go away?

..... **The brain knows and the heart is not pumping**

There are two parts to this, and we need both.

One part is the brain, which knows that we are supposed to

be b'simchah. That much we all know.

The other part is the heart. The heart has to pump from excitement. You are going to daven now. You are going to learn now — is the heart pumping? Or is it: I *have* to go, I *have* to pull myself out of where I am comfortable and do this.

So a person pushes, and he fights hard, and he does it —

..... **Where the excitement is supposed to come from**

The Nesivos Shalom brings it back to two things: emunah and bitachon.

Part of emunah is to believe that everything that happens is *hash-gachah pratis*, from Hashem. And more than that: The Ribbono shel Olam is our Father, that He takes care of us, and that we rely on Him completely because we know He loves us so much.

but the heart is not pumping from simchah. He understands with his brain that he must be b'simchah — and the heart stays where it was.

That is the gap. It is not that you do not know. There are a lot of Chazal written about certain avoidas and written very clear, and we know a lot of these Chazal — but does it enter our mind the right way? You know, and still you cannot get there.

Now everything depends on one question: how strongly do we believe it? Because the stronger you believe it, the more excited you become. If your Father is taking care of you — what exactly do you have to worry about?

But this has to be real in the heart, not only correct in the brain.

And a person can think: why would He take care of us al-

ways? Sometimes we make mistakes. Sometimes we do aveiros. We are people, we are not malachim.

The answer is that *Am Yisrael nikra'u banim*. A Yid is called a son — even when he does not behave the way a son is supposed to behave, he is still a son.

..... **Happy is a show; simchah is inside**

Here we have to be precise, because the English word does not carry it.

Happy is a show, and it is outside. That is not a bad thing — it is good that a person does not put whatever is going on inside of him onto everybody around him — but it stays outside.

Real simchah is supposed to be in the heart. And it is supposed to be there even when it is hard, even when it is dark, when a person has to break the ice to get himself moving forward.

Because the Yetzer is after him. The Yetzer wants him sitting with his nose down, not doing

And he is the son of the King. We do not always understand why the King decided this and decided that. But He created us in His wisdom, He knows where our neshamah is meant to have an aliyah, and He will not leave us stuck in one place. He is always with us!

anything, not looking for anything — just depressed, and finished, and convinced there is no way out of the swamp. In Yiddish they call it a *blotte*, the kind that sucks a person in. He feels himself swimming in it, and around him are all the things waiting to swallow him — all the yetzaros pulling him off to one side and the other.

But he knows the Ribbono shel Olam knows about every one of them. He knows that what is happening to him is for his good, Hashem wants him to wake up, because a person pushes himself to live and that he is