



The Joy of Torah - For Life

Parshas Korach - Innate Happiness! **Shmuz by Rabbi Shimon Max**

Rabbeinu Bichaya, in his introduction to the Parsha, quotes a Pasuk from Mishlei that states, "The light of the Tzadikim will be happy, however, the candle of the wicked will be put out."

Rabbeinu Bichaya explains that this means the light of a Neshama (soul) in its pristine state does not require any support, as its holiness is innate and does not need anything external for sustenance. On the other hand, the Neshama of a wicked person is compared to a candle that requires outside support, such as a wick and oil. Similarly, the Neshama of the wicked relies on the support of the body because throughout its life, it derived pleasure from worldly pursuits. Just as a candle dims and eventually dies when its support is consumed, the Neshama suffers when the body dies because it loses its support.

It seems that although our holy Neshama originates from the Kisei Hakavod (the Divine Throne), it can be conditioned to rely on earthly enjoyments for sustenance. It appears that what the Neshama enjoys is what sustains it.

We were troubled by the fact that Rabbeinu Bichaya stated that the Neshama of Tzadikim does not require any outside support. How could this be when the Neshama derives enjoyment from performing Mitzvot (commandments)?

It seems that the Neshama itself possesses innate happiness and, in fact, does not require external support for its own happiness and pleasure. Its essence is a piece of the Kisei Hakavod. While performing Mitzvos and overcoming temptations of course greatly enhances the joy of the Neshama and preserves its sanctity, the Neshama itself has the potential to provide us with the good feelings, happiness, and a genuine sense of our innate greatness.