

Gateway to Happiness by Rabbi Zelig Pliskin Quotes

When a person who follows the Torah is happy with all the good the Almighty has bestowed upon him, he is fulfilling the *mitzvah* of *Kidush Hashem* (sanctification of the Almighty's name). People will see how fortunate are Torah observers. A Torah observer who is depressed and talks about what he is missing and what is wrong with his life causes others to look down at and avoid Torah observance. This is a *Chilul Hashem*, a most serious offense. This lack of happiness is the root of the retribution enumerated in the Torah (*Dvorim* 28:47) as it is stated that the retribution comes because of a failure to serve the Almighty with joy and a good heart. (Rabbi Yehuda Leib Chasman; *Ohr Yohail*, vol. 3, p. 85)¹

Anything a person does "for the sake of heaven" (*I'shaim shomayim*) is considered a *mitzvah*. Therefore, even when you eat, drink, and sleep, if your motivation is to be strong and healthy to be able to perform good deeds, the mundane is elevated and transformed into a *mitzvah*. By having elevated thoughts in such matters, you can feel the joy of fulfilling a *mitzvah* in what otherwise would be merely meeting your physiological requirements. (*Pele Yoatz; simcha*)²

¹ 27

² 103-104

The fool turns a friend into an enemy, and the wise man turns an enemy into a friend. (Tnuas Hamussar, vol. 4, p. 299)³

The Talmud (Shabbos 32a) warns that we should be careful not to stand in a place where we are endangering our lives. The Chazon Ish commented that this is true with physical dangers, all the more so should we be careful not to place ourselves in a situation where our souls are in danger. (*Emunah Ubitochon* 4:9) ...Keep as far as possible from potential temptation to do something improper. Don't purposely stand in a dangerous situation to battle your evil inclination face to face. (Rabbi Chayim Shmuelevitz; *Sichos Mussar*, 1971, essay 6)⁴

When a person repents for what he has done wrong in the past, he should look at himself as a newly created person and therefore his past wrongs are not identified with him. (*Bais Halevi: Braishis*)⁵

Rabbi Yehoshua Leib Diskin said it is worth the effort to help someone improve his behavior even if the improvement will only be of short duration. He cited the city of Ninveh as an example. The prophet Yonah was sent to warn them of an impending disaster unless they corrected their behavior. *Seder Olam* states their improvement lasted only three months. Nevertheless, it was worth

³ 136

⁴ 264

⁵ 231

Yonah's efforts to bring about that temporary improvement.
(*Amud Aish*)⁶

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