



YACHAD



The Pursuit of True Happiness

This Dvar Torah was written by **Akiva and Dassie Jablon**, Yachad volunteers and **Yehuda and Chana Weinberger**, participants of Yachad's Married Couples program. In loving memory of Ellen Polisky A" H, Chana's late mother.

In Parashat Mishpatim, we are greeted with many new rules and laws. A person's natural instinct may be to feel confined by a set of rules. One might think that breaking free from such boundaries will bring him closer to true happiness and joy. However, we know that is not the case. After all, would Hashem give us so many commandments if they were not able to bring us true happiness? How do mitzvot enhance our joy and fulfillment in life?

In his book *Ein Ayah* (Brachot Aleph), Rav Kook teaches us how to achieve contentment and genuine joy. He writes that there are two paths to happiness. The first way is to temporarily take one's mind off his problems, for

example, running to your phone or hanging out with friends. But while this may distract from the hardship for a few hours or days, the sadness then returns with the realization that one cannot run from their challenges. In other words, taking a break from problems allows for temporary relief but not lasting happiness.

Rav Kook explains, however, that if one recognizes that everything he has – even his challenges – are from Hashem, he will be better able to face and overcome his struggles and find true long-lasting happiness. To take this a step further, since true happiness comes from acknowledging that everything is from Hashem, it follows logically that Hashem's mitzvot and laws can guide us to happiness.

At Yachad, the goal is to help every person reach their full potential and the highest level of happiness. We understand that every human being faces challenges, whether big or small. So whether it's offering fun and meaningful learning opportunities through Shabbatons or other programs, we do everything in our power to enhance each person's sense of personal fulfillment and joy. Yachad means together in every sense: we as an organization – and as a nation – are happier and stronger together. ■

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