

# Contents

Preface .....	9
Introduction.....	11
Happiness .....	13
Smiling.....	17
The Present .....	19
Appreciation.....	21
Love .....	24
Beauty .....	26
Desire.....	27
Pleasure .....	31
Wealth .....	32
Wisdom .....	35
Focus.....	40
Thought.....	41
Dreaming .....	47
Inner Worlds.....	48
Self-Improvement .....	52
Others in our World .....	60

Interacting with Others.....	63
Giving .....	69
Looking Upwards.....	73
Prayer .....	80
Difficulties.....	83
Inspiration.....	86
Intention.....	88
Reader's Comments.....	90

# Pleasure

## **Enjoyment**

The more we enjoy the world around us, the more the world around us is ours.

## **Higher Pleasures**

Really, we were made for pleasure. So, why do we suffer? Our hidden potential demands that we become greater people – people who can appreciate and enjoy the higher, heavenly pleasures that await us. To become such people we must pay a price – in exertion, stress and pain.

## **From our circumstances**

We empower ourselves when we take pleasure from our circumstances, no matter what they are. And we empower ourselves even more when we take pleasure from the One who places us in these circumstances.

## **Learned Pleasures**

A lower pleasure loses its taste when we get to know a higher pleasure.

Sometimes, it's worthwhile to learn and attach ourselves to this higher pleasure just so that we can free ourselves from the lower pleasure.

# Wealth

## **Hungry**

We're happier with food on our tables, money in our pockets and debt-free living. Still, specifically when we are hungry, we are most creative. Our need gives our lives that special, extra edge. We need then to embrace our poverty as well.

## **Push-Button I**

A spiritual push-button to wealth is gratitude, an outpouring, enthusiastic, ongoing gratitude, a thanksgiving that comes from the deepest part of the heart.

## **Push-Button II**

A spiritual push-button to wealth is belief. We need to see that the same force that gives us our precious hands and feet, our eyes and ears, our intelligence and emotion, can give us whatever else that we want.

## **Push-Button III**

A spiritual push-button to wealth is asking. We need to see, as clearly as possible, exactly what we need, when we need it and why we need it, and then express our wish in words.

## **Independently Powerful**

These three push-buttons are independently powerful. We need to pick the one that most suits us, and then use it together with the other two, to launch ourselves to the highest heights.<sup>6</sup>

## **Fabulously Wealthy**

Many fictional stories center on fabulously wealthy individuals, and, as we read them, we think to ourselves this is not real. But, in truth, our lives also center on a Creator who is endlessly powerful, and in terms of health, wealth and success can give us whatever we want.

## **Goodness**

The Creator, who is the source of all power and wealth, is also the source of all goodness. Thus, in drawing closer to goodness, we draw closer to His power and wealth, the power and wealth we need to achieve our life wishes.

## **All We Receive**

All we receive we receive that we may enrich the lives of others. And the more we enrich others, the more we enrich ourselves.

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<sup>6</sup> We find these three spiritual keys in the daily prayer (*Shmoneh Esrei*), each one occupying a section of its own.

### **Only We Decide**

What benefit do we have from admiring what we don't have, as well as – at the same time – disregarding what we do have? Ultimately, only we decide the value of the items of our lives and how much pleasure they will give us.

### **A Means**

Money is always a means. The question is though, a means to what? If we want money so that we can lord over others, or indulge lowly lusts, then it's bad. But if we want it to help ourselves and others to take more pleasure from the beauty of Creation and draw closer to the One who gives it all to us, then it is good.

### **Our Health**

We need high levels of energy to absorb new information effectively, to think deeply, pray powerfully, and even to laugh joyfully. We maintain these levels of energy when we look after our most precious asset – our health.

### **Insurance**

The best health insurance is to express sincere, heartfelt thanks to our Creator each time we leave the bathroom.

The best life insurance is to praise and thank the Creator for the beauty and magnificence of the world.

# Wisdom

## Stupid Mistakes

We make stupid mistakes – all the time. It's part of our reality. The question is then, how do we turn them to our advantage? How do we climb them towards our dream? There is a solution. We just need to find it.

## Our Best

To try to do the right thing *is* to do the right thing. To try to do our best *is* to do our best.

## Solving Problems

First, we need to say, "He-she-they are not to blame." We need to understand why that is so; and then focus on solving our problem.

First, we need to say, "All is for the good". We need to understand why this is so; and then rise to the challenge.

## Going Uphill

When the going is uphill, we should change gear. We should turn our eyes upwards, and say a prayer. If we can't do this, we can take a short rest or a long walk – whatever will best recharge our batteries.

### **With Wisdom**

“With wisdom the Creator founded the world”.<sup>7</sup> We should focus on being wise – wiser than we have been until now. For, wisdom is the foundation of all. With wisdom, we enhance our lives.

### **Wealth or Wisdom**

Wealth is a tremendous tool. With it, we can accomplish so much. However, it also creates problems, obstacles that slow us down. This makes wisdom the better of the two. For, wisdom is fully portable – a wealth that lies within us.

### **A Spiritual Being**

We shouldn’t look at ourselves as physical beings who manage to maintain a spiritual connection. Rather, we should think of ourselves as spiritual beings clothed in physicality.

### **Regular Meals**

People eat regular meals, even though they don’t always know how the food benefits them. Similarly, we must consume spiritual nourishment, on a frequent, ongoing basis – and even though we don’t always know how it benefits us.

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<sup>7</sup> Mishle 3.19

## **Healthy Helpings**

Healthy helpings of spiritual foods motivate and empower us, invigorate and beautify us. Moreover, we can consume them freely without worrying about unneeded calories.

## **To Discover**

We may study all the details of creation, and we may experiment with the various paths along which the world runs. Still, we have a long way to go before we can know the Creator. Therefore, to discover the truth and beauty of it all, we must keep searching.

## **Right or Convenient**

Throughout the day, we make choices. In general, our choice is between doing what is right, as opposed to doing what is convenient. We need to remember though, that from “what is right” we mostly profit, while from “what is convenient” we mostly lose.

## **Managing Resources**

The more an investment manager respects his clients’ funds, the more money he can expect them to entrust to him. Similarly, the more we respect the talents and abilities the Creator gives us, the more we will see them grow.

### With Respect

Treat all others, people and objects also, with full respect. Never make fun of them, even in your thoughts. For, these things have a way of hurting us in return. In addition, they are all the Creator's works, as well as being steps we need to take to reach our final goal.

### Above Ourselves

We must rise above ourselves, exist separately from our bodies and our physical needs, seeing ourselves from above. We must look at our whole, and not just at the parts. This way, we get a true view of ourselves, and the paths we need to follow.

### Paths and Gates

With all our hearts, we must walk the paths of wisdom, aiming as we do so to pass through gates of new understanding and insight, and reach an ultimate greatness.<sup>8</sup>

### Spiritual Treasures

To pursue spiritual treasures is safer than to pursue material wealth. It arouses less resentment and jealousy against us.

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<sup>8</sup> The *Beis HaMikdash* is called לבנון, Levanon. This the *Vilna Gaon* (*Shir HaShirim ch.3*) explains is made of two parts, לב, *Lev*, a word having the numerical value of 32 and therefore representing the 32 paths of *Chochma*, wisdom; and *Noen*, נו, which has the value of 50, representing the fifty gates of *Bina*, understanding and insight.

## **Light and Dark**

The world is made of only two elements. We can call them “light” and “dark”. Light is all that is good, the blessing that enters this world. Light, we may understand, contains even the Creator Himself.

Dark is all that limits, blocks out and turns back the light. Our task is to seek out the light, and absorb it within ourselves, and our lives.

## **To Know**

To know the Creator is a lifetime project. To succeed we have to add to this knowledge every single day. Still the rewards make the efforts well worthwhile.

## **Favors or Orders**

What is better, asking for a favor, or giving orders? – Asking for a favor every time. For the other person, it preserves his dignity. For us, it produces superior results.